

August 2017

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WCBA

VISION BEYOND THE ORDINARY

Westmoreland County Blind Association

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” By Helen Keller~(1880-1968)

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**FROM THE DESK OF OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
TIMOTHY P. MILLER**

WCBA would like to welcome Emily Gindlesperger as a new board member. Emily resides in North Huntingdon.

Our organization continues to grow each day with new clients and staff being added. I recently traveled to Hershey for the presentation of the UniqueSource Achievement Award to Mike Kissell. Mike is a 15 year employee here at WCBA where he has gained independence and confidence to talk with people in his community. See additional information in this issue.

Stop in for a tour to see for yourself what amazing work and challenges being overcome by our individuals.

Have an enjoyable summer season!

~SOCIAL MEDIA~

**Follow us on Facebook @
Westmoreland County Blind Association**

or

Tag us on Twitter @ WCBAinPA



DID YOU KNOW???

Any resident of the United States who is unable to read or use regular print materials as a result of temporary or permanent visual or physical limitations may receive service through the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. This includes those who are blind or have a visual or physical disability that prevents them from reading or handling print materials.

NSL serves patrons of all ages who fall into any of the following categories:

- Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting lenses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
- Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material.
- Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.
- Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and or sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.

NLS has no subscriptions or service fees; it is free to eligible borrowers. Individuals who have a temporary disability may qualify for service on a temporary basis.

NLS offers a variety of formats such as audiobooks and audio magazines on digital cartridges; braille books and magazines; music appreciation materials, music scores, and music instruction in braille, audio and large print. Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) is a web-based service that provides access to thousands of special-format books, magazines and music materials.

NSL offers a wide variety of the most current reading material, including best sellers, biographies, fictional works, how-to-books, magazines, and music scores. Explore their catalog.

For more information, visit their website at loc.gov/nls, email them at nls@loc.gov or call [1-888-657-7323](tel:1-888-657-7323).



From the Work Activity Center:

Every month gets better than the last!! We have just exceeded all of our prior goals in WCBA history during June 2017.....we brought in 205,706 lbs. of paper. We ship out over 100,000 lbs. per month for recycling.

Fiscal year totals from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 were:

1,886,387 lbs. of paper OR over 943 tons!! We also recycle all cardboard boxes that come to us which recycle totals equal 40,585 lbs. OR over 20 tons.

Did we mention that our consumers love to work and they WANT to come to work? They like being here and making friends and earning their very own paycheck.

If ever you want to see how things work at the Pre-Vocational Services, Shredding Department, just stop by! We would love to give you a tour.

UniqueSource Achievement Award

June 19 was an evening to “Embrace the Abilities” of Pennsylvanians by showcasing the skills and talents that individuals with disabilities bring to the workplace each and every day. Twenty-six individuals were recognized with UniqueSource Achievement Awards in front of family, friends, co-workers and legislators for the contributions they make in jobs that they choose to have. “Everyone has their own life story to tell and tonight, we honor each UniqueSource Achievement Award winner for their story,” said Vince Loose, president and CEO of UniqueSource Products & Services. “Not because their story is about their disability, but rather because of their personal mission, commitment and professionalism to not allow their disability to be their story.” Following the awards ceremony, which took place at the Hershey Lodge & Convention Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania, guests were treated to an inspiring keynote address from Jessica Cox—a woman who was born without arms and whose many accomplishments include receiving the Guinness World Record for being the first person certified to fly an airplane with only their feet.

Michael Kissell of Greensburg, Pennsylvania was one of the individuals honored with a UniqueSource Achievement Award. Meet Mike: For the last 15 years, Mike has been employed by Westmoreland County Blind Association and works as a Shredding Laborer. His responsibilities include sorting papers and preparing them for the shredder, shredding documents, sorting x-rays and placing labels on boxes. The Westmoreland County Blind Association has provided him with a job where he can work with friends and a staff that treats him with respect. Mike says that he enjoys working with his friends and earning his own paycheck. He believes his job has made him more responsible and helped give him the confidence to talk with people in his community.

UniqueSource is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit supplier of products and services dedicated to creating employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. It accomplishes this by partnering with its Members—Pennsylvania nonprofit agencies who employ persons with disabilities—to market and deliver their products and services to customers in both private and public sectors.



PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS PROGRAM

Free Programs including Child Vision Screenings for Color Blindness and Blindness Prevention in local county Pre-Schools/Daycares (see picture at right). Educational Programs of Eye Safety classes for home, work and play!!

~ Refer a pre-school or
daycare facility to us ~

@ 724-837-1250



LOW VISION SERVICES

The WCBA has been involved with Dr. Chris Cakanac, O.D., F.A.A.O. in providing low vision services. The program was the first low vision clinic to be established in Westmoreland County. WCBA is responsible for scheduling all appointments, demonstrating all visual aids and providing the visual aids for the clinic. There are a wide range of visual aids available to the patients and the recommended items cannot always be satisfactory to each individual's specific needs. The problem occurs with the patients' inability to determine whether or not the visual aids can be helpful without actually using them during their own personal daily living activities and home surroundings. Due to these difficulties, the WCBA developed a "loaner" program with its visual aids so the the patients can take the items home for two (2) weeks and make their own determination on if the items will be beneficial for their needs. This system has been very assistive to the patients.

This program has provided options for visually-impaired consumers that were not available in the past. The addition of these items as well as obtaining the newest developments in technology is crucial to the effectiveness of this program.

For additional information, please contact us at 724/837-1250 and ask for our Low Vision Representative.



It's not just a business, it's the LAW!

Our shredder has a 10 horsepower motor and is able to shred 750-1500 pounds of paper per hour. It is designed, engineered and manufactured to be the most reliable in the industry. This shredder offers secure destruction of all your confidential materials. Everything fed into this shredder, from thick stacks of computer printouts, to a single check, is rendered unreadable. It is also able to destroy microfiche, typewriter ribbons, audio/video cassettes, credit cards and computer discs.

We offer:

confidentiality - secured carts - pick up service - prompt destruction - certificate of destruction—x-ray disposal - hard drive destruction - peace of mind.

LOW RATES !!!

For pricing or questions, please contact:
Karen Booley, WAC Production Manager
724-837-1250, Ext. 31



Adult Training Facility Happenings

Our Adult Training Facility keeps growing and we now have 17 consumers with us. We are enjoying the sunny weather by going to Round Hill Park Splash Area, Living Treasures and visiting many of our local community parks. We have even gone out to lunch a few times. These activities help to enhance the daily living skills and abilities of these physically and intellectually challenged individuals.

We have participated in fundraising activities such as Bake Sales of pepperoni rolls, cookies, sweet-breads and special lunches. As a repeat of last Christmas, the group has chosen to use their fund-raising profits to purchase toys and gifts for needy children. These gifts are chosen by the ATF consumers, gift-wrapped and presented to the Westmoreland County Children's Bureau for the Holiday season. We always like to help others because so many people are always ready to help us. As you can see, we are a very busy group and we all enjoy ourselves!

WCBA'S TEXTILE MANUFACTURING

Fiscal Year 2016-17 presented WCBA's manufacturing department with operational challenges in their efforts to fulfill desired employment target levels and produce contracted product quantities while continuing to sustain a long standing recognized level of quality that meets or exceeds military specifications as set forth by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Responding to the DoD's cutback in military supplies procurement due to the reduction in both size of the Armed Forces and overall budgetary allocation(s), WCBA restructured operations to stress a much leaner and highly adaptive workforce which allows us the ability to integrate personnel across all production line operations, as needed, to accommodate the volatility of our market end-user.

Through our continued focus in investment of employee cross-training, manufacturing has achieved the flexibility to utilize our workforce in a highly efficient and value added manner. In a parallel effort, we continued to act proactively with the continuation of our goal to replace older floor equipment by purchasing the latest in technological-based equipment, specifically modified with 'Assistive Technology' features that aid our blind/sight-impaired employees in expanding their available job opportunities. In doing so, we fostered personal growth and achievement of each of the individual's skill set and level of accomplishment.

The department's portfolio continued to find support with our participation in the production of the following government contracts that include:

- U.S. Army Generation III (ECWCS) Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System, Layer #2
- Joint Services Light Integrated Suit Technology (JS List Bag) carry bag for chemical, biological and nuclear safety clothing
- Flyer's Kit Bag (FKB) used by aviators to carry maps, charts, helmet and other critical gear onto the aircraft
- U.S. Navy Neckerchief, part of the enlisted man's dress uniform

Our DoD contracts are administered through association with the National Industries of the Blind (NIB), and are subject to the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act (JWOD) of 1971, a federal law which mandates a compliance ratio requirement of one sighted to every three blind/sight impaired employees. Our workforce consists of 37 employees, of which 21 were blind/sight impaired equipment operators and technicians with an additional 7 being sighted. The remaining 9 were dedicated to supervisory, quality assurance and maintenance positions.

In addition to our Department of Defense work, WCBA's commercial product offerings included Smithcot® portable stretchers and grave marker flags.

WCBA continues to seek blind/sight-impaired individuals who are looking to enhance their quality of life through compensated employment and improve their marketable skill sets by becoming a part of our team's future.

Fundraising Events

Mark your calendar for next year's Annual "Visions of Springtime" event on Friday, March 2, 2018 at the Greensburg Country Club. A beautiful display of Pasta Bar choices, hand-passed specialty Hors d'oeuvres, Dessert table, and Cash Bar are being planned. We had many requests to invite the "HitPlay 304" Band to return to share their fun entertainment.

We had a full roster for our 15th Annual Golf Outing in June 2017. Mark your calendars now for next year's 16th Annual Golf Outing scheduled for Friday, June 8, 2018 with additional information to follow.

Please mark these dates on your calendars for a great time and truly wonderful cause!

*From the desk of Deb Sabatine,
Fundraising Coordinator*



The Embroidery Retail Store is open to the Public. Check us out!

Operation Hours: Monday-Friday
8:00AM-4:30 PM

Try us!! We offer the finest products at the LOWEST prices!!

GUARANTEED

For Pricing & Questions, Please Contact Us At: 724.837.1250

Toll Free 800.838.6335eb:
www.wcbainpa.org

"It's a terrible thing to see and have no vision." Helen Keller



A-Team Pennsylvania was formed to joined individuals with disabilities and their family members to create awareness in the community and advise those who care for our citizens with special needs to ensure service choices are protected and sustained. Many of our intellectually and developmentally challenged individuals, family members, staff members, and providers from numerous pre-vocational organizations throughout the state traveled to Harrisburg in support of this cause. On October 18, 2016, we met with several Senators and House of Representatives during the "Embrace the Abilities Day" on the Hill in Harrisburg. Many of our intellectually and developmentally challenged individuals, family members, staff members, and providers from numerous pre-vocational organizations throughout the state traveled to Harrisburg in support of this cause. We are so very proud to announce that "Yes, our voices were heard loud and clear". Continued efforts to get the message of choice for all individuals who receive services will be ongoing with the Wolf administration and also to the Federal government level.

PLEASE DONATE

If at anytime you would like to make a donation or receive more information about our organization, please fill out the form below and mail to:

Westmoreland County Blind Association

911 South Main Street
Greensburg, PA 15601

OR

Go to www.wcbainpa.org and follow the link on "Ways to Give"

Name _____

Address _____

City/ST/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Westmoreland County Blind Association is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.

AROUND THE HUMAN RESOURCE CORNER

Our organization is consistently growing. We would like to welcome our new employees:

Executive Assistant:

Amy Matenkosky

Manufacturing: Catherine Demko

Program Specialist: Ed Stas

Direct Care: Annie Hapchuk

Lisa Loughner

Alicia Rugh

Companion Aide: Kelsey Warfel

Van Driver: Todd Passino

Seasonal Truck Laborer:

Seth Mough

Please help to make these employees feel welcome and assist with any questions or directions that they may need.

You may want to refer friends or family members as we sometimes have job positions available on our team!

2017 MEMORIALS

WCBA wants to acknowledge all who gave in memory of a loved one.

IN MEMORY OF JOHN PETROY:

- Marty Klook
- Angela & Jeff Kucenic
- Timothy Fedele
- Theresa Wertz
- Tim & Marlene Hunter
- Robert & Joyce Garritano
- Ann & Paul Moran
- Chris & Jennifer Corbin
- Robb, Leonard, Mulvihill, Attys at Law

IN MEMORY OF JANICE L.

MILLER:

- Darlene & Kevin Anselmo
- John & Sandra Stutz
- Addison & Joan Errett

IN MEMORY OF KATHLEEN

FOCHTMAN:

- Robert Feidner

IN MEMORY OF HELEN MIKAN:

- John Basile & Phyllis Aluseo
- Christopher Charley
- Tom & Andrea Eicher
- Irene Morelli
- Kathryn A. Bell
- Kristie White

IN MEMORY OF JAMES R. BURZIO:

- Coal & Environmental Services, Inc.
- Rosemary C. Gates
- Jacqueline R. Millar
- Philomena Caldwell
- Alice M. Molenari
- L.J Aviation, Inc.

IN MEMORY OF KAREN Y. REGA:

- Mark & Lynne Mouw
- Kristin Menard
- Steven McIntyre & Mark Callahan
- Jeffrey Yanagi
- Paul Mahoney
- Chapel of the Cross (Tanya Legro)
- Vincent & Stephanie DiLeo
- Larry G. Smitley
- Don & Karen Mahokey
- Judith A. Lesniak
- Louise Vimislicky
- Western PA Housing Directors Authority

These gifts were recorded between Jan 1, 2017 to present date.

We sincerely apologize for any omissions.



Westmoreland County Blind Association

Summer Fun Wishes from our Board of Directors

Janie Mahla-Chairperson

Anthony Bompiani

Jack Cherubini

Kris Douglas

Frank Farrell

Emily Gindlesperger

Mary Ann Grec

April Kopas

Nelson Mayer

Les J. Mlakar

Adele Shuster

Mark Tintori

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