



Ability Beyond Receives National Recognition

Kate Travis, Assistant Services Director; Kevin Cooper, Career Development Program Manager; Glenna Brown, Career Development Program Manager

Ability Beyond received the prestigious 2015 Dartmouth Achievement Award for our Department of Mental Health employment services

We are proud to announce that Ability Beyond has won the prestigious 2015 Dartmouth Achievement Award for our employment services offered in partnership with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). The Award recognizes mental health agencies implementing evidence-based supported employment and their vocational rehabilitation partners in the Program. Ability Beyond is one of two recipients of the award this year, selected from nominations from the eighteen states/regions and three countries that participate in the Dartmouth IPS Learning Collaborative.

Ability Beyond was nominated for this award by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Supported Employment Program Manager, Linda Guillorn.

“Ability Beyond is well known and respected as an agency that does not give up on the people they serve,” said Linda Guillorn in her nomination for Ability Beyond. “They identify individual strengths, and work to find a strong match for both the individual and the employer; with their goal always being long term success. Ability Beyond ensures that staff is well trained and professional. Ability Beyond builds relationships throughout the community by exploring and learning about opportunities that might be a good fit for the people they serve.”

The mission of the Johnson & Johnson-Dartmouth Community Mental Health Program is to increase access to evidence-based supported employment for adults with serious mental illnesses who are interested in improving their work lives. It has been instituted in 17 states, the District of Columbia, and Alameda County, California.

Passage to India Gala a Huge Success



Above : David Kasiaz, Gala Co-Chair & Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees; Bonnie Kasiaz, Gala Co-Chair; Ginny Young, Robert S.Young Humanitarian Award Recipient & Decorations Committee Chair; Tom Fanning, CEO/President of Ability Beyond

Above: Jack Walsh, son of founding family and Paula Walsh, Board of Trustees

Above: Gary Lehman and Rona Rothhouse, Gala Committee member

Below: Elaine Cox, Auction Committee Chair; Lori Berisford, Gala Committee member and Holly Neumann

Below: Shannon Young and Danielle Young, Gala Committee Member

On Saturday, April 25th we held our 2015 Passage to India Gala at the Amber Room Colonnade in Danbury, Connecticut with **co-chairs David and Bonnie Kasiaz**. The evening **raised over \$725,000** in support of the services provided by Ability Beyond including employment training; cognitive and life skills instruction; clinical and therapeutic support; housing and other programs.

Over 500 guests were awed by this year's Passage to India themed fundraiser. As guests entered the auction tent they were transported to an Indian Bazaar complete with vibrantly draped hand decorated fabrics and real life imagery from India while live sitar and tabla performers played in the background. As the evening progressed, guests filed in to the ballroom under an ornate passageway. What awaited them was bright flowers carefully hung from the ceiling, pictures from India, and carefully constructed Rangoli flowers as centerpieces on the tables.

This year we honored **Ginny Young with the Robert S. Young Humanitarian Award** for her dedication to Ability Beyond. Ginny has offered countless hours contributing generously to make the annual Ability Beyond gala one of the most successful, and talked about, fundraising events in the area.

Diamond Sponsors for the event featured renowned companies including: American Express, Colonial Automobile Group, Maplewood Senior Living, and PepsiCo.

Thank you to everyone who attended the gala and for your continuous support of Ability Beyond and the individuals we serve!



Above: Roy Young, Director Emeritus; Ginny Young; Kevin Cox, Director Emeritus; Elaine Cox, Auction Committee Chair

Below: Purvi Shah and Saurin Shah, Board of Trustees

Below: Rajal Young; Jordan Young; Ginny Young; Roy Young; Danielle Young and Shannon Young

Below: Noel Hord and Tamar Christopher-Hord, Special Events Chair and member of the Board of Trustees



Ginny Young Gives Inspirational Speech

Here at Ability Beyond we feel truly blessed by the generosity and compassion we see in people each and every day. For those who could not join us for our annual gala we wanted to share some highlights from Ginny Young's acceptance speech at the gala.

When the pure light of love passes through the prism of the human heart it emerges as intelligence, patience, caring, compassion, enthusiasm and expectancy. This is what is going on at Ability Beyond. It is what the staff does for the people we support. And the end effect of that action eliminates the stultifying limitations of prognosis, the false labels, and lets their boundless potential, their true ABLE nature, be seen.

Your love is expressed by your presence here tonight, your generosity, your paddle raising.

News of Note

New Addition to the Ability Beyond Team



Ability Beyond has recently appointed Kim Woulard-Smith as Talent Acquisition Manager. She has come to Ability Beyond to support in the recruitment of potential employees, and the management of maintaining qualified and reliable employees.

Kim Woulard-Smith holds a bachelor's degree in

Communications, Public Relations from Marquette University and brings 15 years of recruiting, career development and client relationship experience to Ability Beyond. Kim has held positions ranging from Chief of Staff to Senior Relationship Manager and has previously worked for New York University's Leonard N. Stern School of Business, Starbucks Coffee Company and most recently The Zoom Foundation.

In her new role, Kim will be responsible for the overall direction and management of the recruitment and staffing strategy for Ability Beyond. She will be putting talent acquisition strategies in place to support our mission and goals.

Ability Beyond Addressing Alzheimer's Disease

Ability Beyond's Services Director, Nicole Cadovius, has recently become a Master Trainer for the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices (NTG). The NTG has developed a new multipurpose universal education and training curriculum on dementia and intellectual disability ideally suited for use with enhancing workforce skills. Three other Ability Beyond staff members have also become Regional Trainers for the NTG. Marie Caprio, Services Manager, Nicole Kammerer, Acting Services Manager and Haley Hayden, Assistant Program Manager, will be offering trainings twice a year to train other staff at Ability Beyond as well as staff at other agencies in the area.

Ability Beyond continues to be the leader in Connecticut and New York on aging for individuals with disabilities. We want to share our knowledge with other agencies to make sure individuals with disabilities are receiving the best care possible. This training is targeted for direct services personnel who work with or provide primary supports for adults with intellectual disability affected by dementia, as well as family caregivers.

Summer FUNdraising Events

Mercedes-Benz Tennis Event

Saturday June 27, 2015

Four Seasons Racquet Club

Wilton, CT

For more information or to register visit www.abilitybeyond.org/tennisevent

Mercedes-Benz Dealer Championships Golf Tournament

Monday August 17, 2015

Ridgewood Country Club

Danbury, CT

For more information or to register visit www.abilitybeyond.org/golf



Want to know how to maximize your gift to Ability Beyond?



You shop. Amazon gives.

If you are someone who likes to shop online using Amazon, you can simply shop at smile.amazon.com (instead of just amazon.com) with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to Ability Beyond. You can visit Ability Beyond's page at <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/06-0776594> and select us to be your charitable organization.

P.S. Did you know that many corporations offer employee giving programs where they match donations to Ability Beyond? Please consider checking with your employer to see if your gift can be maximized.

Donor Spotlight: The Beylouni Family

Ability Beyond has been fortunate enough to have the Beylouni family deeply involved with the organization for the past several years. After being introduced to Ability Beyond through a tour of a few of our group homes, the whole family jumped right in to support the organization by chairing our Reach for the Stars Gala in 2011. David and Darren Beylouni, with their wives Melissa and Kristin, excitedly co-chaired the event after getting to know some of the individuals supported by Ability Beyond and became inspired by the mission.



David and Melissa Beylouni

“Share the Love” event this past November. Colonial Subaru in Danbury ranked 10th out of 623 Subaru dealerships across the country for raising money for their designated local charity. The “Share the Love” event has been going on annually for the last seven years raising close to \$50 million dollars for selected nonprofit organizations throughout the nation.

Through the event, Colonial Subaru raised over \$45,000 for Ability Beyond during the five week long sales event where customers could choose one of five organizations to direct a \$250 donation from Subaru to when purchasing a car. We are extremely grateful that Colonial Subaru chose Ability Beyond as their local charity organization for Subaru’s “Share the Love” event. The Beylouni family continues to be generous and avid supporters of our organization and we are fortunate to have them as a community partner.

Darren has been a member of the Board of Trustees of Ability Beyond for the past five years. He plays an active role in

fundraising for the organization by bringing in key donors and has also facilitated lasting partnerships for Ability Beyond.



Danielle Cone, Kristin Beylouni and Dayna Beylouni

Not only has the Beylouni family been generous to Ability Beyond with financial contributions but they have also introduced us to other community members, potential employers for the individuals we support and other companies to support the mission of the organization. We have been fortunate to receive support from Auto Trader, Sam Edelman, Ingersoll Auto, Danbury Automotive and Citrin Cooperman because of the Beylounis’.



Bonnie and Ray Beylouni



Darren and Kristin Beylouni

Even after the role of co-chair came to an end, their support of gala continued. Kristin has been a member of the gala committee for the past several years with her sister-in-law Danielle Cone. Both Kristin and Danielle have spent many hours acquiring valuable auction items and decorating to make our annual gala the most talked about event in the area.

Their support doesn’t stop there. As President and Vice President of Colonial Automobile Group, David & Darren selected Ability Beyond as the local charity to support as part of Subaru’s

Support through recent grant awards:

\$40,000	The Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation — for Aging
\$25,000	Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation — for Transitional Programs
\$20,000	George Link Jr. Charitable Trust — for General Operating
\$10,000	GE Capital Corporation — for Danbury home renovations
\$5,000	Anonymous — for General Operating
\$5,000	The TJX Foundation — for Independent Living Services
\$5,000	Albert and Helen C. Meserve Memorial Fund — for Roses for Autism
\$1,000	Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation — for Technology
\$1,000	The Town of New Fairfield — for services in New Fairfield

Spring into Action: Corporate Cares Day



Employees from Mercer's Norwalk office rolled-up their sleeves this Spring to complete a project they began last year at Ability Beyond's home in Georgetown, CT - converting the home's garage into a multi-purpose room for the residents. This labor involved sheet rocking, painting and installing lights. The project was made possible by a grant from Unilever, locally based in Trumbull, CT, and matching funds from Mercer.

"We are thrilled to receive the volunteer and financial support from Mercer, and additional funds from Unilever, to complete a much needed environmental adaptation to our CRS residential program in Wilton CT" says Tanya Medve, Assistant Services Director. "The overarching philosophy of the program is a holistic model specially designed for individuals on the Autism spectrum and supports the active lifestyle of young adults. The house was purchased by one of the family members

specifically for their son to reside in with two other individuals. It's a charming historical home dating back to the 1700s that has been beautifully restored, however, the small living area is not optimally designed to meet sensory and recreational needs. The goal is to renovate the garage and convert it to useable space that can be thoughtfully designed and utilized to increase year round therapeutic and recreational opportunities for the individuals residing at the home."

Mercer was a 2013 nominee for a Corporate Volunteer of the Year award and has been a financial supporter of Ability Beyond since 2009. Over the past five years, Mercer has provided many hours of in-kind professional consultation to our human resources division, and has a front-row seat to the impact Ability Beyond makes in the lives of the individuals we serve.

Unilever has often supported Ability Beyond through our subsidiary, Roses for Autism. Employees from Unilever have provided volunteer support at the rose farm on multiple occasions, and was a corporate sponsor last year at the RFA fundraising event at Chamyard Vineyard in Clinton, CT.



"They are incredible workers—willing and eager to learn, and focused on productivity and meeting team goals," said Padilla. "It didn't take me long to realize that I wasn't hiring people with disabilities, I was hiring the best people for the job."

- Julio Padilla, Manager, PepsiCo Las Vegas Certified Center

Disability Solutions, the corporate consulting practice of Ability Beyond, continues their work with national and global businesses on improving strategy and implementation for sustainable, company led hiring and retention initiatives for jobseekers with disabilities.

The work with Pepsi received global recognition in May with the presentation of the prestigious Harvey C. Russell Inclusion award to the Pepsi ACT (Achieving Change Together) team. Working together with Disability Solutions, the Pepsi ACT Team was commended for their efforts to develop an innovative, sustainable hiring model to support people with disabilities. The award, one of PepsiCo's highest honors, is named for Harvey C. Russell, former Vice President of Community Affairs at PepsiCo, and the first African American to be appointed Vice President in

corporate America. This honor is bestowed upon teams or individuals who exemplify PepsiCo's values, going beyond their daily responsibilities to reinforce PepsiCo's commitment to creating a diverse and engaged environment.

The Pepsi ACT initiative continues to expand across all national markets. This winter the team launched work in Winston-Salem, North Carolina with great results to date. Team members Chris Simler and Kevin McCloskey together with HR leaders from PepsiCo in NC, recently presented to corporations at the North Carolina Business Leadership Network about the positive brand and talent impact a strategic focus on people with disabilities can have on business.

Disability Solutions is launching work in three additional Pepsi sites in June

including Phoenix, Nashville and Orlando and project to begin work with new client, American Express, this summer. In addition, Senior Consultant Chris Simler is finishing up the first phase of a national initiative with Office Depot Maxx. Working collaboratively with other disability inclusion consultants, Disability Solutions joined the Office Depot Maxx project and are happy to add them to their growing list of national clients.

Managing Director Kris Foss and team have been invited to several national conferences throughout the next six months to speak to corporations and disability networks including the Autism Speaks Leadership Summit in Washington D.C., the APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First) national conference in Philadelphia, and the NILG (National Industry Liaison Group) in New York City.

Technology Grants Bring New Opportunity

We are excited to announce that Ability Beyond recently won two grants totaling more than \$1.5 million from New York and Connecticut, to advance our Vision for the Future in technology and employment through our framework to the future and making technology do the work initiatives.

A framework to the future. Ability Beyond will help nonprofit agencies in New York close their sheltered workshops and better incorporate technology into their service plans, thanks to a major grant from the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Through a combination of online resources, in-person consultation and a capstone event in the fall, we will share our own best practices in technology and employment services while cultivating a sense of community around innovation.

The award is part of the state's campaign to transform the way long-term care is delivered, called the Balancing Incentive Program (BIP) Innovation Fund. BIP was designed to engage New York's network of providers, advocates, and community leaders in developing systemic improvements that address barriers encountered when providing community-based long term supports and services across all populations of Medicaid beneficiaries in the State.

Making technology do the work. Ability Beyond will match the people we serve with technology that can be integrated seamlessly into their everyday lives (at home, and beyond) to increase their independence and privacy while rerouting hands-on care to other people with more acute needs.

This work will increase safety and independence while advancing community-based employment for people with disabilities. This work will also support our ability to be an efficient and effective organization.

Both grants are helping to transform how individuals with disabilities are supported at our agency and throughout both states. We are leading change and helping individuals to be as independent as possible in every aspect of their life.

Overseeing both grant projects are committees led by Ability Beyond senior staff and comprised of employees from across the organization. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to pursue this exciting initiative!

Ability Beyond Participates in New York Transformation Project



As part of the BIP grant, Carrie O'Connell, Services Director at Ability Beyond, shared her positive experience on closing a sheltered workshop at Transformation Project, Developing Innovative and Inclusive Business Opportunities earlier this year. Carrie walked providers through the process that Ability Beyond took 10 years ago in preparing to close its sheltered workshop that had been supporting nearly 200 people before successfully transitioning all of the individuals into community based employment.

Carrie O'Connell has been a member of the professional staff at Ability Beyond for the past 16 years. She is on the board of the Connecticut Chapter of the Association of Persons through Supported Employment (APSE), and a member of the state of Connecticut's Employment Steering Committee. Carrie is also certified by the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators with a National Certificate in Supported Employment or Supported Employment and Mental Illness, through completion of a Virginia Commonwealth University course.

Ability Beyond Presents at the Interagency Council Conference

On Thursday June 4th Ability Beyond's Technology Innovations for People Squad (TIP Squad) presented at the Interagency Council (IAC) Conference in New York City! Patrick Queenan, Director of Clinical and Behavioral Sciences, and Carol Drummond, Program Manager at Ability Beyond will be bringing the TIPS Squad to present on how technology is revolutionizing what we are doing at Ability Beyond. They will also cover the cost savings associated with implementing technology and the potential to transform long term supports and services.





Note(ability)

Dear Friends,

Spring is here and it sure does feel good! After the long cold winter I think we can all appreciate the warmer weather and longer days. As you will see in this newsletter, the annual Ability Beyond gala, our signature spring event, recently took place and was once again wonderfully successful. The gala brings many old friends back together

and also provides us with the opportunity to make many new friends. I am always in awe of the outpouring of support we receive and I want to express my sincere appreciation to each of you who support us at the gala and throughout the year.

Through the years Ability Beyond has established a positive reputation locally, regionally and nationally for the work we do in providing opportunities for people with disabilities to reach their full potential. We have so much to be grateful for; we are growing and helping more people each day, our staff are continuing to win

awards and be invited to speak at conferences around the world and we are implementing incredibly innovative programs that have the potential to change the future for people with disabilities.

The simple fact is that much of our success is due to your generosity and I look forward to continuing to share news of our progress with you.

Tom

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