

**THE MICHAEL DUNN CENTER
STAFF BULLETIN**



NOW YOU KNOW

Volume 3 Issue 1

Winter-Spring 2007

edited by Roger Richmond

A WORD FROM MIKE...

Mike McElhinney

A very important part of my job as the President is to speak to people in the community about Michael Dunn Center. I consider it an honor and a privilege to explain to folks how we accomplish our mission of serving children and adults with disabilities – through the hard work and dedication of tremendous staff twenty four hours per day, seven days per week, 365 days per year.

I recently had another opportunity to do this when I spoke to the Rockwood Rotary Club. In the past year I have given presentations about Michael Dunn Center to at least a dozen church groups, clubs or organizations within Roane County. By the way, if you know of a group that might be interested in learning more about Michael Dunn Center please let me know.



This presentation to the Rockwood Rotary Club, however, was different than any I have ever given because I had the assistance of two outstanding individuals. One was Carl, a service recipient that works at Michael Dunn

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Do you remember...

In order to avoid an increase in your insurance cost, proof of a complete physical exam and completion of the Health Risk Assessment must be submitted to Human Resources by April 1.

**Visit our revised website:
www.michaeldunncenter.com**

There's been a lot of talk, and quite frankly, a bit of confusion, over the past year about this "chain of command" thing. What exactly does it mean? Chain of command essentially comes from a military model and refers to a policy that dictates that problems are taken up and down the ladder of leadership, or the "chain" of com-

RANDOM THOUGHTS Roger Richmond



mand, in the proper order of succession. In theory, "chain of command" is a very simple concept, but in practice, the waters get a bit muddied and people begin to misunderstand exactly to whom they should take questions and problems.

"Chain of command" refers to the order up and down the organizational structure- the formal line of authority, communication, and responsibility, within the organization. The chain of command is usually

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Random Thoughts, continued

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depicted on an organizational chart, indicating the superior and subordinate relationships within the organizational structure. In general, the organizational chart allows us to visualize the lines of authority and communication within the organization and ensures clear lines of assignment of duties and responsibilities. Each subordinate reports to one and only one superior as a first line of communication.

Does such a policy mean that you cannot speak directly to the President or a vice president or director from another department? Of course not. What the policy does require is that, whenever a problem or question arises, that issue is taken by the employee to their immediate supervisor to be dealt with. An employee does not discuss a problem or voice a complaint with a director without first speaking to their immediate supervisor.

If the supervisor does not have an answer, the problem may then be taken to *their* supervisor, and so on. For example, a house man-

ager may report to a residential supervisor, who may then speak with the department director, who reports to a vice president, who then takes the problem to the president. Alternatively, if a problem or complaint is not resolved satisfactorily, the employee may wish to go to the supervisor's superior.

outside their chain of command. An employee does not discuss a problem or voice a complaint with a superior from another department, unless the problem has been properly taken up the chain. Conversely, a superior does not take a problem to a subordinate outside their line of command without first speaking to the superior of that department.

We want to continue to encourage effective communication

We want to continue to encourage effective communication with families about the care and progress of their loved ones. However, an employee is never to voice a complaint about salary, benefits, personnel or working conditions directly to a family member. These types of issues should be passed up the chain of command to the employee's supervisor. Problems that need to be discussed with families should be dealt with by Management Staff. If the employee needs to be involved in the discussion with the family, the Supervisor will request their presence.

The reason for such a policy, which is widely practiced in the business world, is that most problems can be resolved by an immediate supervisor, who is then kept "in the loop" of information. If necessary, once the problem is resolved, the supervisor will report the situation "up the ladder" so everyone is kept informed. Chain of command also dictates that problematic issues are managed properly *down* the chain. A vice president may take a problem to a director who may then speak with a Supervisor, and so forth.

Again, such a policy keeps everyone informed and allows problems to be dealt with in the proper way, at the proper level, by the proper person. When everyone follows their chain of command, operations run much more smoothly and efficiently, everyone is kept informed, and problems are resolved in an appropriate manner.

At the same time, an employee does not discuss a problem with someone



The Michael Dunn Center and The Henry Center recently received a donation from the Father Callahan Council of the Knights of Columbus of the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. The donation was presented to Mike McElhinney at The Henry Center by Jim DeGroff, Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus and Bob Capell, Financial Secretary of the Knights of Columbus. The donation is awarded by the Mental Retardation Fund of Tennessee, which is part of the Knights of Columbus. The charter of this foundation is to assist programs that serve people with disabilities. The main fundraising activity of this group is the Tootsie Roll Drive which is held at least annually throughout the county.

As always, staff participation from The Henry Center and the Michael Dunn Center helped to make the fundraiser a success. Mike McElhinney, Sharon Young, and Chasity Johnson volunteered their time to assist in the latest Tootsie Roll Drive at WalMart in Rockwood.

l-r: Jim DeGroff, Vicki Hix, Mike McElhinney, Bob Capell

WHAT'S NEW IN HUMAN RESOURCES

THE NEW ORIENTATION

Like everything else at the Michael Dunn Center, orientation has changed. Let me tell you what we do now. The first thing is fill out the new hire packets with all our policies. I give everyone an opportunity to make a contribution to the United Way from their paycheck. We try to have 100% participation from our company. Second, we go through the employee handbook and discuss each policy in detail. Third, we spend about 15 minutes talking about how Michael Dunn Center is a drug free workplace. We talk about the cost to companies having employees that use drugs and alcohol in the workplace in absenteeism, reduced productivity, accidents, etc. We talk about how to recognize a troubled employee and what to do. Fourth, we discuss universal precautions and how to reduce the risk of getting an infectious disease. We wrap it up by talking about the

Direct Support Professionals Association of Tennessee (DSPAT) and handing out information about the organization. New employees are given the opportunity for Michael Dunn Center to pay their first year of membership, after completing three months of employment. Then, as always, I hand them a newsletter ... *NOW YOU KNOW...*

RADIO ADVERTISING

Michael Dunn Center is now advertising on the radio! We have an ad running on 103.5 WIMZ Monday thru Thursday from 7pm – 6am. You can visit wimz.com and type the catch phrase "love my job". It will link you to our website that now has an online application. We picked that station for their reach and popularity (not because we love the music they play). We picked those hours because we need people who work 2nd and 3rd shifts. We are trying to recruit people who are already working and would like to have a job that is

Tara Hanouskova

more satisfying. Other forms of advertising target people who are unemployed. The problem with that is that many who are currently unemployed have been fired or can't find a job because they are just not good candidates. We need quality people!

Another reason we decided to go with radio advertising is that we wanted to be more aggressive in our recruiting. Our turnover is high and the unemployment rate in this area is 3.5%, which is extremely low. Every business in this area is struggling to find quality applicants. We have been running the ad since the beginning of January. We have had some response including several phone calls and a few applicants. We should see more results the longer that we run the ad. We will be assessing the effectiveness of radio advertising to determine whether or not to continue using this form of advertising.

MOBILE MAMMOGRAM

We are in the process of trying to schedule the Knoxville Comprehensive Breast Center to come to MDC. They will be able to provide mammograms on site to any female employee on our health insurance who would like to be screened. The screening will be covered by United Healthcare 100%. In order to schedule a date and time, we must have 18 women commit to a screening.

Those ineligible to be screened on site through KCBC are:

- Women who are not on our health insurance plan.
- Women with breast implants.
- Women who are currently being treated for a breast related health issue.

Women who are presently experiencing breast tissue issues (such as discharge or noticeable lump).

Employees who are interested in the baseline screening must be at least 40 years old OR Must have a letter from your family physician stating that you are at risk due to family history, etc. This letter must be furnished to KCBC the day of your screening.

Word From Mike, cont'd

(Continued from page 1)

Center and lives at Hope Haven II. The other was Stacey Flask, the House Manager of Hope Haven II.

As usual, I told the group about the 16 different programs we offer at Michael Dunn Center and shared with them some of the figures included in the last newsletter regarding how much we spend on food, gas, insurance, etc. But then I sat down, next to Carl and Stacey, in front of the audience. I began to ask Carl questions such as where he worked and what types of jobs he did, where he lived and what life was like at Hope Haven II, how he spent

his free time, etc. Whenever one of Carl's answers needed an explanation, Stacey was there to provide it.

To be honest, when we began I was not sure what Carl might say or how this was going to be received. However, within about two minutes I realized, as Carl was talking and I had a chance to glance at the audience, that what I had spent the first 15 minutes saying had little impact compared to the comments that Carl and Stacey were making. Everyone in the room was listening intently to everything each of them had to say. I was little more than the talking brochure. They were the truth and reality of what goes on within all of Michael Dunn Cen-

ter's programs each and every minute of every day, and the audience immediately knew it.

The next morning some of the staff at the Center asked how Carl had done. Before I could answer one said, "Mike, did he steal the show?" I paused for a moment and then realized that yes, both Carl and Stacey had stolen the show. I could not have even come close to giving the same message, with the same impact, that the two of them did. So on behalf of all the service recipients and staff I want to say thank you to Carl and Stacey for a job very, very well done representing Michael Dunn Center.

TIMAS IS A GOOD THING

Many of you have been hearing about TIMAS for some time now. I know when I started here last year in April, I kept hearing, "TIMAS is going to be able to do that!" It has been a work in progress and it is quickly beginning to live up to its reputation.

Just like all of you, my first experience with TIMAS was learning to sign in and out. I am sure we all have that mastered by now. Soon you will see what TIMAS is really capable of and I can promise you that it is going to be "BIG".

Recently, I learned how to enter training classes into TIMAS. The idea of this task was a little overwhelming at first. We have close to 300 employees and this meant I was going to be entering in EVERY class EVERY employee has taken for the past year. We thought this would take us at least six months. However, after sitting down with TIMAS and becoming even more familiar with it, I was in awe of how easy this fabulous software was going to make

this challenge. I was able to enter in EVERY class for EVERY employee in a little under three weeks. This was in addition to maintaining my own job responsibilities while doing so. Again, I was in awe!

So just to give you a little summary of the work in progress at present, below is a list to show how TIMAS is shaking up Human Resources. This way you can see what direction we are heading and our timeline for completion.

1. When you take a class, you are asked to sign an attendance sheet. These attendance sheets were reformatted to include your test score. After the class, I will be entering the information from the attendance sheet such as the name of the class, date it was taught, who was in the class and what score you got on the test. This information is entered into a basic spreadsheet on TIMAS. When I finish entering in all the data, I hit one little button and it

Michaele Butler

exports this information to your individual record.

2. Instead of sending out a hand-recorded log of who is due for class, we can now generate these reports from TIMAS. This will serve two major purposes: 1. The information is guaranteed more accurate. 2. This keeps you as well as MDC in compliance with training timelines.

We will be generating these reports this month! This means our goal of generating them within six months meant we were underestimating the power of TIMAS.

I hope that everyone is as excited about this program as I am. We are going to see big changes for the better. As far as Human Resources goes, it has already made a tremendous change in the tracking, training and maintaining areas of our department.

So, from now on, when you hear someone say, "TIMAS is going to be able to do that!" they aren't kidding!

FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA

As Coordinator of East Tennessee North Child Care Resource and Referral, my job has taken me to some really interesting places in the last year. Many of you may not know what the Resource and Referral does. In short, our organization is a grant project funded through collaboration between Tennessee's Department of Human Services, Signal Centers of Chattanooga and the Michael Dunn Center. Our mission is to provide support, training and resources to DHS licensed child care providers in 14 counties in East Tennessee. As you may guess, I spend a lot of time in my car and have pretty much driven every inch of Tennessee, North to South and East to West. I never expected that my job would ever take me to Maryland or California. Was I in for a surprise?

Because my field of interest and expertise is in the area of infant and toddler growth and development, it only made sense that I become nationally certified in infant and toddler care giving. The only existing way to obtain this certification is to enroll in and complete the West ED Program for Infant and Toddler Care (PITC).

Because of the wonderful administrative support I receive from the Michael Dunn Center, DHS and my statewide network, I was able to undertake this project in July of last year.

First stop, Baltimore, Maryland. In Baltimore, I received training on two very important areas of infant and toddler care; Social Emotional Growth and Socialization and Group Care of Young Children. Aside from the wonderful professional development I received I was also able to visit a place that I had never been before. Located on Chesapeake Bay, just north of Washington D.C., Baltimore is a beautiful city filled with culture and history. During my week long stay in Baltimore, I spent 10 hour days in training classes and what was left of the evenings taking in the sights and sounds of the bay. What an experience!

Next stop, California!!! After beginning the first part of my PITC training in Baltimore, I was required to travel to Berkley, California to complete this wonderful training experi-

Karen Wright

ence. While in Berkley, I would receive training on Early Brain Development and Cultural Diversity in the classroom. What I didn't realize is that the experience of spending 8 days in California would provide an education you don't get from textbooks. Located just minutes from San Francisco and Oakland, Berkley is a college town brimming with cultural diversity. Walking down the streets of Berkley was so different from anything I have ever experienced here in East Tennessee. There are restaurants that serve any kind of food imaginable. There are people dressed in authentic clothing native to their home country. The casual passer by might be speaking German, Dutch or Vietnamese. The sights, sounds, and smells of Berkley and San Francisco will be forever etched in my memory and make the formal education I received there even more memorable as well.

Soon my travels will take me to Washington, D.C. for the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referrals annual symposium. Look for the details of that trip in the future.

DRIVING CONCERNS

One day recently, I received a telephone call from a woman, who was quite upset, who called to say one of our vans nearly ran head-on into her. Reportedly, around 8:35 that morning, as she sat in the center turn lane waiting to turn into Weigel's, one of our vans started to enter the turn lane head-on towards her. After beginning the turn, the van driver realized the woman was there and swerved out of the turn lane just in time to barely miss her, coming close enough to give the woman a good scare. This woman was very shaken up and felt like our

van could have killed her. Safe driving practices would require that our vehicles not be entering the center turn lane as far away from our drive as Weigels.

On another recent occasion, Mike received a call from an irate trucker who informed him that one of our vehicles pulled out in front of him on the interstate, causing him to have to slam on his brakes to avoid a collision. Our driver had run out of road on the entry ramp and, rather than stop and wait until the roadway was clear, pulled onto the Interstate at

Roger Richmond

too slow of a speed, immediately in front of him, causing him to have to "slam his brakes".

On another recent occasion, I observed an MDC employee animatedly talking on her cell phone, while transporting a service recipient in an agency van, coming off the I-40 ramp at Gallaher Rd. The staff person finished her call just as she pulled into the drive at MDC.

Drivers need to be mindful of safety concerns at all times when operating

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TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

It is now March, which not only means that better weather is on the horizon, but there could be more money in your pocket. If you had the chance to put an extra \$50.00 in the bank every month, would you? Well, if you have insurance through Michael Dunn Center, you can!

The March 31st deadline for proof of physicals and the completion of the health risk assessment is quickly approaching. If you are on the MDC insurance policy and are currently receiving insurance benefits, you are being given the opportunity to keep your premiums the same all year long if you turn these items in. If you do not complete both required items, your insurance premiums will increase an additional \$25.00 per pay period. If you have a spouse on the insurance, the increase in premiums will double to \$50.00.

You have from now until March 31st to turn in both items for each covered individual on MDC insurance. Human Resources has been tracking

all items turned in. Most individuals have turned in either a physical or a health risk assessment, but not many have turned in both.

So, if \$50.00 extra dollars in your pocket a month sounds good to you, you need to get these items in by the deadline. Effective April 1st, your premiums will increase if these items are not turned in to Human Resources. You will continue paying the higher rate until you submit the required items.

Here are some helpful tips to ensure you meet the deadline with the appropriate items.

1. Go to www.healthforums.com. Then click on the tab titled, "Health Tools". This will direct you to the page containing the health assessment. Complete the assessment and print out the report. Remember that this website will not save your information, so once you complete the report, you must print it. Only the first page of the report is

Michaele Butler

required by Human Resources. Do not forget to put your name on the report to ensure that you receive credit for turning it in.

Get a physical! If you have had a physical in the last year, documentation from your physician is needed. Remember that this will be required on an annual basis, so if you had a physical last year in May and you provide documentation to HR, you will receive credit for the physical, however you will need to have another physical in May of this year to continue to receive the lower premium rates.

Many of you have asked what kind of documentation is required for the physical. A simple note written on a prescription pad from your MD stating that you had a complete physical and what date it was completed will be sufficient.

If you have questions, please feel free to come by my office or call me at 865-376-3416 ext. 211. I would be happy to help in any way I can.



Pictured above is the 1975 USA Women's Pan American Games Basketball Team. Player Number 4 (top row, 3rd from right), is our own **Carolyn Bush Roddy**. Player Number 8 (top row, far right) is **Pat Head Summitt**. The USA team won the series with a 7-0 record. Carolyn might show you her gold medal, if you ask! Details can be found at http://www.usabasketball.com/history/wpag_1975.html

DON'T FORGET!!! **MDC Monthly Recruitment Contest**

For every person you refer to MDC that is hired, you are eligible to receive a \$100.00 referral bonus. This bonus will be paid to you after the new employee has successfully completed 30 days of employment!

After that person reaches 6 months of employment, you will receive another \$100.00 in referral bonuses!

The employee who recruits the most new hires each month also wins a \$50.00 gift card to Wal-Mart!

WORK PROGRAMS

On January 16, 2007, Dunn Employment Services was awarded a janitorial contract at Mid-East Community Action Agency, in Lenoir City. Amanda F., Rosa H., and Corey W. are now employees of Mid-East, working at a Head Start Program that serves approximately 100 children, ranging in age from six weeks five years.

Amanda, Corey and Rosa perform janitorial duties which consist of sweeping, mopping vacuuming, dusting, cleaning restrooms and other cleaning duties as assigned. They work for approximately three hours per day, and are supervised by Robin Turpin, who recently transferred from Thermo Fisher. This transition has proven to be a benefit to the service recipients. Thank you, Robin for stepping up and willingly accepting the change.

Dunn Employment Services, Dunn Industries and Dunn Document Destruction are combining into one fa-

cility. The former DDI building is now the **Michael Dunn Center Work Programs Building**.

Thanks to a generous donation, the Michael Dunn Center Work Programs Building will be undergoing major renovations, which consist of new office spaces, restrooms, conference room, and lunchroom. Recently, additions and renovations were made to the landscaping of the building to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the facility.

Work Programs consists of three arms: Dunn Employment Services, Dunn Industries and Dunn Document Destruction.

The purpose of **Dunn Employment Services** is to provide employment every individual who wants to work, and to obtain regular and temporary contract work sites.

The focus of **Dunn Document Destructions** is developing and grow-

Cindy Gregg

ing the document destruction business, an area which has huge growth potential.

Dunn Industries continues to bring in contracted work for individuals at the Michael Dunn Center Work Programs Building and within the community.

A dedicated group of Michael Dunn Center employees work together to see that meaningful work opportunities are provided for individuals who receive support in Michael Dunn Work Programs. This group includes Melanie Harmon, Vice President; Cindy Gregg, Director; Paula Anthony, Assistant Director; Debbie Thomas, Lead Supervisor; Paula Bennett, Document Destruction; Carl Henline, Litter Crew; Kathy Reichard, Litter Crew; Wayne Jones, PCA; Bill Kovalsky, Floater; Dick Lamping, Maintenance; Robin Turpin, Mid East; Hope Ellison, Holiday Inn; Tim Woodfin, Recycling Center; Brian Johnson, Thermo; Lynn Riddle, Driver; Carol Smith, Driver; and Betty Dulling, Steven Wright Laundry

Driving Safety, continued

(Continued from page 5)

vehicles, especially when we are transporting service recipients in agency vehicles. Accidents happen instantly and usually without warning. We drivers tend to be much too complacent in our actions and have far too many distractions that interfere with safe driving habits. Please remember that Michael Dunn Center policy requires that we refrain from talking on the phone while transporting service recipients. Also, drivers need to be aware of driving conditions at all times. For example, many entrance ramps are very short, including those at Kingston and Galaher Road. Sometimes drivers must come to a complete stop before a break in the traffic allows safe entry

onto the Interstate. Center turn lanes should not be used to drive on any more than is essential to make your turn. Entering a turn lane too soon might result in a collision that could have been avoided, had the driver waited until closer to the desired turning place to enter the lane.

Following are some good tips found on a driving safety web site:

Think safety first. Avoiding aggressive and inattentive driving tendencies yourself will put you in a stronger position to deal with other people's bad driving. Leave plenty of space between you and the car in front.

Be aware of your surroundings. Check your mirrors frequently and scan conditions far ahead of you. If a

vehicle is showing signs of aggressive driving, slow down or pull over to avoid it. If the driver is driving so dangerously that you're worried, try to get off the road or highway by turning right or taking the next exit if it's safe to do so.

Assume the worst. Assume that drivers will run through red lights or stop signs and be prepared to react. While driving, imagine that other drivers (especially truck drivers) don't see you when you are making your way into their path.

Don't take risks. When in doubt, don't pass. And keep a safe following distance. That way you can avoid a collision, stay in your lane, and not get rear-ended if the driver in front of you slams on the brakes.

**THE MICHAEL DUNN CENTER
STAFF BULLETIN**



Phone Numbers:

Poison Control.....1-800-222-1222
Abuse Investigator.....1-800-579-0023

Our Mission:

***Empowering individuals with disabilities
to pursue their choice of livelihood
by providing them with opportunities
to increase their contribution
to the community in which they live.***

Back issues of NYK can be found at www.michaeldunncenter.com

TEN TIPS FOR BEING A GOOD LEADER

- 1. Keep Your Word.** Don't make promises you can't keep.
- 2. Be Fair to All.** A good leader shows no favorites. Don't allow friendships to keep you from being fair to all members of your group. Know the strengths and weaknesses of group members.
- 3. Be a Good Communicator.** You don't need a commanding voice to be a good leader, but you must be willing to step out front with an effective "Let's go." A good leader knows how to get and give information so that everyone understands what's going on.
- 4. Be Flexible.** Everything doesn't always go as planned. Be prepared to shift to "plan B" when "plan A" doesn't work.
- 5. Be Organized.** The time you spend planning will be repaid many times over. At meetings, record who agrees to do each task, and keep good notes from the meeting.
- 6. Delegate.** Some leaders assume that the job will not get done unless they do it themselves. Most people like to be challenged with a task. Empower your team members to do things they have never tried.
- 7. Set an Example.** The most important thing you can do is lead by example. Whatever you do, your team members are likely to do the same. A cheerful attitude can keep everyone's spirits up.
- 8. Be Consistent.** Nothing is more confusing than a leader who is one way one moment and another way a short time later. If your team knows what to expect from you, they will more likely respond positively to your leadership.
- 9. Give Praise.** The best way to get credit is to give it away. Often a "Nice job" is all the praise necessary to make a team member feel he is contributing to the efforts of the group or company.
- 10. Ask for Help.** Don't be embarrassed to ask for help. You have many resources at your disposal. When confronted with a situation you don't know how to handle, ask someone with more experience for some advice and direction.

Same location, new address: **HOPE HAVEN 3, 990 BRENTWOOD, KINGSTON, TN.**

