



inside

Newsletter of Ability Building Center

January 2005

ABC

ABC Works Employee of the Year



ABC Works Employee of the Year is Terry Miller. Terry has been with ABC Works since 2002. Terry has many jobs; they include delivering papers for the Foxy Shopper, cleaning at Andy's Sportsmans Bar, the LaCrescent Fire Station, Al's Concrete, Yeiter Insurance, Edward Jones and LaCrescent Animal Care. In addition to all of these jobs, Terry also works at Perkins busing tables. Terry is a hard working dedicated employee and we love to see his smiling face every day!

Congratulations Terry!!

Woodland Industries Employee of the Year



Woodland Industries Employee of the Year is Diana Simmons. During this past year, Diana has increased the number of hours that she works in the community, her attendance has improved dramatically in the past year and she has been very motivated to substitute on other enclaves.

Diana gets along well with staff and co-workers. She is a great asset to Woodland's workforce.

Congratulations Diana!!

Published for the friends of Ability Building Center, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities and other special needs in Southeastern MN by providing rehabilitation and employment services.

Ability Building Center
1911 NW 14th Street
Rochester, MN 55901
507-281-6262

ABC Vocational Development Service
604 11th Ave. NW
Rochester, MN 55901
507-529-4812

ABC Works
730 North Pine
Caledonia, MN 55921
507-725-2057

ABC Works
62 North 3rd Street
LaCrescent, MN 55947
507- 895-7161

Woodland Industries
521 Old Highway Drive
Caledonia, MN 55921
507-725-2092

Executive Director: Steve Hill
Editor: Laurie Kellagher
Assistant Editor: Jane Kreidermacher
Contributing Writers: Helen Olson, Jane Kreidermacher, Steve Hill, Missy Loveday, Neva Stavlund, Kelly Voigt, Julia Ramsey, Mike Griffin, Judy Wandling, Cathy McCabe





ABC Works Employer of the Year



ABC Works employer of the year is Perkins Restaurant and Bakery of Onalaska. Perkins has been providing work for ABC Works since 2001. Perkins originally hired one of our participants to bus tables Monday through Friday during the lunch time. Starting September, they hired another participant to wash dishes, do some light janitorial work and food prep in the kitchen. Perkins has been great to work with and we hope to continue our relationship with them for a long time.

Thank you for all that you do!

Woodland Industries Employer of the Year

Woodland Industries Employer of the Year is Camp Winnebago. Woodland Industries has had the opportunity to send two participants and one job coach to the camp for the last six years. The camp is open from June to August.

The Woodland participants work there Tuesday through Friday from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. While working at the camp participants are provided lunch.

Duties at the camp are light janitorial in all the cabins and at the new multipurpose building.



Vicki Wilkes Memorial Award



The newest award that was handed out at this year's banquet was the Vicki Wilkes Memorial Independence Award. This award was presented to Harlan Lien. The award was sponsored and awarded by Danielle Burg, an advocate for Vicki, who passed away in 2004. Vicki was a long time participant of ABC Works and Woodland Industries. She was a very independent person. This will be an ongoing award in her memory.



Rochester Employee of the Year

Rochester's Employee of the Year is Lam La. Lam has been employed at Ability Building Center for 8 1/2 years. During this time, he has made great strides in the areas of attendance, punctuality, and staying on task.

Lam is always thoughtful of his co-workers and is always willing to offer a helping hand to others. He has improved in following all directions from his supervisors. His smile is contagious and he always shares it willingly with others.

Congratulations Lam!

Rochester Employer of the Year

This year's Employer of the Year is HyVee stores of Rochester. The staff and management at HyVee have been great with our workers. ABC has a couple of work crews that bus and wash the dishes in the cafeteria area, workers who are baggers and perform miscellaneous job duties.

HyVee has been a great place to work and has provided many training opportunities.

Finally, ABC would like to thank the staff and management for this opportunity and hope we have many more years working together.



Rochester Business Partner of the Year



ABC's Business Partner of the Year is Mayo Medical Laboratories. Mayo Medical Labs and ABC have worked together for more than twenty years. The Express Mailers project employs sixty-nine workers, eight staff, and provides seven thousand hours of work for employees annually.

In addition to cooperativeness and flexibility, we would have to add friendly to the criteria. MML has the greatest group of employees we have ever worked with. They have become an extension of our ABC family. MML provides ABC employees a variety of opportunities. The many projects we assemble for Mayo provide a healthy challenge for a multitude of skill levels. PR opportunities and our association with MML has opened the door for employment at other work sites at Mayo as well. Please join us in giving a huge "thank you" to the Mayo Medical Labs Packaging Team. A very special thanks to their leaders, Greg Brown, Joy Noe and many others that think of ABC as a place that gets the job done.



Kitchen Band Performs at Festival of Trees



Gloria Dei Party

Thank you to members of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church who have hosted annual Christmas dinners for ABC staff and employees for many years. This year due to construction at the church the group came to ABC on December 3rd to bring Christmas goodies provided by church members. Thanks for bringing your “holiday cheer” to ABC!

Region 10 Review

Many of you know Ability Enterprises is the Day Training and Habilitation program within ABC. AE maintains a license through the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Region 10 Quality Assurance is responsible for overseeing and reviewing the license. Every two years a licensing review and site visit must be conducted. AE’s license was reviewed in September.

We are extremely happy to report AE passed with flying colors. There were no issues or citations. Licensing is a difficult process. All the staff, especially the program coordinators, worked very hard to make this a positive experience. It was the recommendation of Region 10 Quality Assurance for DHS to grant AE a license for an additional two years.

We know that good quality services don’t necessarily come from a licensing review. Quality must be defined by those participants we serve and their collective teams. In Ability Enterprises we wish to continually improve our services. Should any stakeholders have questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions, we always want to hear them.

Please feel free to contact Kelly Voigt, Program Manager, at 535-7126 or kellyv@abcinc.org



Woodland Outstanding Worker

At Woodland Industries we have quarterly WOW Award winners, which are nominated and determined by staff. After the 4th quarter a WOW Award winner has been selected, ballots are made up and the participants/co-workers vote for one person from that list to determine Woodland's Employee of the Year.

This year our WOW winners were:

- 1st Quarter – Jerry Kurtz
- 2nd Quarter – Diana Simmons
- 3rd Quarter – Steve Gauger
- 4th Quarter – Duane Ernster

The staff and workers of Woodland Industries would like to congratulate these workers on their outstanding job performance.

Lowry Award Winner

The Lowry Award is given bi-monthly to recognize Workers in ABC's Extended Employment programs for their outstanding progress towards goals and improvement in overall work performance.

Winners of the Lowry Award are then eligible for the annual Employee of the Year Award.



Congratulations to Dan Wethington for being our November/December recipient.

Dan has demonstrated a positive attitude everyday, goes above and beyond work expectations by doing other tasks without being told.

Dan picks up the hard workload on a daily basis and is a tremendous asset to the work crew at McMurphy's.

When he is not working, he is greatly missed and things never seem to go as smoothly.

Dan is a great worker and never complains about the workload.

Congratulations!

“Room to Grow”



We would like to thank everyone in the community who supported our "Room to Grow" expansion project. Our goal was to raise \$700,000 over a 3 year time period. As we close this campaign at the end of 2004, we are happy to report that \$604,674 had been raised. Our programs are growing and filling our new space. Thanks again for sharing in our success!



LaCrescent Expansion

November 30th was a very exciting day for ABC Works in LaCrescent! On that day we officially moved into our new space. With the addition almost completed, staff and participants helped move out of the old and into the new!

With the old area emptied out, construction workers were able to get started with the kitchen remodeling, painting and flooring changes. The extra space and openness has



been well received by all. We have had many compliments on the paint colors, cabinets and high ceiling. The lift system in the restrooms is also one of the favorite changes. The project should be entirely completed by the end of December, and will be a wonderful Christmas present for all! It's hard to believe we are so close to completion. It's been a very smooth process with little interruption to programming.

Our capital campaign will continue to raise funds to offset the mortgage. A building dedication will be held in January. Hope to see you all there!

Brain Injury Community Committee Conference

The Rochester Area Brain Injury Community Committee (BICC) grew from an idea that community service providers, families affected by brain injury, and persons with brain injury could come together to build and strengthen relationships and bridge existing gaps in service to better serve people with brain injuries. Started in 1989, the BICC has continued to grow both in membership and in its mission. The BICC's mission is to coordinate and promote development of community resources for persons with traumatic brain injury and other acquired brain injury to enhance the quality of life and community involvement.

The BICC's objectives include:

1. Facilitating ongoing dialogue between community agencies serving persons with brain injury.
2. Defining mutual problem areas and reaching acceptable solutions.
3. Enhancing effective use of community resources by persons with brain injury and their families.
4. Fostering further development of community programs directed at fulfilling specific needs of persons with brain injury and their families.
5. Promoting awareness of the specialized needs of persons with brain injury.

The BICC held their 7th annual conference, "Transitions: Life After Brain Injury," on October 20th at the Best Western Apache in Rochester. The keynote speaker was Mike Strand, who is a brain injury survivor. He has written a book, "[Meditations on Brain Injury](#)." The conference was well attended by survivors, family members and professionals.

The BICC meets the first Thursday of every month at AU, 1-2 p.m. or call Neva Stavlund (507.535.7132) if you would like more information about the BICC.

Memorials and Tributes

ABC is honored to have received gifts from family, friends and loved ones in memory of those who have died and in tribute to others who live on. The following gifts were received through November 30, 2004.

Donor

Stephen & Sharon Boyce
Roger & Lois Carlson
Gary and Martha Doherty
Dick & Nancy Engrav
Roger & Irene Herzog
Mary Holtegaard
Olive Husmann
George & Susan Kittleson
Ray Kostner
Miriam Kurland
Clifford Laging
Steve & Joan Larson
Marie-France Letendre
Christopher & Lynette Matzke
Don & Lavona Meiners
Thomas & Angela Murphy
Glynis Myhre
Leona Nelson
Gayle Olson
Therese Peterson
Jerry & Marylyn Piotrowski
Tammy Radloff
Dean & Audrey Schmidt
Bill Siggelkow & Connie Hosey
Harry & Evelyn Sykes
Sandra Tschida
Vince & Carol Zortman

Donor

Huberta Fenstermacher
Jerry & Norma Nordstrom
Jerry & Marylyn Piotrowski

Correction:

Henry & Helen Frank

In Memory of:

Johnny Gillespie
Scott Allan Carlson
Herschel Wolk
Alatha Wehinger
Robert Herzog
Everett Burt Jr.
Aaron Husmann
Vicki Wilkes
Jim Lucas
Dr. Leonard Kurland
Gregg & Dorothy Laging
Ann Ferguson
Pete Fletcher
Alton Shefelbine
Orville Schroeder
Elmer L. Anderson
Larry Myhre
Alan Nelson
Eileen Penning
Sherwood Peterson
Marijo Prigge
Pete Fletcher
Vicki Wilkes
Karin Siggelkow
Margaret Boardman
Tony Tschida Sr.
Dennis Zortman

In Honor of:

Tom Fenstermacher
David Papenfus
Margaret Coleman &
Clint Calvert

In Honor of:

Lisa Meiners

A Time for Giving Thanks - AU

"I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder." *Gilbert Keith Chesterton*

Thanksgiving can be a time of deep reflection on gratitude. Abilities Unlimited wanted to show our appreciation to all the participants, friends, care providers, volunteers, co-workers and family members, by offering a Thanksgiving lunch, on November 23, 2004.



Over 60 people sat together and enjoyed a great home cooked meal. The food was hot and the service was sweet as the holiday spirit swirled around us. Abilities Unlimited is so thankful for all the gifts that are given to us by all the wonderful hearts that help make AU what it is. We are truly blessed. We have been sent nothing but angels. Thank you everyone who helped make this year's Thanksgiving lunch run so smoothly. See you next year!





Happy New Year From Your Friends At ABC



Ability Building Center
1911 NW 14th Street
PO Box 6938
Rochester, Minnesota 55903-6938
lauriek@abcinc.org

Change Service Requested

Please notify us if you receive duplicate issues or no longer wish to receive this newsletter.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #12
Rochester, MN.