

Robotics Class Star of Summer School Program

Circle C was delighted to welcome the addition of a Robotics Class to our Title I Summer School Program this past July. We were inspired to attempt this project through the enthusiasm and assistance of **Linda Bechtol** and **Mary Babcock**, both teachers at **Brookline Regional Catholic School**.

Following their lead, Circle C's Director of Treatment Services, **Jeanne Rieber** and Education Coordinator, **Mary Polansky** began this process by attending teacher-training classes at the **National Robotics Engineering Consortium (NREC)** earlier this spring. The training was provided through **Carnegie Mellon University's (CMU) Robotics Academy**, whose funding is provided primarily through six regional foundations, including Grable, Alcoa and the Heinz Endowments. The Robotics Academy is "committed to using robotics to excite children about science and technology and to help create a more technologically literate society." The Academy, particularly **Robin Shoop**, Director of Educational Outreach and **Norm Kerman**,



Students assembling Legos in Robotics Lab.

Education Coordinator, generously provided many robotic kits for our classroom, technical assistance, and a referral to an excellent teacher, **James Horvath**, to get the program up and going.

Mr. Horvath, who teaches at Taylor-Allerdice in the Pre-Engineering Academy, did a great job sharing his expertise with the children. His approach is to "coach" students on the application of math, science and engineering principles in a manner that is both fun and challenging! Information was given on an "as-needed" basis, so it was not daunting or overwhelming. The program's success could be measured



Completed robot, ready to roll.

in the huge amount of enthusiasm and creativity the students brought to the classroom.

Initially, some children (particularly the girls) were intimidated by the involved technology, reticent to try or were just disinterested. Those attitudes quickly disappeared as students discovered they had the capability to succeed at this project, and that they could work comfortably at their own pace or more competitively if they chose. Students built and programmed their own robots using Lego-based kits and software developed at CMU. The robots used a variety of sensors (light, touch and rotational) to

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Day of Caring Volunteers — Big Hearts and Many Hands

September 14th marked Circle C's 12th year participating in the **United Way Day of Caring Program**. We were thrilled to welcome five groups of volunteers who spent the day with us, accomplishing a great deal of "clean-up and fix-up" work at our four group home facilities. Nationally, the "Day of Caring" began in 1987 when several United Way's around the country replaced their traditional campaign kick-off events with

a huge one-day volunteer event. Any company, community or social group interested in making a positive difference in their community can participate.

We extend our sincere thanks to the following companies and their employees who took the time from their day to help us maintain our group homes:

911 Airlift Wing volunteers were happy to work at Carrick House for their third consecutive year. The '911' orga-

nizes, recruits and trains Air Force personnel to provide airlift of troops, their equipment and supplies.

Volunteers from **Koppers, Inc.** returned for their second year to work at Patak House, our original site in the Northside. They also joined us as a major sponsor for this year's blues event. Koppers is an international producer of chemicals, carbon compounds, and treated wood products for the aluminum,

(See Day of Caring Volunteers on Page 3)

Staunton Farm Funds New Position

Thanks to support from the **Staunton Farm Foundation**, Circle C is happy to announce the addition of a new Case Manager position to support our group home programs.

We were pleased to welcome **Ms. Erin Burke** to our staff in early summer. She has been busy arranging for and monitoring the delivery of specialized treatment services to our residents. Erin's recent work experience was ideal preparation for her current duties. For the previous two years, she was a caseworker for the United Way



in Wheeling. Prior to that, she was a Family Resource Advocate for Head Start. Erin also worked with dependent youth while doing an internship with the West Virginia Youth Advocate's Office.

Erin has a B.S. in Psychology from West Liberty State College, and is currently working on her masters degree in Guidance Counseling at West Virginia University. She is married and has three children.

"Project First Place" Replenished

Circle C recently received a grant from the **Sarah Heinz House** to continue "Project First Place!", a special fund which helps Circle C residents as they plan for living on their own, after a successful discharge.

Eligible residents work with a Circle C staff member to equip either a first apartment or dorm room with the basic items they will need to live on their own. Grant funds have enabled these young people to make security deposits, purchase furniture, bedding, cooking

utensils, silverware, dishes, glasses, household appliances and other assorted items for daily living.

"Project First Place!" was funded initially by the **Laurel Foundation** in 2001. Over a two-year period, the grant enabled eight young people to move from a closely supervised group home setting toward independence and self-reliance. Staff frequently maintain contact with former residents to see how they are progressing.

Development Update

Over the past year, Pittsburgh's Foundation and corporate community has been very generous in it's support. Circle C received 18 grants and sponsorships totaling over \$200,000 for our programs, events and capital improvements. We celebrate not only the financial assistance for our mission, but also the partnership that these donations represent.

Grants. Child Health Association of Sewickley, Citizens Bank of PA, Eden Hall Foundation, Grable Foundation, Knudsen Foundation, Matthews Charitable & Educational Trust, McCune Foundation, McKinney Foundation, The Pittsburgh Foundation, PNC Charitable Trust Committee, Rockwell Foundation, Sarah Heinz House, Staunton Farm Foundation, and the Westinghouse Charitable Giving Program.

Sponsorships. Heinz North America, Koppers, Inc., Shop 'n Save Foundation, UPMC Health Plan, and the Western Pennsylvania Toy Run.

2004 Blues Update

The second annual *Help Kids Lose the Blues* benefit raised approximately 35% more than it's inaugural year for Circle C's work with at-risk youth and their families. Circle C sincerely appreciates the support of our presenting sponsor, **UPMC Health Plan**, and other major donors, **WYEP 91.3 FM** (media sponsor), **Heinz North America**, **Koppers, Inc.**, and the **Shop 'n Save Foundation**.

The event took place at **Riverwatch** in the Strip District on Saturday, March 27th. Guests were treated to an evening of great rhythm and blues with "**Mo Black's Magic**" featuring **Andrea Pearl**. Riverwatch staff served hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, and the Chinese auction featured over \$6,500 in goods and services donated by Pittsburgh businesses. To see photographs of the event please visit www.circlec.net/photos!

Celebrating 37 Years of Caring! Your United Way contribution supports Circle C's work with at-risk kids and families.

Your financial support helps us to provide continuing care and treatment to local kids facing the problems of abuse, neglect and delinquency. To designate all or a portion of your United Way pledge to **Circle C Youth and Family Services**, complete Portion 3b of your United Way Pledge Form marked "DESIGNATE TO A SPECIFIC AGENCY" and write in **Code # 920**.

Agency Code: #920

Agency Name: Circle C Youth & Family Services

For more information contact **Scott Jones**, Director of Development at (412) 937-1650 x224 or sjones@circlec.net.

Residents Attend Leadership Conference

Two residents from the **Euclid Supervised Independent Living Program** were chosen to attend a youth leadership conference held in Chevy Chase, Maryland in late August. The **Destination Future Conference** is an annual event that brings together youth and adults from across the nation to network, problem solve, improve leadership skills, build partnerships and learn about advocating for change.

Our young men attended a variety of workshops and group sessions. On the final day they made a presentation to the full conference. Staff member and chaperone **Mark Copeland** reported that "their talk was met with *thunderous applause.*" Conference organizers were so impressed that they invited the boys to attend again next year! While in Maryland, the group also had an opportunity to tour the Washington, D.C. area.

The **Pennsylvania Independent Living Project (ILP)** made it possible for our youth to attend the conference. The ILP is managed under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Competency-Based Training and Certification Program at the University of Pittsburgh. It operates under the leadership of Pennsylvania's Department of Public Welfare and is funded by Title IV-E.

Bechtel Lends a Hand

The employees of **Bechtel Plant Machinery, Inc.** recently helped Circle C students to get this school year off to a great start! In late August, they supplied an entire vanload of school supplies to ensure that our residents had everything they needed to begin the academic year on the right foot. Students received backpacks, spiral notebooks, binders, loose-leaf paper, pocket folders, dozens of pens, pencils, markers and more! Their support is greatly appreciated.

Golf Marathon Has Successful Second Year at Montour Heights Country Club

Good weather smiled upon the 11th Annual Golf Marathon May 24th at the Montour Heights Country Club, marking two consecutive years without rain! We were also blessed with a "trusting" greenskeeper who allowed carts on the fairways, to "help the cause." Five new golfers joined a field of 20, beginning the day at 6:30 a.m. A handful of hard-core golfers finished around 8:30 p.m.

The award for "Most Holes Golfed" goes to **Eric Major** for 110 holes! Eric had competition with **Dr. Jim Henderson** coming in a close second, at 108 holes. A variety of other prizes were awarded, including "Low Score" (73) to former Euclid Program Coordinator **Llew Strachan**; "Most Money Raised" (\$1,315) to **Scott Jones**, Director of Development (*Go Scott!*); and "Most Bass" :- to **Mike Courtad**, Circle C's insurance broker.



Golfers enjoying the 10th hole of the beautiful Montour Heights Course.

Congratulations to Executive Director, **Rich Knouff** for his lowest score ever—82! This year's Marathon raised over \$10,000 for our work with at-risk kids and their families. Our most sincere thanks goes to local business for donating prizes for this event. A big welcome also goes to new donors **Holiday Inn-Beaver Falls, Stonecrest Golf Course** and **Fox Run Golf Course**.

Day of Caring Volunteers (Continued from page 1)

steel, chemical, plastics, railroad and utility industries.

Friends from **SMS Demag, Inc.** enjoyed themselves so much last year at Euclid House, that they decided to join us again at our Oasis program in the Northside. SMS Demag is a world-class

plant manufacturer for the metallurgical plant and rolling mill technology sectors.

We were also very pleased to welcome first-time volunteers from **National City Bank** at Patak House, and **Duquesne Light** at Euclid House.



Featuring
Tony Janflone, Jr.

Save-The-Date!

3rd Annual



"Help Kids Lose The Blues"

Saturday, March 19, 2005

Sports Rock Cafe'



Cash Bar • Hors D'Oeuvres
Door Prizes • Raffle/Auction

Local Web Developer Designs With Heart

For the past year, a labor of love has been underway, often in the “wee hours” of the night. In what little spare time she’s had, Pittsburgh-based



multimedia and web developer, **Deena Alansky** completely redesigned Circle C’s web site—giving it a fresh look and improved functionality.

Deena’s artistic talent, extensive computer knowledge, and high regard for Circle C’s mission and staff saw her through countless hours of design decisions and application, photography and photo-editing, and the revision of pages and pages of agency information and news.

Deena was first introduced to Circle C as the webmaster for local blues band, **Jill West and Blues Attack**, who performed for Circle C’s inaugural *Help Kids Lose the Blues* fundraiser in March 2003. Deena’s enthusiasm and

technical skills were invaluable in making sure that the event was well publicized on both web sites. Deena then volunteered to serve as the event photographer, and has since photographed many other Circle C events, growing in her understanding and enthusiasm for the agency!

Deena’s expertise *and* big heart became very apparent as we worked together throughout the year. She has put her heart and soul into developing first-class web sites for several other non-profit agencies, worthy causes and projects. Keeping her client’s vision in the forefront of the creative process, Deena has juggled a variety of projects for the **Early Learning Institute**, the **Leukemia & Lymphoma Society**, the **National Marrow Donor Program**, the **Johnnie Johnson Blues Society** and the **Latin American & Caribbean Heritage Room**.

Deena received her Bachelors Degree in Psychology (child development)

from the University of Pittsburgh in 1983. She has worked with children and families in many capacities including, founding day care centers and cooperatives, counseling abused and neglected children, and several years as a private nanny. She graduated from The Art Institute of Pittsburgh in 2002 with a degree in Multimedia and Web Design. She chose this focus because it combined so many of her passions—art, design, color, photography, music, video, etc.

Deena has been working as a freelance web developer since her graduation from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh; however, she is currently seeking full-time employment in her field. If you’re looking for a skilled and dedicated designer, Deena can be reached at: deena@deenasportfolio.com, or www.deenasportfolio.com. We genuinely appreciate the work Deena has done on our behalf. Please stop by our new site at www.circlec.net, and catch up on what’s happening at Circle C!

Robotics Class (Cont’d Page 1)

navigate a simulation of the planet Mars. Most students worked in teams, learning how to collaborate and problem-solve. Title I Program Director, **Kathy Carlson** said, “*It was a terrific opportunity—particularly for those children who have struggled or under-achieved in traditional classrooms.*”

Title I assisted by providing funding for laptops, a projector and robotic kits. Many thanks to all who made this class a huge success. It will be offered annually in the summer school program, and we are exploring the possibility of a robotics club so the students can continue to build their skills throughout the year.

The Circle C Summer School is a shared venture with **Familylinks**. Certified teachers also offer classes in math, social studies, English and reading. Pre and post-testing shows significant gains in both math and reading levels—sometimes as much as several grade levels.

Residents Benefit from Education Support Services

Join us in congratulating Circle C residents who successfully completed the 2003-2004 school year. We are pleased to report that approximately 50 percent of our students earned a place on the honor roll! We are also proud of all of our kids who put forth real effort, gained skill and knowledge, improved their attendance, and began to realize the necessity of education!

Circle C has placed extra emphasis on our residents’ education and transition needs for several years, beginning with the addition of the Education Coordinator position in 1998, thanks to support from the **Grable Foundation**. Within the last two years, a life skills curriculum was added with a strong focus on self-sufficiency. Transition services focus on helping our students develop post-secondary education and career plans. Circle C’s tutoring program is now in its third year,

and the extra attention has clearly paid off! Tutors are available to work with residents at least once a week. We are very fortunate to have four extraordinary teachers this year.

Maria Lardas is the “much loved” tutor at Patak. During the day she teaches Special Education at Brashear High School. Our Euclid tutor, **Jim Slater**, does a great job with our older boys. He teaches and provides computer support at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. **Diane O’Toole** works with the young women at the Oasis House. She has received many awards from Duquesne University, Carnegie Mellon, and Chatham College. **Harold Murock** is our new Carrick House tutor. He’s certified to teach Math, English, General Science, and Social Studies. Harold also spent two years with the U.S. Peace Corps in Kenya.

Holiday Hopes & Dreams

Please help us to provide a meaningful and memorable holiday for the 50+ kids living in one of our group or foster homes this year. We are hoping to provide them with gifts and a special holiday to remember.

Here's how you can help!

- Decide how you would like to brighten a child's holiday season by completing this form.
- Mail or fax the entire sheet to us by **Monday, November 8th**, or e-mail us your choice at bginsburg@circlec.net.
- Your selections will be matched with our kid's holiday wishes, and we will mail you your list no later than **Monday, November 15th**.
- Gifts should be new, and can be mailed or delivered to Circle C's Administrative Office in Greentree no later than **Monday, December 6th**.
- With advanced notice, we can pick up gifts from your home or work place!
- Our elves will make sure that each gift gets to the right child!

Holiday Sweets. What quantity?
Call if you need Suggestions.

_____ Cookies
_____ Candy

Purchase a Gift?

_____ Under \$20
_____ \$20-\$30
_____ \$30-\$40
_____ # of children
_____ Preferred age?



Filled Stockings. How many?
Call if you need stocking suggestions.

_____ Girls _____ Boys

Contribute toward a meal, gift, or other special holiday activities?

_____ \$25 _____ \$50
_____ \$100 _____ Other

Holiday Hopes & Dreams

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Your contribution is tax deductible. A copy of the registration and financial information for Circle C may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Circle C Youth and Family Services

Mission Statement

Building on a long standing tradition, Circle C Youth and Family Services provides a safe environment and therapeutic relationships for children and families at risk. With a focus on strengths, we are committed to assisting children and their families in building solid foundations and supports within their own family and the community. Our goal is to instill personal growth and positive values and achieve permanency for each child.

Serving children and families since 1967

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