

volume 39 | fall 2010

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Lifeworks Brooklyn Park Grand Opening

At Lifeworks, we don't always toot our own horn, but in this situation we just have to. The Lifeworks Brooklyn Park Grand Opening was a big success. It was an evening of great company, delicious food, and good fun; all this housed in the brand new Lifeworks flagship program facility.

We welcomed parents, friends, social workers, board members, staff, and even current and potential politicians to mingle and celebrate the achievements of those people who are supported through Lifeworks Brooklyn Park.

The Lifeworks Brooklyn Park facility was the product of over a year of hard work to create a template that facilitates effectiveness and efficiency in the services Lifeworks provides. The design is both lean and intentional, considering everything down to the pose ability of the lights. The center is intended to be open, accessible, and took in considerable feedback from the people we support and their families. Some highlights include a state-of-the-art lift and track system, portable computer stations, a fitness center, wide screen LCD screens in each area, and a global design that enhances all aspect of delivering quality services.

Kerry Houston, a Lifeworks client in Brooklyn Park Career Development, summed it up when she said, "This is a great night. We worked so hard, and now we are finally here!"



Judy Lysne and David Spragg cutting the ribbon at the new Lifeworks Brooklyn Park

Visit Lifeworks Facebook page to see photos from the grand opening event



Lifeworks client Ann Bailey at the Lifeworks Brooklyn Park Grand Opening

Employer Partner Volt Services wins ASA Care Award

The Volt hiring initiative, "Bridging the Employment Gap for Individuals with Disabilities" represents a local partnership in Minneapolis-St. Paul between Volt, its customer 3M, and Lifeworks.

In October, this initiative won Volt a 2010 ASA Care Award from the American Staffing Association for outstanding corporate social responsibility and was featured in the Wall Street Journal for this achievement. This is the third consecutive year that Volt has achieved Care Award honors from ASA for developing business processes that

produce an overall positive effect on society. Volt and Lifeworks are great match and have similar philosophies when it comes to employment. Volt's hiring initiative, along with the Lifeworks mission, continue to provide meaningful employment for people with disabilities at 3M.

If you are interested in the Lifeworks difference in your workplace or are inspired by the great achievements Volt has made with their disability initiative, learn more at www.lifeworks.org/for-business



Celebrating A Perfect Fit

On April 22, more than 800 people gathered at The Depot in Minneapolis to celebrate and honor Lifeworks clients and those who support them at the Lifeworks Annual Celebration, "A Perfect Fit."

"You are our perfect fit," Judy Lysne, president and CEO of Lifeworks, told the group. "We couldn't do what we do without you."

In his opening remarks, Steve Wexler, CEO of KaiserComm and chair of the Lifeworks board of directors, welcomed guests and shared a few highlights from the organization's year in numbers. He also made the group a promise:

"Sometime tonight, your eyes will well up with tears or you'll get a chill up your spine. Something that happens on stage will touch you," said Wexler.

By the end of the evening, Wexler's promise was easily kept. Many guests dabbed their eyes as they watched moving videos highlighting the achievements of each of the year's award winners, including:

- **Rollie Keeley**, a Lifeworks client employed by ABM Janitorial Services, and **Kim Moore**, a Lifeworks client employed by Wal-Mart in Apple Valley, who both received Personal Achievement awards
- **Key Surgical**, Employer of the Year
- **Caryn Addante**, Advocate of the Year



Rollie Keeley accepting the Personal Achievement Award alongside Lifeworks President and CEO Judy Lysne

SAVE THE DATE

Join us at the next Lifeworks Annual Celebration!

Thursday, April 21, 2011
The Depot, Minneapolis

Following the award presentation, auctioneer Glen Fladeboe took the floor for the live auction. Among the items up for bidding were vacation packages, Twins tickets, an "instant wine cellar," and a private tour of the Walker Art Center. Fladeboe's trademark humor and warmth helped raise \$16,000 to support Lifeworks program.

As the auction concluded, Fladeboe asked everyone in attendance to consider making a gift to offset Lifeworks' transportation costs. Guests responded with donations ranging from \$5 to \$5,000, resulting in an additional \$45,000 raised.

"Though 2009 was a tough year for the economy, our generous supporters ensured it was a great year for Lifeworks," says Wexler. "Based on the Annual Celebration, I suspect 2010 will be no different. We are blessed with supporters who recognize the importance of the work we do, and are inspired to join us in making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities."



AN INTERVIEW WITH SCOTT HEROLD

In June we introduced Scott Herold to the Lifeworks community, and in just a few short months we have already seen big things. In his role as director of business development, Scott leads the sales team in the effort to secure employment for all Lifeworks clients who have work as a goal. He brings to Lifeworks a 20-year background in sales, training, and management as well as experience leading business development and client services teams in both consumer goods and retail solutions.

Recently, we sat down with Scott to ask him a few questions about Lifeworks, his business philosophy, and himself.

Tell us a little about yourself, and your role at Lifeworks.

For the past 15 years, I have worked in consumer goods leading the business development and client services teams for some of the nation's most respected merchandising organizations. A few years ago I began to transition out of the for-profit world. My heart has always been in the community, striving lead the Lifeworks business development team to create more jobs for the people we support. I love being in the community every day, meeting with employers and advocates. We have made significant progress in building the Lifeworks name in the community. Although it takes hard work, late hours and tremendous focus, I am the happiest I have ever been.

What sets Lifeworks apart from other organizations in the same field?

Our approach in creating true business solutions sets us apart. We create a genuine partnership with our employers. We look at what the real day-to-day needs are, and then we place our associates in the right positions where they can thrive. We support both the associate and the employer. I do not know of any other organization like Lifeworks that has a presence in some of the most respected companies in Minnesota.

As the new director of business development, what are your goals for the upcoming year at Lifeworks?

I have some big goals, but they are achievable. We are creating a Lifeworks business development playbook. This will help define our process, leading my team to develop more advocate groups, which lead to more jobs. I want to increase our resources and capacity. We will continue to improve our toolkit as we learn and increase our employment partnerships. We will have no less than 12 lead campaigns a year. We will develop more focus groups to help us understand market segments. We will increase wages earned by 6%. Most importantly we will continue to reinvent and define supported employment!

You are connected to other nonprofit organizations in the community. Tell us a little about your relationship with those.

A few years ago I started a nonprofit called Rock the Cause. I saw a need in the community for Millennials to get involved in their community. The Rock the Cause team has helped Big Brothers Big Sisters fill the ranks of desperately needed mentors. We have also helped raise money and awareness organizations like Free Arts Minnesota, Youth Advantage, Open Arms of Minnesota, and even Lifeworks.

Find Scott Herold on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/in/leescottherold

Find out more about the work Scott does at Lifeworks at www.lifeworks.org/for-business



Dakota County Government Center and Lifeworks celebrate 25 years

Dakota County Government Center was Lifeworks very first employer partner! This year we are celebrating this achievement and partnership while looking back at all the great achievements over the years. Back in 1985, when we first partnered with Dakota County, few adults with disabilities had jobs. The idea that someone with a developmental disability could have a paying job was preposterous to many people. Many adults with disabilities had just been released from institutions or state hospitals, and children with disabilities attending public schools was a recent memory.

As Lifeworks was transitioning away from focusing on early intervention care for infants and toddlers with disabilities to adults, Lifeworks started to think about the benefits of people with disabilities working in the community. A pivotal presentation by speaker Lou Brown sparked Lifeworks into action, and after much brainstorming and needling we were able to make employment

for individuals with developmental disabilities a reality. Judy Lysne, our current president and CEO, and Joe Harris, Dakota County Commissioner, were essential to implementing this partnership. It is no surprise that they are still at it today. Kathleen Pengelly, our very first job coach at Dakota County Government Center is also still with Lifeworks, now as our volunteer and advocate coordinator.

Much has changed in the last 25 years, and as a learning organization, Lifeworks continued to adapt. Many of the early jobs such as removing staples and recycling microfilm are now obsolete. As the employment environment changes, so has Lifeworks. Just as our employer partners meet the changing needs of a modern economy, so too has Lifeworks stepped up to the challenge. It has been a wonderful 25 years at the Dakota County Government Center, and we look forward to 25 more!

2010 Employer Milestone Anniversaries

25 years

Dakota County Government Center

20 years

Cub Foods - Burnsville

General Mills - James Ford Bell Technical Ctr.

Thomson Reuters

TJ Maxx & More - Burnsville

15 years

Cargill

10 years

ABM Janitorial - MSP Intl Airport

Bro-tex, Inc.

Best Western Hotel & Restaurant

Garven, LLC

Old Chicago - Eagan

PreferredOne

5 years

Apple Automatic

Babies "R" Us

Chartwells - Breck School

City of Minneapolis

Community of Hope Church

Culver's of North Mankato

Kowalski's - Parkview

Life Time Fitness - Bloomington North

Midwest Electric Products

Paragon Printing & Mailing, Inc.

Sodexo - Regina Medical Center

Sodexo - South View Middle School

Starkey Laboratories

Stratasys, Inc.

Taher Dining - US Postal Services

Waterford Manor

YMCA Hastings

And welcome to our new employers!

Atlas Manufacturing

Ballistic Products, Inc.

BBI International

BMW of Minnetonka

Buffalo Wild Wings-Mankato

Cargill - Excelsior Crossing

DQ Grill & Chill - Edina

GAP - Southdale

Hickory Tech

HR Simplified, Inc.

InterDyn

Lakewinds

Lawson Software

Loffler - Cargill Pensions

Lorenz Lubrication

Marshalls

Meet Minneapolis, Official Convention+Visitors Association

NAI Welsh

Pepsi-Cola of Mankato, Inc.

Periscope

Red Robin - Apple Valley

Rother Machine

Sinard Inc.

Spherion at Allianz

Surly Brewing Company

Sushi Avenue

Target Corporation

The Rave Special Olympics

Vanderberg Cleaning Service, LLC

White Pine Senior Living

Winland Electronics, Inc.



TOTALLY WILD: Lifeworks at the Wild home opener

by Adrian Freeman, interactive marketing and communications specialist, Lifeworks

Step into any Lifeworks location at any time of the year and you are bound to see two things: forest green and iron range red, the colors of the Minnesota Wild. On season or off, enthusiasm and team pride runs high. You won't see the blue of the New York Rangers or the wheel of the Detroit Red Wings. There is no blather or light hearted back-and-forth as you might get when discussing the Packers and the Vikings. Oh, no. At Lifeworks, there is Wild solidarity, a firm and stalwart loyalty that is unshakable.

In November, Lifeworks was chosen as the featured nonprofit for the Wild's charity of the month program. The Minnesota Wild recognizes a different local charity each month during the regular season. The program provides awareness and exposure for the chosen nonprofit over the course of one month. Lifeworks was featured on Wild.com and at the November 5, 2010 Wild home game by displaying photos on the video board and in-arena public address announcements. Given all the Wild love at Lifeworks, this has been a perfect fit.

To kick things off, the Wild offered one lucky person who we support at Lifeworks excellent tickets to the season opener. These tickets were practically on the ice! Out of the hordes of Wild fanatics at Lifeworks one person stood out. Chris Williams. Wild fan #1.

When Chris and I arrived at the Xcel Energy Center, he was pretty pumped up. He started to recognize fellow fans as well. Through the course of the night Chris, Wild fan #1, saw many acquaintances bound

by Wild love. One old co-worker ran up to Chris and embraced him. Of course, this was a manly embrace filled with Wild hockey passion. When Chris took his seat, he was immediately blown away. He thought he was so close! Chris said that he had never sat so close before. The look of elation was all over his face.

The game was epic. Ice spray flew, the clack of stick and puck filled the air, goals were scored, the penalty box was filled and emptied. It was a whirlwind. In the end, the Wild beat the Oilers 4-2 and Chris left a little more *Wild* than when he entered.

For Chris, it was a memorable night that would have never happened if the Wild had not chosen Lifeworks for the charity of the month program. When I see Chris in the halls, he always asks me when he can go again. Sometimes he just points at his shirt, which is of course, a Wild jersey. What is so cool, is that he did get to go again, thanks to the Wild. Chris along with 49 others from Lifeworks all received tickets courtesy of the charity of the month program to the November 5 game. Chris was there, once again, leading the pack. Wild fan #1.

You can read the full story and see pictures of the game night on the Lifeworks blog.



Top: Chris Williams at the Minnesota Wild home season opener.

Lifeworks Service Innovation

the lifeworks assistive technology band



Part of experiencing life to the fullest is going through the everyday rituals and achieving the milestones that go along with our own culture. For many of us that could mean being on the debate team, playing on a high school football team, performing at a dance recital, or playing in the school band. Many of the people we support at Lifeworks, especially those with profound motor and speech impairments, have never had the opportunity to experience these important milestones.

Lifeworks and Dynavox have partnered to bring down this barrier. Lifeworks, Dynavox, and a group of 10 talented assistive technology (AT) device users came together to create the "Lifeworks AT Real-Time Band". Dynavox currently leads the industry with their cutting edge assistive technology devices and software, providing people with a method of communication when using their voice is not always the best option. These devices, like the Dynavox V are able to do many things, such as simulate the sounds of instruments. With the help of Lifeworks Neurological Music Therapist Jennie Delisi, Lifeworks and Dynavox created musical samples and the software needed to play these sounds on a Dynavox in a coordinated way. In short, they created a new way to make music.

After much planning, tweaking, and trouble shooting, the band was able to get together and do what they have never been able to do before. Make music together! The group consists of band members: Beth Niedringhaus, Bobbi Jean Ashton, Bradley Janota, Christopher Majetic, Daniel Gacki, Elaine Howe, Laura Quist-Knox, Megan Moyna, Peter Loerch, and Shannon O'Brien.

The group has already played their first gig at the Closing the Gap Conference, playing in front of a packed audience, and receiving a standing ovation at the end, something none of the members had ever received before.

Peter, who plays percussion in the band, commented, "This is all new to us. There are not many bands like this in the country! With technology, anything is possible these days. Even ten years ago, this band would not be possible. We just want to play and see what happens."

You can see pictures and video of the Lifeworks AT Real-Time band on the Lifeworks facebook page.



Top: Shannon O'Brien playing the bass.

Bottom Left: Elaine Howe, Megan Moyna, and Bradley Janota performing at Closing the Gap

Bottom Right: Megan Moyna on the keyboard.



Tribute Giving: **gift giving made easy**

This holiday season, consider something more meaningful than a scented candle or a pair of slippers - **consider making a contribution to Lifeworks in someone's name.** Tribute giving is a fresh, easy approach to gift giving this season - and year round!

Contributions can be made in any amount and for any occasion. Consider not only holiday gifts in honor of your loved ones but in honor of their birthdays, anniversaries, or weddings!

When you make a tribute gift to Lifeworks, the honoree will receive a note indicating your gift was made in their name or in honor of their celebration.

Touch the hearts of those around you with your tribute gift today. Make your secure contribution online at **www.lifeworks.org** or by sending your payment and information in the enclosed envelope.

SAVE THE DATE

**The Lifeworks Leadership Circle Luncheon is
Thursday, February 3, 2011 at
Mendakota Country Club in Mendota Heights.**

Nominations for the 2010 Annual Awards open on December 1 **2010** annual award nominations

Each year Lifeworks recognizes individuals and businesses that go far above and beyond the normal status quo. The people who give 110% each day, providing valuable service to the community around them. In 1986, Lifeworks began honoring the contributions people with disabilities make to the community and to recognize the individuals and businesses who help the people we support succeed and live full, meaningful lives. Help us now to choose new award winners in these following categories:

- Employer of the Year
- Advocate of the Year
- Personal Achievement

Complete your nomination online at **www.lifeworks.org/nominate**

This is your chance to recognize those who make a difference every day. Nominate and come celebrate with us at the award presentations during the Annual Celebration on April 21, 2011!

Cheng Vang: Sometimes Student – Full Time Fisherman

written by Kath Pengelly, volunteer and advocate coordinator, Lifeworks



I first met Cheng in March of 2010 at an internship fair at Gustavus College in St. Peter. I was recruiting summer volunteers to spend time at our program locations learning about Lifeworks and people with disabilities. Cheng approached me and said that he was interested and when I asked him what his interests and hobbies were he responded quickly and emphatically, “fishing.”

It stopped me for a moment, I hadn’t ever thought about starting a fishing program. It’s hard to talk to Cheng about fishing without getting enthused yourself, so I bought the idea and brought it back to Lifeworks Eagan to sell.

Cheng recently began his senior year at Gustavus. He is studying neuroscience and would like to one day be a psychiatrist. I asked Cheng why he wanted this volunteer opportunity and he said, “I love fishing and I have always wanted to share my passion with others. I have especially wanted to teach people with disabilities how to fish because I worry that this group of people might not get a chance to try it.”

Our first step in the process was to get fishing licenses for all 30 of the interested members; fortunately we had a few months before school was out for Cheng in order to accomplish this task. Cheng gave us a list of basic equipment needed and between the generosity of our staff and a new founded partnership with another nonprofit, Fishing for Life, we gathered enough rods, reels, line, hooks, and bobbers to begin.

In early June, Cheng came to Lifeworks Eagan to talk about fishing, equipment, to meet the potential fishermen, and share enthusiasm for his passion. Finally on June 11, a group of five hopeful fishermen traveled to Rogers Lake in Mendota Heights and the real fun began. The total catch of the day was 25 fish with Joe Foldenauer bringing in the most - seven sunfish and one large mouth bass. The enthusiasm that Cheng shared with me back in March was now all over the faces of the novice fishermen. The thrill of the line tugging your hand and winding the reel, hoping the fish will stay attached long enough for you to witness your success is how fish stories are made.

Every Friday there were at five to eight people fishing with Cheng and our staff. They have explored many of the lakes in Dakota County. The smiles and fish tales multiplied and grew enthusiastically each week. I asked several of the fishermen to talk about their adventure and several told me they had never fished before and they loved it. “Cheng is awesome,” Peter Loerch said, “We need to hook him into staying with us forever.” Peter went onto to say, “I caught a fish, I don’t know what kind it was and I don’t care, I loved going and I am going to go again July 30th.”



"Just to be out there at the lake," said Beth, "Just to be with Cheng."

"I never caught a fish before," added Elaine, "And Cheng really knows his fish."

John Buchan once said, "The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of what is elusive but attainable, a perpetual series of occasions for hope." How true, a simple pole, red and white bobber, a worm, and some quiet time on a pier with a friend can bring hope and a smile to many.

After seven weeks of fishing I asked Cheng what he has learned from us and he said, "This is my first time to be exposed to so many people with similar disabilities. I have learned that though some of them lack the ability to communicate effectively, they are still able to comprehend. The approach I take for each person varies a little and if I know which one works best, I can learn to meet their needs more. This has taught me how to be more patient with people."

I also asked what his favorite memory was and his response was quick, "I would have to say all of the smiles on the clients' faces when they catch a fish. Those are the kind of smiles where you know they are really having a good time."

"Would you do this again?" I asked; and Cheng responded, "Definitely!"

Thank you Cheng for bringing your passion to us, this has been a summer we will never forget.

Do you have a something you are passionate about and would like to share with others? Sharing what you love with others is one of the best gifts you can give. find out more about volunteering with Lifeworks at www.lifeworks.org/make-an-impact



Top Left: Cheng Vang

Top Right: Fishing Rogers lake in Mendota Heights

Bottom Right: Celebrating the catch of the day.

thankyou

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March 1, 2010 and October 31, 2010

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A nonprofit serving people with disabilities

Lifeworks Services, Inc.

2965 Lone Oak Drive, Suite 160
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www.lifeworks.org

About Lifeworks

Lifeworks is a nonprofit organization that helps people with disabilities live fuller lives that are integrated into the flow of community experience. Through employment at area businesses, social enrichment opportunities, and customized support services, Lifeworks provides the tools clients need to build the lives they want to live. For more than 40 years, we have collaborated with employers, volunteers, and government agencies to create expanded opportunities for people with disabilities. For every individual who wants to learn more, do more, and contribute more, Lifeworks strives to provide the best possible support. For more information, visit lifeworks.org

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Giving to Lifeworks doesn't have to be an individual activity! Group giving is becoming more popular and convenient for clubs, associations, families or groups of friends! Pooling together your efforts for one cause can make a bigger impact than you ever could have imagined on your own.

Recently, Lifeworks received a gift from the group of MBA young professionals who organize Summer Soiree, a Twin Cities fundraiser benefitting local nonprofits. Their combined their efforts and dollars to raised \$10,000 for equipment and technology for the new Lifeworks Brooklyn Park facility. Without this gift, we never would have been able to purchase the state-of-the-art, adaptive computer and fitness equipment the people we support enjoy each day.

Learn more about giving to Lifeworks at www.lifeworks.org/make-an-impact

