



CHANGING LIVES THROUGH OPPORTUNITY



The Shooting Star

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Osborn Hospital Enclave – Jeff’s Story

When Jeff first started his position at the Osborn hospital enclave, he was placed into a role of housekeeping and janitorial services. Learning a variety of tasks, Jeff worked on cleaning restrooms, nursing stations, and everything in between. The work was abundant and kept Jeff busy, but he struggled with the overall quality of his work due to the time constraints and fast paced environment.

I helped him with gloves as he had issues with the repetition. I helped him with remembering which way to go when getting off an elevator so he wouldn’t keep getting lost. I helped him work on opening/checking doors to avoid entering isolation contact rooms. I worked with him on filling out the forms completely and checking them off, to the point where he is now self sufficient with the forms and fills them out himself. There are so many areas in his work ethic that he has improved on just thanks to following directions and absorbing information.

After a few months, the tasks of the hospital changed to cleaning and servicing the hand sanitizers throughout the hospital, removing the janitorial work. Specific training was required and all of the participants, including Jeff, were forced to start off brand new. Jeff took this opportunity to step up and flourish in his new job role. After training, Jeff would spend time at home working on his verbal introduction to patient rooms, as this was a new additional responsibility for the enclave.

Entering the rooms, Jeff began using an introduction he refined himself, knocking softly and walking in to say, “Hello! My name is Jeff and I’m here to clean and service your hand sanitizer...[checks hand sanitizer] Alright, you’re all set, have a good day!”

Ever so often, Jeff will stop and connect with a patient, whether it’s football, church, or just enjoying that it’s Friday. He always seems to leave a room more bright than when he entered it, which we’ve heard from both patients and staff alike.

Aside from his wonderful verbal skills, Jeff also finishes his routes to completion with 100% quality and has helped train new participants on proper room etiquette and how to introduce yourself. Jeff also works well by himself when someone is out sick. Jeff continues to display leadership qualities and a willingness to work that all other participants to look to for motivation and we couldn’t be happier to have him at Honor Health Osborn!

–Aaron Miles, Jeff’s Job Coach



From the President of the STARS’ Board

Did you know that you can improve the lives of individuals with developmental and cognitive disabilities and get a 100% state tax credit for your donation at the same time? Sounds too good to be true, right? It’s true!

You can support STARS and become part of our mission to improve the lives of individuals with developmental and cognitive disabilities AND get a 100% state tax credit for your donation for your generosity. Better yet- there’s still time (through April 15, 2017) to make a contribution for 2016 and claim your credit for the 2016 tax year!

That’s because STARS is a “qualifying charitable organization” according to Arizona law, which means you can claim a Credit for Contributions for

your contribution for anyone who itemizes on their State return. Individual taxpayers can donate up to \$400 and couples filing jointly can donate up to \$800 to STARS. This tax donation can be made in addition to any public/private school tax credit.

It only takes a few minutes, and it’ll mean so much to the folks that participate in our fun programs at STARS.

STARS offers meaningful programs and job opportunities which enhance the lives of our participants. You may have seen STARS’ participants bagging your groceries at Fry’s. If you have a Cox remote control in your house, chances are good it was refurbished by a STARS participant working at one of STARS’ two campuses in Scottsdale.

Our participants are paid for their work, and they get the same sense of purpose and fulfillment that you and I feel after a good day’s work. We also offer variety of programs to our participants - cooking and music classes, interesting field trips - and STARS has a vibrant and growing Youth Program.

It takes significant resources for STARS to provide the breadth and quality of these programs- and you can be our partner by taking a few minutes to visit our Tax Credit Web Page (starsaz.org/taxcredit). I promise it’ll give you a smile!

Will Humble, STARS’ Board Chair

From STARS' Creative Arts Director

Hi all,

I attended The Arizona Arts Congress on Tuesday and learned so much about the potential funding issues that could arise if current plans to defund the arts continue. The arts program could potentially be dealing with a double whammy, between low funding from DDD as well as a huge cut in the potential funding to our community partners which serves our participants. Funding towards potential grants could also be slashed.

I have attached a link to the Americans for the Arts Action Fund with a template letter to send to your US Reps and Senators. Please consider writing to your state and local representatives as well to tell them what cuts could mean for STARS and the population we serve.

www.votervoice.net/ARTSUSA/Campaigns/47344/Respond

If you have any questions, please let me know!

Taylor Buttrey, tbuttrey@starsaz.org

Youth Program at the Train Park

Our youth program had an amazing time at the train park on Indian Bend during Spring Break. We rode the train twice and the merry-go-round four times. The kids really enjoyed their time at the park. Sadly there were frowns all around when we had to leave. All in all it was a grand ole time.

—Alex,
Youth Program Instructor



Our participants got a raise!

Every day at STARS, we strive to provide the highest quality programs and services to our participants. This is why we are thrilled to announce that our participants recently received a raise! The implementation of the new minimum wage on January 1st affected our participants. All of our members working in the community are compensated at the minimum wage, so they received an automatic increase on January 1st. Additionally, through our wage determination process, the amount members are paid for piece work increased as well.

In our center-based employment program, determining member compensation is a comprehensive and meticulous process. In order to ensure that our center-based employment wages are fair, we conduct annual prevailing wage surveys. The prevailing wage (simply put) is an average wage of what other companies pay for similar work. Since the minimum wage increased, the prevailing wage increased, on average, 19%. We are delighted to see our participants earn more for the work they do!

—Gina Griffiths, Program Director



Advocacy Update

Hello STARS friends, families and supporters. STARS and all of our sister agencies have been very busy trying to illustrate our fiscal crisis to our elected officials. Proposition 206 is having dramatic effects on the network of DD providers and we are deeply concerned with network sustainability under the new wage requirements. While we are always thrilled with the idea of increasing pay for our amazing, dedicated and deserving staff, we do not have the flexibility to increase our revenue. To put it simply, your dry cleaner will charge you more to cover this increase, but we can't charge the state more to pay for services.

The Arizona Association of Providers for People with Disabilities estimates a cost of \$74 million related to Proposition 206

requirements (this does not address the longstanding funding deficit in our community). The provider community has been working to educate our state representatives and senators as well as Governor Ducey's staff. As the budget process moves forward, our work is intensifying! We are all working to ensure that the people we serve have a strong, high quality network of service providers! If you'd like to get involved in this effort, please contact Gina at ggriffiths@starsaz.org or 480.994.5704.

Thanks for all of the support and for trusting us with your loved ones!

Gina Griffiths, Program Director

Dave's Corner

Greetings STARS supporters!

Did I miss something?

The start of baseball's spring training has often been an indicator of several weeks of pleasant temperatures. Yet seemingly overnight, temps went from the glorious mid 70's to the simmering 90's! So, what happened to spring?

One trend I would like to see change this spring is for the Arizona State Legislature to adopt a budget that adequately funds providers for persons with developmental disabilities. You can help by sending an email to the Governor at: www.azgovernor.gov/engage/form/contact-governor-ducey. Choose "I am making a comment" and select "Budget" as the subject. Use the comments box to share your personal impact story. For tips on what to include, go to: www.aappd.org/legislative-advocacy/writing-elected-officials-and-community-leader

After you've contacted the Governor, I encourage you to let me know. I don't want to miss out on the opportunity to thank you for your thoughtful support!

Dave

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