

PDS Newsletter

Winter 2008/2009

Dedicated to the fantastic staff of Pacific Diversified Services

Happy New Year!

We at PDS are thrilled to be ringing in the new year. 2009 is bound to be an exciting and fresh start for our entire country! On behalf of all of the staff and clients of Pacific Diversified Services I want to thank you so much for collaborating with us to help people with developmental disabilities lead rich fulfilling lives. The good tidings of the holidays remind us that our success would not be possible without you.

With warm wishes to you and your loved ones,

Lisa Girdali

Co-founder and Executive Director, Pacific Diversified Services



Kevin, Jarrod & Don M after a rousing day of tennis

911-R Irwin Street
San Rafael, California 94901



Happy New Year

*From the clients and staff of
Pacific Diversified Services*

PDS Client News



Lisa Girdali and Guy

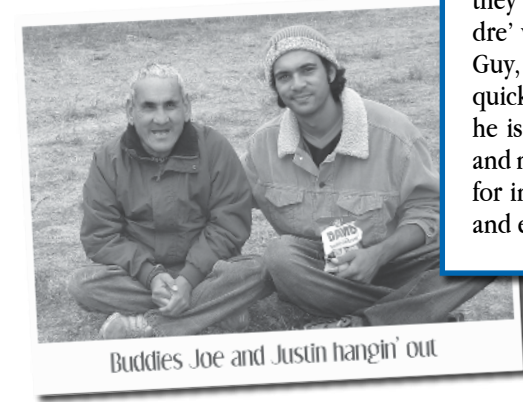
We are so pleased to introduce our newest client, **Guy!** Guy is an old friend of Lisa Girdali. He often visited with her and her son Andre' at the Marinwood Pool, where they were all members. In fact Lisa knew Guy before Andre' was born and she had always hoped to work with Guy, because he seemed so sweet and capable. Guy quickly obtained a position at Pasta Pomodoro, where he is setting tables. Guy is already having a great time and making friends at PDS. He loves crows-which makes for interesting conversations and he is a conscientious and earnest young man.



Mary working hard in the Whole Foods produce department



Cathy loves her job at Border, Books & Music



Buddies Joe and Justin hangin' out



Scott and Marc proudly display their catch of the day

Pride
Diversity
Prestige
Partnership
Pay

Diligence
Dignity
Dedication
Determination

Self-Sufficiency
Strength
Self-Determination
Satisfaction
Support

Generous Donors
2008-2009 Fiscal Year

Power Donors

Jennifer A. Maxwell Fund

Strength Donors

Mike & Susan Brandeberry
The Doering Family Foundation, LTD
Herbst Foundation, Inc.
Andrew & Jennifer Kirmse

Partnership Donors

The Barron Family
Annette Bernardini
Andre Blanadet
Jacqueline Branch
Peter Carrol
Dan & Ellen Cremin
Julia Delamater
Keith Denkler, MD
Jeffrey Finci
Richard Falk & Francine Falk-Allen
Micheal & Donna Franzblau
Paul Geffner
Melanie Giusti
Google
Denise Greenberg
Margaret Hallett
Marjorie Headley
Ray Hollinger
Alison Howard
Ann Jessup
Candace Johnson
Amy Koel
Bertram Koel, M.D.
Renee Golanty-Koel, Ph.D.
David & Ginger Koel
Felicia Kramarz
Catherine Less
Ravi Lescher
Anthony Leuin & Jean Bertrand
Mary Mathews
Jennifer Maxwell
Bettina Cassayre Moore
Jamie Myers
Alice Nakahata
Theresa Olson
Charles Peterfy & Jo-Anne Hume Peterfy
Charles & Gene Pratt
Lynn Pulliam, Ph.D.
Richard Reubin, Ph.D.
Ellen G. Ruderman, Ph.D.
Brian Schirano
Karl Schramm
William & Kathleen Sloan
William & Mitzi Smiley
Brian Smith
Carl & Rocio Smith
Larry Toney & Gloria Mattioli
Dennis & Angela Tucker
Steve Urell
United Way
Dick Whitley
Scott Wilson
Henry & Katherine Wong
Susanna Zuniga
Rex Johnson in honor of
Jane & in memory of
Helmer Johnson

A New Year's Thank You from Executive Director Lisa Giraldi



Lisa Giraldi

You may have heard that PDS experienced a bit of a crisis when we learned that our line of credit from American Express, due to the downturn of the economy and the companies decision to discontinue all unsecured lines of credit for all their customers. Further exacerbating the problem, was the fact that our expected donations, were just not coming in at the time we really needed them.

Luckily there were many "angels" that came to the rescue of PDS, just in time.

Jennifer Maxwell decided to donate \$30,000 from the Brian and Jennifer Maxwell fund, to promote diet and exercise for our clients, who could all benefit from getting in shape and/or losing some weight. We plan to hire a nutritionist to meet monthly with our clients to teach them about proper nutrition and we will be promoting healthier eating and ramping up exercise opportunities for our clientele. This will be lifesaving for individuals who are at risk for heart disease and Type 2 diabetes,

Here is what Ginger Koel (Don M.'s mom) said when she heard the news about Jennifer's donation:

"THANK GOD!!!!!! I could kiss Jennifer's pretty little feet. What a generous woman, Thank God the world still has wonderful people like this. Nice just before the holidays. "

And there have been countless others who have stepped up to the plate to make generous contributions-friends, family members, co-workers, and tennis students of my husband Leo Giraldi, have opened their hearts and pocket books to help PDS. Truly, I am absolutely blown away by the generosity and kindness shown to us.

Metallica generously donated two tickets to their sold out show an some great autographed memorabilia which served as a catalyst well timed and much fundraiser for us. Thank you to everyone who purchased raffle tickets.

And there are parents and siblings of clients who have worked tirelessly on my behalf-organizing the raffle, and doing all the promotional and leg work that it takes to pull a fundraiser off. But what I truly value is the moral support these people have offered me, I continue to be astounded and impressed by the tireless dedication and perseverance these family members show toward ensuring their adult children with disabilities receive quality care. It is unbelievable to see how these parents keep up the fight for their children, and do so with grace and positivity. I am speaking specifically of David and Ginger Koel (Don M.'s parents), Pati Stoliar and Jennifer Kirmsey (Robin's mom and sister), Dennis Tucker (Marc's dad) and Stu Leeb (Betsy's dad). All of the parents of our clients are fantastic, but these people deserve special recognition for always "being there" for me and for PDS, in good times and bad.

PDS is truly like a family. So many of us have been so close for so many years. It's really touching to see how we can rally together and sustain this wonderful web of support for our hardworking and deserving clients with developmental disabilities.

Some people will not be recognized in this newsletter as it may go "to press" before we can add your name. But thank you to everyone -- those who have given and those that will give in the future. We need and appreciate you, more than I can express.

Be sure to check out the new PDS website. You can click on "Donate Now" to make donations through Paypal, or to sign up for United Way and Escrip. We need your support now more than ever! Our new webmaster, Lisa Keene, also donated her time to design and coordinate the production of this newsletter. www.quickandcleanwebsites.com

www.pdsmarin.org



Ben Ashe



Corinne Amare



Darlan Cash



Gary Kaplan



Gerry O'Reilly



Justin Burke

I am often told "PDS has the greatest staff" and it is true. We typically recruit people from Craigslist where we advertise that candidates do not necessarily need to have experience because we provide two weeks training. We find that these inexperienced staff are often "fresher" and they are typically enthusiastic about the prospect of working a field that is fun, but also meaningful and intrinsically rewarding. They always laugh about the fact that they get paid to go to the movies with our clients!

At PDS we do not take our hiring process lightly. We recognize the huge responsibility our Employment and Community Support Facilitators (ECSF's) have in transporting our clients and seeing to our clients' personal and important needs. We do through background checks online and we always check at least 3 personal or professional references to ask about a prospective employee's character and to ask if they can imagine the person doing this sort of work. Then we provide no less than 2 weeks of training. For the first week our new employees shadow a co-worker and observe their every move. In the second week of training our new employees are accompanied by a co-worker who watches them in action and gives final tips before our brand new ECSF "flies solo."

Throughout an ECSF's tenure with PDS they attend a staff meeting every Thursday where they receive ongoing advice, support and training into client specific issues. We hold trainings in CPR and First Aid as well as other topics like sign language and positive behavioral approaches. We discuss the words we use to describe our clients and how to portray them with dignity when we are acting as liaisons at their workplaces and in the community. It is costly to hold these staff meetings every week-especially since we have to pay time and a half to staff that are working beyond their 8 hour day. But we find these meetings to be invaluable-and a definitely a key to our success.

PDS also does terminate employment when necessary. This may seem unremarkable to people outside of our field but for struggling non-profits, it is often easier to look the other way than it is to confront issues head on. At PDS we believe that our clients deserve to be advocated for, even when it is inconvenient and uncomfortable for us to take their sides. In many cases, staff that have moved on, even when it was not by choice, have kept in touch with PDS and have not had hard feelings because they recognize their leaving was probably for the best.

But most importantly our staff have kindness, empathy and compassion that takes precedence over any screening, training or discipline they receive from PDS. They might be "needles in haystack" but we manage to find people with huge hearts, small egos and fun, engaging personalities. Our staff is ethnically diverse, and we come from different countries and range from 20 to 60 plus of age, but we all have something in common. We care about people with developmental disabilities and we want to allow them all the opportunities that life has to offer. Whether it is taking Lisa T. on a scary roller coaster at Marine World or finding just the right record for David at the second hand store, the PDS staff put their hearts into everything they do. They share their interests like fishing, photography, weight lifting, bike riding and shopping with our clients and they participate in these activities with them, like the true friends they are. And when the going gets tough at work, or in the community when our clients are discriminated against or mistreated in any way, our staff are their protectors and their advocates.

To the current and former staff members: Thank you so much! We appreciate you for who you are and what you do. The world is better place because of you!

www.pdsmarin.org



Jarrod Allen



Megan Rincon



Scott Blood



Scott Brandeberry



Shirley Chao



Victoria Diego

Meet the Staff of PDS

Current PDS
Employers

BANANA REPUBLIC

BORDERS.

COSTCO
WHOLESALE

COST PLUS
WORLD MARKET
Unique, authentic, and always affordable.

★ macy's



MERIDIAN
SPORTS CLUBS

OLD NAVY

pasta
pomodoro

PETCO
Where the pets go.

Ritter
center



WHOLE
FOODS
MARKET

wildcare

WOODLANDS MARKET
Your local purveyor

Youth in Arts.