

JVS pathways

EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS
ENRICHING LIVES

SUMMER 2011

New Program Offers Innovative Approach to Work

As eight people package products for retail sale, six others do puzzles or arts and crafts or watch movies in another part of the room. They're upbeat, friendly and productive.

These are the X-Plorers of Jewish Vocational Service, a program that features a mixture of recreation, social activities and work for consumers with developmental disabilities who prefer lighter workloads.

The X-Plorers arose from the recognition that some consumers wanted to increase the amount of time they spend participating in recreational and social activities.

They once did assembly and packaging work all day with dozens of co-workers in the JVS Work Center in Blue Ash. Now, with fewer co-workers, there are fewer distractions, making them more productive.

Matthew Cromer, 24, of Sycamore Township, loves the X-Plorers. Cromer had a

difficult time focusing in the Work Center because so many things are happening at once. "The X-Plorers are more relaxing and laid-back," he says.

The X-Plorers are funded by Hamilton County Developmental Disabilities Services and Medicaid. A similar program with 21 consumers exists at the JVS location on Harrison Avenue on the West Side.

"We wanted to provide meaningful activities and minimize behavioral problems," says JVS Vice President Rich Davis. "Our consumers and staff are thrilled with the new program."



JVS Consumers Font Swift, left, and Joey Bang, who are in the X-Plorers program, work on an art project.

they've moved to larger rooms.

The current room is the size of a classroom. Dozens of board games and books sit on shelves. Hanging from the ceiling are miniature replicas of the planets. On the floor in a corner are bean bag chairs.

Programming focuses on themes. During their Disney week, they watched Disney movies on a large-screen TV, then created artwork based on the movies.

Guest speakers have talked about their overseas vacation trips and showed photos. A musician performed on his guitar and puppeteers put on a show. They've taken field trips to a firehouse, airport, historic Indian village and doughnut bakery.

Some consumers do individual activities while others work in teams. Says David Shell, a JVS work adjustment specialist, "There's something for everybody all the time if they want it."

Because of the program's popularity, the number of X-Plorers has grown to about 20 since the group came together in October 2009. As a result, several times



X-Plorer Taylor Weiss listens as David Shell, a JVS work adjustment specialist, reads a book.

MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE X-PLORERS

More information about the X-Plorers is available from JVS.

Please contact Keith Hammond at 513-985-0515 or khammond@jvscinti.org.

Message to the Community

Working Together to Serve People Better

Dear Friends:

Though we wish governments provided more funding for social services, especially during these difficult times, we do not expect government to solve societal problems. That's why we're thrilled that two key JVS funders have initiated long-range planning to better help the community. The United Way of Greater Cincinnati this spring announced its Bold Goals, a plan designed to make sure residents are better educated, more financially stable and healthier. "Because the goals are so bold, the only way we're really going to be able to achieve them is by all working together," says United Way Chair Valarie Sheppard.

Likewise, the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati has been seeking broad input on a plan that would lead toward a more vibrant Jewish community, one that's envied across the nation. It's called Cincinnati 2020. Andy Berger, a Jewish Federation vice president, says "The plan is to have ... all the organizations and synagogues in the community pull in the same direction and work to achieve this vision together." It is efforts like these that help JVS maintain its focus in challenging times, helping us empower individuals to enrich their lives.

How can you help?

- Learn more about the planning going on at the United Way and Jewish Federation and consider getting involved: www.uwgc.org and www.jewishcincinnati.org.
- Let us know your ideas about leveraging every resource to maintain the safety net for those with disabilities and other disadvantages. All of us must continue to identify more innovative, efficient and effective ways to enhance the lives of those we serve.

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JVS is grateful to its funding partners:



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Workum internships expose students to Jewish nonprofits

For years, Molly Cramer figured that she'd enjoy working after college as a clinical psychologist in private practice. But after only a few weeks as a JVS intern, she's now considering a career in the nonprofit world, too.



Intern Molly Cramer

She's studying leadership and psychology.

During her eight-week internship, she's worked in various JVS programs, including the Work Center and the Cincinnati Career Network in Blue Ash.

She's learning how challenging the work can be. But she says it's worthwhile and rewarding. "At the end of the day," she says, "it's all about helping our clients."

"This has kind of opened my eyes to new things," she says. "I've really fallen in love with Jewish Vocational Service."

Cramer is one of 10 interns working this summer at Jewish community agencies in Greater Cincinnati through the Workum Fund Summer Intern Program.

Since 1987, many former interns have used their experiences as Workum interns as springboards for nonprofit careers. The internships are funded by the Workum Foundation, whose roots date back to 1917 as a program of the National Council of Jewish Women, Cincinnati section.

Cramer, of Blue Ash, a 2010 graduate of Sycamore High School, will be entering her sophomore year this fall at the University of Richmond.

With JVS support, Chris Stoner progresses toward his goals

At an age when many people are uncertain about their career paths, Chris Stoner knows exactly what he wants to do.

He wants to work in the world of culinary arts. And since April, that's what he's been doing.

With a passion for cooking, Stoner, 20, landed a job at Buffalo Joe's Family Restaurant in Fairfield. And after only a few months, he had progressed from washing dishes and preparing raw ingredients to the added responsibility of cooking.

Stoner's successful journey started when he was in high school. He realized cooking intrigued him, so he enrolled in the culinary arts program at Butler Tech High School.

Since his 2009 graduation, Stoner, who has a developmental disability, has been pursuing his goals with guidance from JVS programs funded by the United Way of Greater Cincinnati and the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission.

JVS arranged a temporary work opportunity in a country club kitchen. While there, he learned new skills and gained valuable experience.



JVS consumer Chris Stoner works in the kitchen at Buffalo Joe's Family Restaurant in Fairfield. The job makes Stoner feel great. "I'm glad I have something to look forward to in the future."

With limited transportation options and limited work experience, he began a job search with help from JVS. Soon thereafter, Butler County started a new bus route, which expanded his transportation options. He landed the job at Buffalo Joe's, working about 18 hours a week.

Stoner says he has become more focused because of the experience he's getting. He realizes dirty dishes and food orders could quickly pile up if he allows himself to become distracted. "When we're busy, there's no time to mess around."

Kenji Matsuda, Buffalo Joe's co-owner, says Stoner has learned the importance of

doing his job correctly and takes criticism well. With practice, he's becoming a better cook. "I'm hoping he'll cook more for us," Matsuda says.

The job makes Stoner feel great. "I'm glad I have something to look forward to in the future." And years from now, he hopes to have achieved some other goals: going to college to study culinary arts and business, and opening a restaurant.

Highlighting Some JVS Accomplishments in the Last Year

Community Integration

- Provided 87 people who have developmental disabilities with work and wellness activities at five YMCAs.
- Organized activities at JVS for 85 older adults who have developmental disabilities.
- Provided 53 people who are not able to get out of their homes independently with one-on-one interaction and personalized activities in their homes and at various community locations.

Community Employment

- Helped 47 people with disabilities start community employment.
- They earned an average wage of \$9.44 per hour.
- Organized and supervised crews of people with developmental disabilities to work in four for-profit community businesses.

Employment and Training

- Provided work options for 357 people with disabilities who are unable to maintain employment in the community.
- Operated a fleet of 17 vehicles, transporting 145 people each day to employment and programming sites at JVS and in the community.
- Helped more than 70 people improve their academic skills to achieve greater levels of employability.

The above outcomes report is for the 12 months ending Dec. 31, 2010.

CINCINNATI PRESENTS

REEL ABILITIES
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award-winning films celebrating the lives, stories, and art of people with disabilities

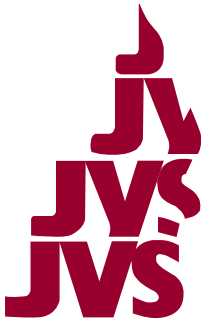
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Tips for Interacting with People with Disabilities

- When speaking with a person with a disability, talk directly to the person, not his or her companion.
- If you believe that an individual with a disability needs assistance, offer the assistance, but wait for your offer to be accepted before trying to help.
- If you are interviewing a job candidate with a disability, listen to what the individual has to offer. Do not make assumptions about what that person can or cannot do.
- If you are speaking to a person who is blind, be sure to identify yourself at the beginning of the conversation and announce when you are leaving.
- If you are having a conversation with a person who uses a wheelchair, try to put yourself at the person's eye level. Never lean on or touch a person's wheelchair or any other assistive device.

Source: www.disability.gov

CAREER WORKSHOPS IN SEPTEMBER

The JVS Cincinnati Career Network will offer five workshops in September aimed at helping job-seekers improve their job-hunting skills. All sessions will be free at JVS, 4300 Rossplain Road, Blue Ash. Reservations are required by contacting a CCN career consultant at 513-985-0515 or ccn@jvscinti.org

Career Huddle: Client Exchange & Strategy Session

Tuesday, Sept. 6, 1-2 p.m.

This discussion group touches on various topics, including overcoming hurdles and upgrading your materials and techniques.

Begin the Process: Job Search Prep

Thursday, Sept. 8, 1-2 p.m.

This session focuses on preparing to start a job search, including organizing, planning, setting priorities and scheduling activities.

Career Huddle: Get Out & Network

Tuesday, Sept. 13, 1-2 p.m.

This workshop explores how to use networking to access the vast number of unadvertised jobs.

Job Search Boot Camp

Thursday, Sept. 22, 1-2:30 p.m.

This workshop delves into various topics, including career options, resumes and wowing employers.

Career Huddle: Linked In & You

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 1-2 p.m.

This is an advanced Linked In workshop for people who already are using LinkedIn.