

The HIRRS Circulator

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Hey Everyone,

Fall has arrived. The leaves are changing and Halloween is right around the corner. This autumn, we here at HIRRS are looking forward to having a great time in the cool weather while trying to recover from the heat of summer. In this issue of the newsletter, we will tell you about our plans for the fall months, what is new in the Day Program, and our amazing adventures thus far! We hope you enjoy our newsletter, and be sure to eat LOTS of candy on Halloween! **A special thanks to Katie for helping to type the newsletter.**

Warmly Yours,

The HIRRS Circulator Staff

Happy Birthday to all of our July, August, and September babies!

Mary Jane, July 9th
Rashida, July 11th
Carrie, July 13th
Jason L., July 22nd
Rick, August 25th
Chelsea, September 10th

Katie, July 9th
Trish, July 12th
Jermaine, July 14th
Jason P., August 16th
Sean, September 7th
Liz, September 12th



What's New at HIRRS?

We have two new day program staff members to welcome to the crew! They are pretty cool and interesting so we decided to interview them for the newsletter. Their names are Chelsea and Erica. We hope you like the interviews!

Interview with Chelsea

How did you hear about the HIRRS organization?

I was looking for a new job in the rehabilitation field and I came across HIRRS online.

Where are you from?

I was born in Annapolis, MD and I grew up in Crofton, MD.

What motivated you to want to work with people with traumatic brain injury?

I have previously worked with people with schizophrenia, autism and Alzheimer's so traumatic brain injuries really interested me.

Have you had any experience working with brain injured clients prior to this job?

I have worked with elderly people with dementia and Alzheimer's, which I consider similar to brain injury. But – I don't have direct experience with TBI. I think my background in mental illness really helps me do well with this job.

What was the last school you went to and what was your degree?

I went to University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). I received my Bachelor's in Psychology and Medical Sociology. WOOF WOOF GO retrievers!

What is your favorite holiday?

My favorite holiday is my birthday. Wait, that's not celebrated nationally? Fine...Christmas is good too.

What is your favorite sport?

My favorite sport is Olympic Couch Surfing. But I do like to watch NFL games, RAVENS!

Who is your favorite band and/or singer?

TAYLOR SWIFT, duh.

What is your favorite place to go on vacation?

My favorite vacation spot is Southern Germany. And that's where I recently got engaged ☺

What is your favorite food?

I love sushi and Vietnamese food!



Chelsea & Erica, Day Program Staff

Interview with Erica

How did you hear about the HIRRS organization?

I actually was a summer intern here almost 10 years ago when I was in high school!

Where are you from?

I was born in Washington DC and grew up in Bethesda.

What motivated you to want to work with people with traumatic brain injury?

I've always been interested in the brain and have done research in TBI, and I wanted to see how it impacts people in the real world.

Have you had any experience working with brain injured clients prior to this job?

No, but I have experience worked with brain injured mice! In my research I looked at the relationship between TBIs and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in rodents.

What was the last school you went to and what was your degree?

I got my BA in psychology from George Washington University in 2011, and I also studied at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. But don't worry, I'm not an Eagles fan!

What is your favorite holiday?

Thanksgiving – I love the food and spending time with my family.

What is your favorite sport?

I grew up riding horses – is that a sport?

Who is your favorite band and/or singer?

I love indie music, like Tennis and Beach House. (So NOT Taylor Swift!)

What is your favorite place to go on vacation?

I love Paris, Barcelona, and Portugal. Also, anywhere I can lie on a tropical beach!

What is your favorite food?

Sushi! At least Chelsea and I agree on something...

News from the Day Program

The Gardening Group has been hard at work maintaining the HIRRS garden plot. Their work has not gone to waste because they have really developed a green thumb! Take a look for yourself...



This sunflower grew to be VERY, VERY tall and beautiful!

Pictured Right: Quinn H. is very excited to discover his hard work has paid off with delicious POTATOES



Pictured Left: Danny M., Quinn H., and Jason P. keeping the garden neat and tidy by working with gardening tools

Notes from Vocational Staff

Many individuals who come to HIRRS have come to the Vocational Staff asking how to get a job and how they can prepare themselves for work. In each newsletter, the Vocational Department will address various topics related to work and returning to work. If you have any ideas for the Voc. Staff on what topic you'd like to see, let Sarah and the Vocational Staff know!

Think about what volunteering can do for you...

For those who have not worked before, each member of the HIRRS vocational department will encourage you to get out there and volunteer. There are many volunteer opportunities out in the community. Take a look at Montgomery County Volunteer Center (www.montgomeryserves.org) or if you are in other counties in Maryland, you can look at the Maryland Volunteer Centers (marylandvolunteercenters.org) where they can connect you to centers in other counties. You can volunteer for a day or you can try to volunteer for a few months. Participating in a volunteer opportunity can help you learn more about yourself and answer the questions about what you want to do, what you don't want to do, what you did well, and what you didn't do well. Volunteer opportunities are vast and offer you a chance to try different job areas and will not tie you down by doing just one job, giving you more job related experience! Other bonuses for volunteering are:

- **It looks good on a resume:** Having a few volunteer jobs listed on your resume is a lot better than having nothing and it can highlight the new skills that you learned.
- **You can learn new skills:** Taking a volunteer position can help you improve your abilities and give you an opportunity to learn new skills you can only get in a job setting.
- **Your volunteer supervisor can help evaluate your potential to be an employee:** While volunteering is good at helping you learn more about yourself, it is sometimes great to get someone else's perspective on how you are as a worker, what you are good at, and what you need to work on more. Your supervisor can be a great source for this information, so ask them! You can learn how you can improve and what they like most about working with you. As an added bonus, your supervisor could help to provide a potential recommendation if you do well at your volunteer tasks, work well with others, and can tell your next supervisor what you do best.

If you are really serious about working, look into volunteering. You do not have to volunteer for a long time if you do not want to, but even a short term volunteer job can help you become more aware of your current skill level and interests. Give it a try!

By: Sarah Gagnon, Director of Vocational Services

Creative Expression

For this issue of “HIRRS Circulator”, participants of Svetlana’s Creative Expression Group wanted to do something very different. Though they take pride in the individual projects they submit to our newsletter, this time everybody decided to engage in a joint adventure. Participants also wanted to do something BIG. And what is bigger than the universe? The result of their artistic endeavor is this beautiful and complex painting. Can you guess what the question marks and other symbols on the painting stand for?

“Our Universe”



Members of Creative Expression Group talked about the fall season, its beauty and its parallels with a human life. Participants read quotes by famous authors and were inspired to write their own. We hope that you will appreciate their wit and wisdom.

* A breezy frigid spooky night, fall night, on a pumpkin patch.

* Taking a colorful stroll through the woods on an Autumn Day.

- Christina C.



* The falling leaves are the exact opposite of my aspirations.

* It's time we start over in fall... Let's plant!

- Trish D.



* Just now leaves are falling until flakes tomorrow. Colors are dull more than the 4th of July to be covered, made all white, in a few months to come.

- Ian C.



* The change of the seasons is like the circle of life, it never ends.

* There is only today never a tomorrow like the fallen leaves.

* Don't waste the fall season for tomorrow may never come.

- Mark S.



* The Fall is a relaxing time of year. The temperatures are perfect, and the colors of the leaves are beautiful. Fall is a wonderful season to look forward to.

- Marie D.



* When I was growing up, fall and football were a couple.

* Time to go back to school.

- Nick M.



* Without the fallin' of the leaves
No recyclin' of the Earth could go thru
Cuz a changin' of the seasons is what
it's gotta do.

Seasons have to change.
Maybe they don't want to.
But guess what?
They have to.

- Dave H.



Outings Recaps and Other Activities

Trainwreck – Movie Review

By Dave H.

This movie stunk. Amy Schumer played herself. Most of the movie was raunchy and funny to grown-ups, yet not good for everyone. I wouldn't bring my future kids to watch this flick.



Relaxing at Brookside Gardens!

Homestead Farms Adventures

By Mark S.

My Experience at Homestead Farms was unlike any other HIRRS trip planning adventure. Because I chased goats and put them back in their fences. I now will be known as the official "Homestead Farms Goat Herder".

Recent Outings

Recent Outings	
July 1	Homestead Farms Berry Picking
July 22	Movies – Ant Man
July 31	Movies – Trainwreck & Minions
August 14	Bowling @ Bowl America
August 20	Movies – Mission Impossible
August 28	Brookside Gardens
September 11	Picnic at Glen Echo Park
September 16	Homestead Farms Apple Picking



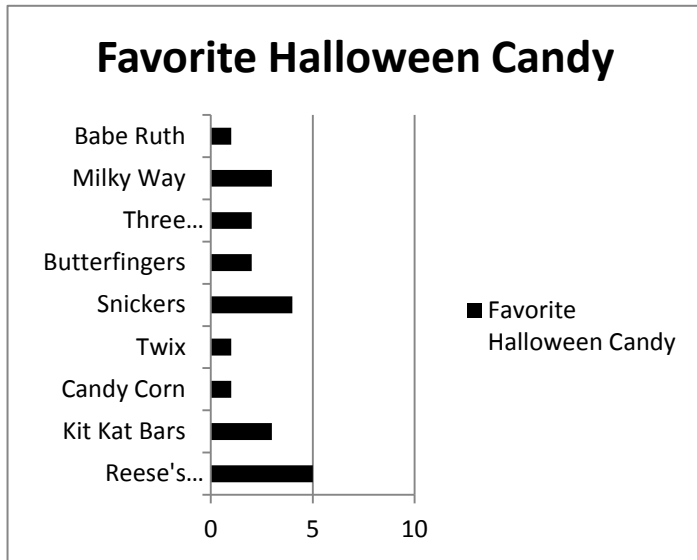
Mark "Professional Goat Herder"



Apple picking at Homestead Farms!

Halloween Reminiscing

With Halloween around the corner, some HIRRS clients reminisced about their spooky Halloween memories and voted on their favorite candies!



Danny M. remembered all of the wonderful candy he got on Halloween. When he was 5 years old he dressed up as G.I. Joe, but now he likes to wear face paint. This year he plans on dressing up as a ghost! Woooooo, scary!

Eric M. enjoyed remembering trick-or-treating with his sister, Jill. He liked dressing up as a pirate, but now he doesn't dress up – he will just go as himself to Halloween events.

Mark S. remembered going trick-or-treating with his family. He liked to dress up as super heroes.

He also liked to dress up as Rock Stars. This year Mark plans on dressing up as Donald Trump, because he is so awesome.

It's Hard to Say Goodbye

Change is a constant part of our lives, it can be hard at times but it can also be a really great adventure. HIRRS clients wrote about their feelings on change and wrote farewell notes to previous HIRRS Day Program staff member Sophie.

Sophie, I will miss you at H.I.R.R.S and I hope you will come visit us sometime. My fondest memories are you teaching Brain Gym and Newsletter Group. I hope you can do well in school and finish your Master's Degree!

From, Eric M.

Dear Sophie, You not only helped me through my rehabilitation you always encouraged me to do my best. Rehabilitation has many aspects, you helped me conquer some. Thank you for your efforts, you will be missed!

From, Trish

Sophie, I know you will do great at whatever you do because you are a shining star that'll never be dimmed. My favorite memory of you is when I ride my bike past Bauer Drive... it always makes me think of you!

Best of Luck, Dave

*For Sophie,
My favorite memory of Sophie is that I knew she was always there to brighten my day. You will be sadly missed and loved by me especially because I enjoyed your laugh, your smile and your can-do attitude. I still like you even though you didn't take me to the Taylor Swift concert. Love, Mark.*

Bye, bye, I hope you enjoy yourself and the bright future that lies in front of you. Keep your eyes on your goals and remember this is the way to get there! Thank you for the help you gave to all of the clients at H.I.R.R.S.

Thanks, Nick

Current Topics

Technology

“What does Technology mean to you? How has it changed over time?”

Technology is good because it is always getting better for the future. I think that technology can help the military advance with different machinery.

- Danny M.

Technology has been a life saver for me. I love my iPhone and I use it quite frequently. It is also a great tool if you are in danger; want to schedule events, appointments, etc.

- Jason P.

Technology is a great advancement for all humans. It is something that builds and builds overtime. The sky is really the limit for technology.

- Dave H.

Sports

“What’s your favorite sports team and/or player?”

My favorite sports team is the Washington Nationals.

The Nationals record is AMAZING, they are in 2nd Place in their Division. My favorite Player is Bryce Harper.

- Eric M.

My favorite sports team is the Indiana Pacers, Basketball! #31 Reggie Miller is 6’7” and led the Pacers to the championship series. They unfortunately lost to the LA Lakers.

- Nicholas M.

All you have to know is that this is Mark S. REDSKINS NATION!!!

- Mark S.



Fashion



“Why is fashion important to you? How do you think fashion impacts the individual?”

Fashion depicts who I am and what is important to me. I also love that fashion goes hand-to-hand with Jewelry.

- Trish D.

I like to think that fashion expresses what you are doing at that time. For example, when you are at work you wear your uniform. When you are at school you can really be unique.

- Nicholas M.

Extra! Extra! Read All About It!



Hello. This article is about the Special Olympics. I competed in the golfing event. I was playing in my first golf tournament. I had a lot of practice and yes, I do have a golf coach by the name of Martin. Anyhow back to what I was saying about the tournament. There were over 20 golfers that competed. There were several different skill units such as: longest drive, longest putt, shortest putt, chipping, and closest to the pin hole. The Special Olympics director came out to the tent on the first green and announced, "ladies and gentlemen: in first place with 148 points, competing in the golfing venue, not only winning the tournament but setting brand new Special Olympics records... congratulations Mr. JASON P. You know to be totally honest with you, some shots were not only skill but a lot of luck. Thank you for reading my article!

The HIRrz ZOO By Dave H.

There once was this brain injured rhinoceros that attended the HIRrz Zoo. The Zoo was located in Rockville, MD and it helped brain injured animals get back on their paws. The Rhinoceros' name was Misbehavid. Misbehavid was a determined little rhino and would find himself running into walls all of the time. He had caretakers that would try to guide him, but he never really listened to them until one day. The caretaker told him that he should try to work on his goals so that he could better himself. While working on his goals, one of his caretakers had a new job opportunity. Misbehavid was upset but really what could be done? Nothing. He had to remind himself that change happens sometimes. So all of a sudden he felt such motivation to escape from the Zoo. He knew he would have to find either a good caretaker or some really green grassy fields to live off of. Misbehavid, developed a plan with his caretakers, he escaped from the zoo and he lived happily ever after.