

The HIRRS Circulator

April 2016, Issue Eighteen

Words from the Circulator Staff:

Hello Everyone,

Woo Hoo! We are excited to announce the New Year, 2016! Winter is finally over. Hopefully, some April showers will bring May flowers. In this issue of the newsletter you will read about some adventures that we had at the Day Program and out in the community, and read some of our creative writings.

As usual, we will provide you with some excellent pieces from Svetlana's Creative Expression Group. We also have an update from our Brooke Meadow Program! Also, a huge thanks to **Katie** for typing many of the excerpts.

Enjoy the reading,
The HIRRS
Circulator
Staff



Above: A few of our clients FINALLY being able to enjoy the spring weather at Brookeside Gardens

Happy Birthday: January, February, March

Eric - January 3

Payman - January 29

Ben - January 16

Denise - February 25

Andre - January 28

Sam - March 18

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Who's New at HIRRS?

*We have two new Speech Interns to welcome to the program, Jenna and Kim. They seem very nice and we are excited to share their interviews with you! A special thank you to **Liz** for interviewing these ladies!*

Right: Our speech intern **Kim** & client **Liz**

Far Right: Our speech intern **Jenna**



Interview with Jenna & Kim

How did you hear about the HIRRS organization?

Jenna: I heard about this opportunity through my graduate clinical director.

Kim: I heard about HIRRS when Tom came at speak to Towson University about available speech internships.

Where were you born? Where do you live now?

Jenna: I was born in Long Island, New York. I currently live in PG County

Kim: I was born in Frederick County in Maryland and I still live there now.

Where do you go to school? What do you study?

Jenna: My undergraduate studies were in Hearing & Speech Sciences and my Master's is in Speech Pathology. Both programs are at University of Maryland, College Park.

Kim: I studied Elementary & Special Education at Towson University. Now I am getting my Master's in Speech Pathology.

What is your favorite holiday? Why?

Jenna: My favorite holiday is Thanksgiving. My mom hosts and she gets the entire family together!

Kim: My favorite holiday is my birthday. It's all about me and I get to spend time with my friends!

Where is the best place you've been on vacation?

Jenna: I enjoyed sight-seeing and great food (especially Gelato) in Florence, Italy!

Kim: I've been to Maui in Hawaii. I went there with my husband for our honeymoon! We loved the scuba diving excursion.

What is your favorite food to eat for dinner?

Jenna: I love classic homemade macaroni and cheese with breadcrumbs!

Kim: I would have to pick two favorites: pizza and French fries. Ledo's Pizza has everything I could ever want!

What is your future dream job?

Jenna: My dream job is to be a speech pathologist with younger people!

Kim: My dream job is to work with children at a school or a private clinic.

News From the Day Program

What's Cookin' with Cooking Group

Cooking Group is an opportunity for clients to improve their time management, ability to read recipes, kitchen safety, basic math, and teamwork skills. Two clients work together to decide what recipe to make and how to make it. Cooking Group challenges clients to perform multi-step directions, to focus on more than one task, and to work on time-management. **Christina, Jason L., Danny, and Quinn** have been rotating as group participants. Let's see what clients think...

"Honestly, I like working with Kim. The instructions are helpful and it helps me see what I can do at home" - **Christina**

"Cooking Group is my chance to express myself through food." - **Danny**

"It helps me with measuring and I like cooking with people." - **Quinn**

"Cooking is a way for me to express myself" - **Jason L.**



Above: The tasty Lo Mein from Cooking Group!

Below: **Quinn & Danny** proud of their cooking accomplishment



New Groups are in Full Bloom...

The Day Program is blossoming with several new groups!

Problem Solving Group:

This group simulates real-life scenarios that our clients can use to focus on strategies regarding money management, decision making skills, and other practical problem solving.

Wellness Group:

Creating a relaxing environment through yoga, meditation and breathing exercises is the purpose of this group. Clients channel their imagination and go to their own paradise! They also learn about different areas of wellness.

Men's Group:

This group was created in an open format so that clients can express their thoughts and feelings on various topics related to men's issues.

"Men's group is awesome, we are able to talk about anything and everything."

-Mark

Art Group: Each week clients create different art projects with various materials. Clients find expressing their artistic ability to be enjoyable and relaxing.

Vocational Program: Workin' Hard

How have vocational services helped you?

"I like everything about HIRRS, but most of all I like that they are helping me find a job. The vocational staff have actually changed my life. Thanks Abe!"

- **Jason P.**

"Vocational services have helped me with preparation. It taught me what to expect from a job—even the hard parts." - **Ian**

"Vocational services are nice. They help me with whatever I need help with in that moment. My favorite job in the past was being a landscaper."

- **Danny**

"My favorite thing about vocational services is seeing all of the staff and their smiling faces. I love working at Ingleside Retirement Community."

- **Mark**



Above: Danny keeps the offices clean by separating the recycling and trash each day.



Above: Nick practices his skills while vacuuming the office.

*Interested in sharing your work experience with those exploring future career paths? Can you spare half an hour? Contact the **Vocational Department** at **HIRRS** to set up a volunteer opportunity. Volunteer to share your professional experience with our clients looking to learn more about the career possibilities in our area.*

Holiday Musings

"Valentine's Day is a consumer holiday, why bother with it in the first place? But family and love is important for closeness and togetherness." - **Marc**

"I like to celebrate holidays with my family!" - **Eric**

"I like to wear green to get into the spirit of St. Patrick's Day."
- **Mark**

"I think Valentine's Day is a very special, special time of the year... about love, respect and harmony. But it's been commercialized through jewelry sales, chocolate hearts and flowers"

- **Jason P.**

"It's great! Especially if you're loved. Family should love each other, but it's healthy to have disagreements." - **Trish**



Creative Expression

Participants of Svetlana's Creative Expression Group were asked to write a poem that starts with the words "When I..." During the discussion, group members talked about how the word "when" is usually associated with time, and is often related to memories about the past or to thoughts about the future. However, "when" can also be used with present tense to describe general truths, reoccurring events or unchanging emotions and wishes. The poems that you are about to read, as unique as the authors themselves, are about that: past, present and future. Or, in other words, life.

**When I miss my dog Rocky
I wish he didn't die.
I would give anything
To see him, fat little self,
Waddle over his food bowl.
He looks at me as if I am the worst mom
For making him starve
For making him wait.
Oh, I wish God would give Rocky back to me.**
- Christina

**When I look outside on a spring day,
It brings back old memories
Of watering the lawn or cutting grass
Before going to a friendly neighborhood
For backyard football or basketball.
And to end the day on a good note,
Find yard work to make tax free money
Which is also green.**
- Jermaine

**When I wake up in the morning
I take a deep breath of air.
I think about what I see and what I care.
Whatever I did, just remember
That I really care.
I remember that I once
Had long hair.**
- Nicholas

**When I...
Do you know? Do I know? What can that mean?
When I dial a wrong number
Did it come to me from the pizza box?
When I leave my pen top on the kitchen table
Is it because I hear the chandelier swings that way?
When I roll my color socks on Thursday
Is it because the three flavor ice cream told me variety yesterday?
When I watch the news from my carpet
Is it because politics is fun to laugh up to?
When I open new toothpaste container but others aren't finished
Well, I do that all the time and don't ask questions at all.**
- Ian

**When I see a calm ocean, I am reminded
That it's only temporary.
I use personification, bringing it to life.
It is now alive and has feelings, hunger, thirst, etc.
It gets hot, cold and in between.
It longs for some things and dreads others.
I imagine that it has a memory
Which would be very useful
Because I don't.**
- Trish

**When I think about happiness
I always remember my dad.
He was the one who raised me
Since I was 10
To be a woman I am.
My first grandson has his name.
I love you, dad!**
- Marie

**When I look at the future for me and you
It's full of happiness and love forever.
I see dogs and cats dancing in our heads.
So, to be honest and clear,
I see roses coming up for us here.
Family in tow,
Happy together
For you and me!**
- Mark

Creative Expression

*If you didn't guess it yet, Creative Expression is my favorite group! My guys' talent and motivation never cease to amaze me even after facilitating it for more than 9 years. This needle felting project was the first time that group participants were full time designers while the boring manual job was done by me.
Good team work, don't you think? - Svetlana*



Left: Coaster
designed by **Nick**



Right: Coaster
designed by
Jermaine



Left: Coaster
designed by **Ian**



Right: Coaster
designed by
Mark



Left: Eye Glasses
Case designed by
Christina



Right: Eye Glasses
Case designed by
Trish

Outings & Activities Recap



Above: We like to celebrate Hump Day (Wednesday) with a nice trip to TGI Friday's! We even got a long table, it was a PARTY!

Below: A group of clients had an amazing time on our private tour of the College Park Aviation Museum! We even got to shoot air-planes through the launcher!



Above: A group of clients got to tour the iHeart Radio Station in Rockville. We got to meet some local radio personalities! We even learned that famous people get interviewed there, like Kanye West!

“Outings get us out into the community to enjoy the nice weather”

- Mark

Recent Outings	
iHeart Radio Station	Jan 7
Bowl America	Jan 14
Aviation Museum	Feb 17
Lunch Outing: TGI Fridays	Feb 24
Bauer Dr. Community Center	Mar 3
National Smithsonian Zoo	Mar 9
Woodbourne Creamery	Mar 17
Brookeside Gardens	Mar 23
Lunch: Original Pancake House	Mar 30
SPAGnVOLA Chocolate Tour	Apr 11
Great and Small Horse Farm	Apr 15

Where are they Now?

Former Staff Update

Many clients and staff at HIRRS would remember Anthony Melchiorre, our awesome Day Program Cognitive Rehabilitative Specialist from 2004 to 2007.

He left HIRRS to pursue graduate studies, but wowed us one final time on his last day. Surrounded by cheering clients and staff, he pumped out 80+ push-ups to make good on his hiring interview statement that his greatest strength was his ability to do push-ups.

Since leaving us, Anthony has completed a doctorate in psychology, got a job as a rehabilitation psychologist in Richmond, and tied the knot. He has happily become a father to a very cute baby boy (his mother's genes no doubt). The HIRRS family extends a very enthusiastic congratulations to Anthony, his wife, and their son Anthony. (Apparently you can never have too many Anthonys!)



Former Client Update

Cathy was a former client here at HIRRS. During a phone interview, she discussed how the job coaches at HIRRS helped her to get a job with a cleaning company called DIDLAKE. The cleaning company has a contract to clean The National Institute of Standard Technology (NIST). She started this job in July, 2011 and has been working there for about five years. Her supervisor is **Daniel E.**, a previous HIRRS staff member (Small World!).



She is hoping to get a work location transfer to DC because she has a long commute to work in Germantown from Brandywine, Maryland.

Cathy uses Metro Access to travel the 59.8 miles to work each day. If she does get this work location transfer, she hopes for a higher position in the company.

At the end of the interview, **Cathy** gave some advice for others in similar life circumstances: "For anyone who

wants to work I recommend a positive outlook on life. I believe that with tenacity and a strong will to work anyone can find a job that they can enjoy doing. Problems might arise, but by being honest and surrounding yourself with trustworthy people, any issue that comes up in the work place can be solved. Always keep your head up and keep a smile on your face!"

We thank **Mark for doing this interview.*



Her work day at NIST consists of cleaning roughly twelve bathrooms as well as water fountains and lobbies. She cleans everything that needs to be cleaned. She likes her job; however, she wishes that she could get more hours and a pay raise (don't we all!).

Current Topics

In the Future...

We asked clients what the world will look like in 2050. Let's see their responses!

"In 2050, there will be solar-flying cars. We could save the planet if everything went solar."

-Steve

"In 2050, I will be living the life and be rich. If there are wars, they will be about territory."

-Danny

"In 2050, I will be rotting 6 feet under! Hah! By then there will be a technological brick wall protecting us from the holes in the ozone layer."

-Ian

"In 2050, if HIRRS is still in existence, everything will be computer operated. Client robots, of course!"

-Marc

Thoughts on Family...

**Where did you grow up?
What is your heritage?
What kind of family traditions do you have?**

"My heritage is Irish, and I'm proud of it! In the past, it was known my mom would have a St. Patrick's Day Party, complete with a BAGPIPER!!!"

-Trish

"I am Japanese and American!"

-Katie

"My family traditions often include traveling to other places that we have never been to."

-Eric

"Every three years we go on a major vacation! We've been to China, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Tahiti, Germany, and the list goes on and on."

-Jason P.



Spring Cleaning...

**Many people practice spring cleaning. What's something in your life that needs to be "dusted off?"
What's your favorite spring activity?**

"I would love to continue to work on my New Year's resolution of quitting smoking."

-Jason P.

"In spring, I like going to see the Washington Nationals baseball games."

-Eric

"In the springtime, I like to clear out cobwebs from the attic and dust off my CD collection."

-Marc

"I like to swim (year-round actually!)"

-Trish

"I like planting flowers in the backyard. Feeling the breeze of fresh air will keep you focused."

-Katie

April Foolishness

“I was playing an ice hockey game as a goalie and I accidentally scored on my own goal.” - **Jason P.**

“During a baseball game, I was positioned in the outfield. I was not paying attention and the next thing I know, I look up and I caught a pop fly.”

- **Danny**



Funniest thing to happen to you?

“I don’t remember the funniest thing to happen to me, thankfully. But in order for something to be funny, usually someone’s reputation is entailed... usually mine” - **Trish**

“I won this year’s March Madness bracket with pure luck” - **Jason P.**

Best Knock, Knock

Knock, Knock, Who’s there?

Joke:

Boo.

By: **Katie**

Boo, Who?

Don’t cry it’s just a joke!

What’s the deal with Leap Day?

Clients were asked questions about what they would do with 24 extra hours in the month of February. Let’s see what they said!

“If I had no obligations I would spend more time at my favorite restaurant, Hooters. If I was born on Leap Day I would feel like the most important person in the world.” - **Mark**

“If I had no schedule, I would spend the extra 24 hours sleeping and relaxing.” - **Andre**

“I would relax, watch TV, plus talk with my family and friends on Facebook. Something lucky happened on Leap Day for me...the Washington Wizards won their game against the 76ers.”

- **Eric**

“On Leap Day, I would make plans for the following year. If I were born on Leap Day, I would celebrate my birthday on March 1st on a non-leap years.” - **Nick**

“With my extra 24 hours, I would sleep and swim. If I were born on Leap Day I would be grateful that I only age every 4 years!” - **Trish**



News from Brooke Meadow

Holiday Reminiscing

Our Brooke Meadow clients discussed what they used to do during the holiday season; let's see what they said!

"I went to a church service with my family and right after we would go out to dinner at a restaurant for Easter dinner." - **Felix**

"We would go to church with family for Easter, but there wasn't any special celebrations." - **Wallace**

"Our family attended Easter mass, did eggs hunts with the neighborhood, and had family dinners. The best part was that our nanny used to give us Easter baskets." - **Mark K.**

"I used to love going to service on Good Friday and Easter Sunday with my family. We often dyed eggs and hunted for them." - **Danny M.**

"I never attended church services or celebrated Easter."
- **John**



Above: Bernice enjoying her birthday with a BIG CHOCOLATE CAKE. Let's see if she will share a slice with us!



Left: Wallace, John, Mark, and Felix are enjoying a St. Patrick's Day party!

The Brooke Meadow clients expressed their gratitude towards the staff for taking them to participate in many community outings.

Recently, clients were able to go to a church service for Good Friday! It was such a great experience.

Clients reminisced that attending a church service brought back many memories of their childhood traditions!

Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

“Ballet” by Katie

I was a teenager when I saw “Swan Lake” ballet for the first time and I liked it a lot. I liked the music, dancing, costumes, and sets, scenery and props. So I started taking ballet lessons at the Ballet Academy in Beltsville, Maryland, in 2008. I participated in many ballets but my favorites are “Swan Lake,” “Nutcracker,” “Sleeping Beauty,” and “Romeo and Juliet.” I danced in ensemble and solo. I do my own stage make-up. When I get nervous before going on stage, I say the words my mom taught me: “I’m a ballerina and I can do my dance,” and it helps me. I take ballet lessons three days a week and I use Metro Access to get to my classes and back home. Next show I am in will be in spring 2016 at “Publick Playhouse” theater in Cheverly, Maryland.

You are all invited!

~ Based on an interview with Svetlana

“Rainy Day” by Mark



The day is gloomy, it’s wet, and it’s a day only ducks can enjoy. So if your name is Donald or Daffy, your day is going swimmingly... which, by the way, is how you would get anywhere today. The best news is this too shall pass and “The sun will come out tomorrow,” sung so well by “Annie.”

Spring will come and all of this rain, snow and whatever else comes our way will be a distant memory. So don’t be too sad for it will be alright. There is light at the end of the tunnel. To put it bluntly, “Deal with it!”