

Enhancing Lives Through Work



FALL 2022

Change

A Message from Sarah Cutler and Sharon Schmid Co-Directors of Community Work Services

When looking up the word "change" in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, one will find an array of definitions to choose between. To best summarize the upcoming leadership change at Community Work Services, we will settle on "to replace with another" or "to shift from one to another."

As we have all heard at some point in our life, change is good. This is sometimes easier to say than it is to believe, but please know that as we leave our roles as Co-Directors at Community Work Services, we are believers. As you read on, we think you will agree.

In the fall of 2011, we stepped into the roles of Executive and Program Directors at Community Work Services. This shift in leadership was a change not only in our personal lives but for the organization as a whole. We know that personally, this caused us some anxiety, and are confident that this feeling rippled throughout the agency and beyond. Fast forward eleven years, and we are happy to report that Community Work Services is doing great.

At the end of 2011, the 77 individuals supported by Community Work Services had a job retention rate of 97.4%. At the end of 2021, the 78 individuals supported by Community Work Services had a job retention rate of 98.7%. In other words, despite the change in leadership that occurred in 2011, our lifelong commitment to community employment did not falter.

As Gina Shea and Jeri Murray step into their new roles as Executive and Program Directors, respectively, they bring with them more than 38 years of combined experience working at Community Work Services. They have worked diligently to provide exceptional services to the people we support throughout their tenure. Therefore, although this is a change, we know that this is the perfect example of change being positive. Gina and Jeri will work with us over the coming months and assume their new roles at the beginning of the new year.

As we prepare to step away from our careers at Community Work Services, we want to express our sincere gratitude to the amazing staff we have had the privilege of working with. We also want to thank the individuals who we support, their families and team members, our donors and all of the employers we have been fortunate to work with over the years.

You have all made a real difference in our lives!

Thank you.



On the left, Sarah Cutler (outgoing Executive Director) & Sharon Schmid (outgoing Program Director), of Community Work Services, are pleased to introduce the two new Co-Directors on the right, Jeri Murray (Program Director) and Gina Shea (Executive Director).

Variety is the Spice of Life



Russell is busy preparing for an upcoming conference for WBPDD.



CLA appreciates all of the filing Thomas does for them.

of the Fleet Service building, Thomas is making sure that the garbage bins, both inside and outside of The Home Depot, are emptied before he moves on to stocking soda and candy.

Both Thomas and Russell have their work days split between two very different kinds of environments. According to Russell, "It doesn't bother me to have these different jobs. It provides variety, and I get to meet a lot of new friends." Thomas shared that he feels good about working at both of his jobs, and is especially fond of all of the holiday decorations that are on display at The Home Depot at different times of the year. As an added bonus, while working hard at Community Living Alliance, his coworkers always enjoy it if Thomas throws in his infamous "Taco Tuesday Dance" while filing. As the saying goes, "variety is the (taco) spice of life."

Have you ever experienced the "blahs" when it comes to your job? Has work left you feeling that you are in a rut, bored, or under-challenged? Maybe the time has come to take a cue from Russell and Thomas.

Four mornings a week, Russell McCullough goes to work at the Wisconsin Board of People with Developmental Disabilities, where he completes different tasks such as putting materials together for conferences and trainings, delivering mail, and any other clerical duties that need to get done. Thomas Purnell works Tuesday and Thursday mornings at Community Living Alliance. His work tasks include alphabetizing documents, scanning, and filing.

After working their morning shifts, both Russell and Thomas take a lunch break before they head back to work. However, rather than going back to their office-setting jobs, Russell catches a city bus to his afternoon job at City of Madison Fleet Service, and Thomas gets a ride with support staff to The Home Depot on the west side of Madison. While Russell keeps busy cleaning different areas



Thomas is proud of the work he does at The Home Depot.



Emptying the garbage is just one of the many tasks Russell completes at Fleet Service.

In Memory

On the morning of January 15, 2022, **André Brown** passed away at the age of 42. André was a very sweet and joyful man with an inspiring smile and an infectious "belly" laugh that those around him couldn't help but reciprocate. André gave us the gift of music, often humming a song while he worked, and enjoyed listening to a wide variety of music ranging from traditional African music to jazz to opera. André enjoyed being in and on the water through swimming, kayaking, ice skating, or relaxing in the hot tub. Other adventures that André enjoyed with family and friends included camping trips, dog sledding, and cheering on his favorite sports teams.

Community Work Services had the pleasure of working with André for over 20 years, with his most recent jobs being at the Dane County District Attorney's office and Movin' Out, Inc. André provided valuable assistance to his employers and formed long-lasting relationships with his coworkers. André's fortitude for life and sunny disposition taught us all how to persevere despite the challenges we may face. We were all sad to have to say goodbye to André so soon but realize how fortunate we are to have had him as our companion and colleague. André, thank you for the great memories and life lessons!



André Brown

40 Years and Still At It

It's hard to believe that **Kristin Yelinek** celebrated her 40-year work anniversary at McCardle Laboratory for Cancer Research. Not many people can say that they have worked at the same job for that many years, and



Kristin celebrates her work anniversary with her coworkers and family

Kristin does not plan on retiring anytime soon! She enjoys her work as a Lab Assistant, and her coworkers equally enjoy her charming personality and fabulous sense of humor. **Congratulations on this amazing accomplishment, Kristin!**

Long Term Commitment

Please join us in recognizing and celebrating **Sarah Nack** on her 25-year work anniversary at Community Work Services. On May 14, 1997, Sarah began her career at Community Work Services.



Over the years, Sarah has provided thousands upon thousands of hours of support to the individuals that we serve. In addition to providing excellent direct service, Sarah has brought a vast amount of knowledge, friendship, guidance, laughter, and overall joy to team members, employers, and the staff here at CWS. Thank you for your years of service and dedication Sarah- you are a gift to all of us!!!



Words of Thanks to the Knights of Columbus

Once again, Community Work Services expresses our gratitude to the Knights of Columbus for the very generous grant that we received. With this gift, we were able to purchase much needed supplies for jobsites throughout Madison to assist supported workers to be successful at their jobs. Your ongoing support of our program is so very much appreciated. **THANK YOU!**

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All of us at Community Work Services continue to be grateful for and touched by the outpouring of support we have received from our friends, families and supporters!

Your generosity has been, and will continue to be, vital in allowing us to fulfill our mission of enhancing lives through work. As always, you have our heartfelt thanks and appreciation. We couldn't do it without you!

We'd also like to thank our many donors who wished to remain anonymous.

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\$250,000 Matching Fund Drive

CWS is very fortunate to have an anonymous donor commit to match any donation made this year up to a total of \$250,000. We are excited to report that thus far, we have received \$193,525. These funds will go toward enhancing our services and retaining high quality, compassionate staff. We thank everyone who graciously contributed to this drive. *We would also like to thank our many anonymous donors.*

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Our mission...

Community Work Services is guided by the belief that all people have value and that supporting individuals with disabilities to actively participate in all aspects of community life results in a more diverse, compassionate, and stronger community for everyone.

With that as a foundation, the agency works in partnership with employers to make a positive difference in the lives of the people we support by helping them find and keep individually meaningful community jobs.



Are you a member of Thrivent Financial who is eligible to direct Thrivent Choice Dollars? If so, consider choosing Community Work Services as a recipient.



Community Work Services

1402 Greenway Cross #200
Madison, WI 53713



Happy Birthday, Mary!!

Birthdays are always fun, but when you work for the Governor's office for the number of years that Mary has, they are a blast! Mary started working for Governor Tommy Thompson in 1990. Since then she has worked for five Governors including current Governor Tony Evers. Governor Evers and the First Lady are great friends of Mary's, and when they heard it was her 75th birthday, the Governor and his team went all out to honor her, the longest running employee in the Governor's office. The party was complete with special guests, cake, root beer floats, gifts, and lots of celebrating. It was the party of the year! **Happy Birthday, Mary!!**

Volunteer - Be a friend!

Are you interested or know of anyone who would be interested in being a volunteer for one of our clients? Check out our volunteer opportunities at: www.volunteeryourtime.org or call Jeri Murray at Community Work Services: 608.233.0115.

To learn more about Community Work Services, please visit our website at www.cwsmadison.com

