



# Development Centers

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2011

## Vocational Training Program

The value of education and job training is always priceless. Given the changing nature of the job market, vocational training has become more important than ever. Leading the charge in providing assistance with this type of training in Detroit is DCI's new Jobs, Education and Training—Vocational Educational Training (JET-VET) program.

The JET-VET program at DCI coordinates training services for JET participants throughout the entire city of Detroit by financing training for participants. This means anyone already participating in a JET program in Detroit who is eligible and interested in acquiring more job training can apply for assistance from the JET-VET program.

The program, which is run through a contract with the Detroit Workforce Development Department (DWDD), has undergone name and management changes in the past, but as of May 1, it's back at DCI. It was operated by DCI between 2002 and 2007 under a different name and then moved to DWDD for three years. The contract became available again and based on its previous experience, DCI was chosen to be the provider.

Participants interested in training can choose from a list of contracted training institutions. They can be trained for jobs such as healthcare, truck driving, graphic and web design, computer business management, etc. The most popular training programs right now, according to program manager Delana Baltimore, are the



*JET-VET Program Staff. Left to Right: Delana, Curtis, Shanetta, Angela, Sonjia, Roxanne, and Todd.*

healthcare, culinary and hospitality trainings. "We are also delving into green jobs," she adds.

The training programs vary in length from three weeks to twelve months, and participants work with JET-VET staff for the duration of their trainings.

As Delana says, "We care about the customer. That's the bottom line here." This caring attitude helps program participants succeed in their training, allowing them a more equal opportunity at becoming employed in the long run.

LaRhonda is one such successful participant. Her job search had hit a plateau before she was referred to the JET-VET program. She chose the Basic EMT/Paramedic training program through Dearborn Public Schools and graduated

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BEHAVIORS

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**Mission  
Statement**

DCI is a non-profit organization committed to improving the lives of individuals, families, and the community by meeting behavioral health, social and vocational needs through a continuum of prevention, treatment and training services.

# Message from the

Dear Friends,

Summer is a season of warmth and growth, and that certainly has been the case for us at DCI. This summer has been ripe with growth and success for both DCI consumers and staff. Throughout this newsletter we highlight the impact our programs are making in our community as both new and old programs continue to flourish.

Our most obvious growth has been with the Jobs, Education and Training – Vocational Educational Training (JET-VET) program we began running this May. The JET-VET program has been brought back to the agency and within its first few months of activity has already empowered over 116 participants to continue their education and increase job placement success.

Building on their successes from the past, our School-Based and Full Circle Programs continue to thrive. School-Based Summer Camp this year focused on sports and gave the youth from DCI's school-based programs opportunities to enhance their teamwork and sportsmanship skills while at the same time having summer fun. The Full Circle program has experienced exponential growth in its first two years of existence, and here we highlight the successes of one particular consumer who is living a healthier life after a year of services at DCI.

I would also like to highlight one of our staff success stories. This newsletter features our Employee of the Year, Certified Peer Support Specialist Ashlyn Talley. Once a consumer herself at DCI, Ashlyn worked hard to become a Certified Peer Support Specialist and is now employed in DCI's Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Program. DCI is pleased to honor her as our employee of the year for 2011.

These stories are all made possible by continued support from community members like you. I invite you to celebrate with us as we reflect on the successes of the summer and look forward to more in the coming seasons.

Sincerely,



Dr. Robert Shaw,  
Executive Director

# Students Shine at Summer Camps

DCI's summer camps for consumers in the school-based programs were a huge success again this year.

School-based Program Director, Deborah Harris-Swan explains that the summer camps are meant to help students, "internalize the skills worked on throughout the academic school year such as social skills, building self-esteem and enhancing self-awareness."

Each year school-based program staff identifies themes for the camps and builds a curriculum around those themes. This year the themes are "Literacy in the Park" for children in grades K – 2 in Barber Focus School in Highland Park and "Everyday MVP" for consumers in select Detroit Public Schools.

The Literacy in the Park Summer Program utilized scrapbooking and storytelling to increase the children's understanding of their and other cultures. The activities helped them explore their individuality and build self-confidence, while also creating a sense of community.

Students at the Everyday MVP camp came from the Detroit Public Schools Palmer Park Academy, Peter Vetal School and Sampson Webber Academy. The sports theme provided an excellent venue for teaching students how to build teamwork, leadership and social skills.

This five week camp took students on multiple field trips to showcase different sports. The trips have included tours of the Palace and Ford Field, swimming trips to Chandler Park and Lower

Huron Metropark, and other larger trips such as days at the Imagination Station and Cedar Point.

In addition to the trips, students learned about various sports through clinics taught by staff and outside professionals. Favorites included basketball, gymnastics, dance, and football.

Students thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to have structured fun throughout the summer. Eleven year old camper, Andrew, from Peter Vetal Elementary says, "I don't have a favorite part. Well, maybe today is my least favorite part because it's over." In addition to this fun, Andrew won the award for the camp's most improved participant.

The summer camps give students the occasion to have fun and play in ways they may not otherwise have the chance to do. More importantly, they are an opportunity to interact with other children for the summer and continue building on the work they were doing with DCI staff during the year.



*Everyday MVP camp participants learning baseball at Stoepel Park. From Left to Right: Kejuan, Michael, Jamarion, Leonte, and Alexis.*

# Ashlyn Talley Named Employee of the Year



*DCI's 2011 Employee of the Year, Ashlyn Talley*

Ashlyn was a consumer at DCI before becoming employed as a Certified Peer Support Specialist with the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team in 2007. Her progress from consumer to valued colleague and employee of the year is a shining example of the endless possibilities for individuals living with a mental illness.

With the ACT Team, Ashlyn currently provides outreach and support services to consumers in the community – everything from driving consumers to medical appointments, to helping them do grocery shopping. As a Certified Peer Support Specialist, Ashlyn

brings a critical perspective to the team. She says, “I am able to help the team better see things from a consumer’s point of view.”

When explaining her job to others she always says that if an individual goes to a mental health agency and does not see someone who is successful, the individual will start to wonder if the agency is truly doing a good job. Ashlyn is proud to be that successful role model through her work with the ACT team.

Of course, that’s just the beginning of what makes Ashlyn such an exemplary employee at DCI. In addition to her full time position as a Peer Support Specialist, she is also DCI’s webmaster and created DCI’s website from scratch before being hired onto the ACT team. Ashlyn uses her tech-savvy side at DCI frequently, acting as the unofficial computer wizard for all those around her.

When Ashlyn was honored at the most recent All Staff Meeting as 2011 Employee of the Year, she made a point to say that she is one of many employees at DCI whose dedication to the job is beyond measure. She says, “I’ve never worked with a group of people that I have admired so much.”

Of course, this is another reason it’s a joy to work with Ashlyn; her humility and positive attitude is infectious and refreshing.

## Vocational Training Program Continued

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from the program in late July. “I’m just thankful that I got any opportunity for education,” she says. “I felt definitely like I gained some insights.”

The program has been successful here in the past, so Delana is confident they will meet their goal of helping at least 300 participants in training between May 1 and September 30,

2011. They hope to double that and help 600 throughout the first program year.

So far 116 participants have enrolled in training programs and 25 have successfully completed training and are now looking for employment. Through the program these participants have acquired skills that will assist them in obtaining employment in an occupation in demand in the local labor market.

# Full Circle Supports Healthier

A mother's dream for her child rarely includes regular trips to the hospital. However, this was the regular routine for Chris\*, a consumer in DCI's Full Circle Program. Chris had multiple traumatic experiences during his childhood, and as he grew he began to imitate the behaviors with violent outbursts. As these episodes increased, Chris was referred by the hospital to DCI.

Full Circle is DCI's Developmental Disabilities program serving children and adults. Individuals who become disabled before age 18 are considered developmentally disabled, and can receive services through the program.

Chris and his family received support from Full Circle, and together, they created a behavior plan for Chris. After a year of implementing this plan and working with the

staff in Full Circle, Chris has experienced dramatic improvements in his behavior and health.

This year has been his first full year after the age of six without entering the hospital. He is healthier and had no violent outbursts in the past year. Also, his grades have improved and he participates in sports now. As his mother puts it, he now has a healthy state of mind.

Of the services at DCI she says, "It was a piece of the puzzle that needed to be fixed." She is grateful for the support DCI provided her family and the chance it gave her son to open up about his past experiences.

In the future, Chris will continue services at DCI so he can maintain his healthy growth and happier childhood.

\* Name changed for privacy

## Save the Date



**Murder Mystery**  
DINNER, THEATRE & AUCTION

**October 21, 2011 6:00pm**  
**At Genitti's Hole in the Wall**



**A Benefit Featuring**

**7 Course Italian Dinner**

**Theater Performance & Auction, Ticket Price \$95.00**

**To support families served by Development Centers, Inc.**



Development Centers, Inc.  
17421 Telegraph Rd.  
Detroit, MI 48219

## DCI Services and Locations

### **Early Childhood and Family Services**

### **Child and Family Services Full Circle ACCESS**

17321 Telegraph Rd.  
Detroit, MI 48219  
Phone: 313-531-2500

### **Adult Behavioral Services JET**

24424 W. McNichols Rd.  
Detroit, MI 48219  
Phone: 313-531-2500

### **New Directions Clubhouse**

24430 W. McNichols Rd.  
Detroit, MI 48219  
Phone: 313-531-0738

### **School Sites**

#### **Detroit Public Schools:**

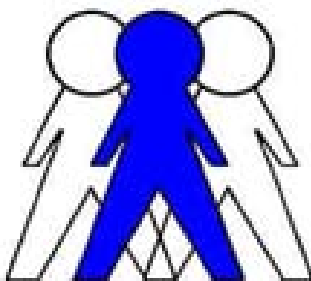
Sampson Webber  
Academy  
Palmer Park Academy  
Vetal Elementary  
Detroit Lions Academy

#### **Charter Schools:**

Detroit Leadership  
Academy

#### **Highland Park City Schools:**

Barber Focus School



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