



MECKLENBURG NEWSLETTER

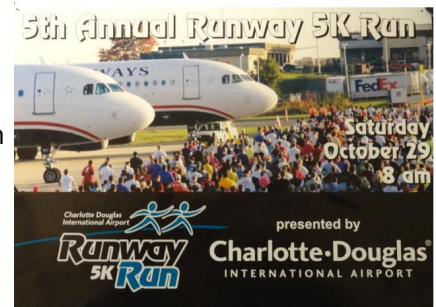
DECEMBER 2011

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RUNWAY 5K RUN AT CHARLOTTE DOUGLAS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Over 2,000 runners/walkers gathered at the Charlotte Douglas International Airport on Saturday, October 29 for the Fifth Annual Runway 5K Run. "It was another successful year for the event," said run organizer, Herbert Judon. "The participants loved the flat course, venue and atmosphere. Thanks to everyone who participated to make the run another one-of-kind experience."



Overall winner of the Run was Michael Crouch of Blowing Rock, NC with a time of 14:58. Lauren Hagans of Knoxville, TN, captured the top spot for females with a time of 17:11. Both Crouch and Hagans walked away with airline gift cards. Former defensive player Mike Rucker of the Carolina Panthers and Mrs. North Carolina USA Debbie Miller were on hand to present awards and pose for pictures.

Funds raised from the Runway 5K event will be donated to the LIFESPAN Community Activity and Employment Transition Program (CAET). The Charlotte Douglas International Airport was one of our first community partners to support the CAET program and currently employs fifteen individuals with developmental disabilities. Thanks to the staff and vendors at Charlotte Douglas International Airport for their continued support of LIFESPAN and for organizing the Runway 5K event.

Our Mission

LIFESPAN transforms the lives of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities by providing education, employment, and enrichment opportunities that promote inclusion, choice, family supports, and other best practices.

WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY: JOSHUA W.



Joshua W. has been a participant in the CAET program since March 2010. With the help of the CAET program, he began volunteering at the Habitat for Humanity Restore on Wendover Road. Joshua currently volunteers at Julia's Coffee Shop (a division of Habitat for Humanity) sorting inventory, maintaining displays, and greeting customers. He also volunteers with Wild Birds Unlimited, a bird feed store and education center in Charlotte. With the help of his community coach, he has learned the skills necessary to work independently.

LIFESPAN PARTICIPATES AT THE DISABILITY AWARENESS EXPO



Allison Davila (left), Program Coordinator CAET & Supported Employment with UNCC Student and LIFESPAN intern, Darynne Hefner

LIFESPAN attended the October Disability Awareness Expo at the Bank of America in uptown Charlotte. The goal of the Disability Expo is to provide Bank of America associates with an appreciation of the different disabilities affecting their associates and families and to educate them as to the resources and support available in the community. LIFESPAN was able to assist in this endeavor by sharing information on the programs available and discussing some of the great success participants have experienced with regard to reaching their employment goals and becoming active members of their community. Many of the Bank of America associates who visited LIFESPAN's table were unfamiliar with our services and now will be able to share the information with their friends and neighbors.

KNITTING CLASSES AT CENTER CITY

Every Friday, four individuals at Center City find enjoyment in crafts such as knitting and sewing. Chelsi Smith, a parent at Center City, had previously worked with the group helping them to sew together tote bags. Since then, she has offered to teach a knitting class. The individuals look forward to seeing Chelsi on Fridays so they can begin their next creative project.



From (L to R): Demetria D., Chelsi Smith, Angela L., Tracey M., and Melanie W.

LIFESPAN has secured employment for 9 individuals in Mecklenburg. We have 43 volunteers in the Mecklenburg area, contributing 912.5 volunteer hours.

In our Mecklenburg district, 20 individuals are attending community college, and 33 individuals are attending our art program.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT LIFESPAN ARTS

Mark your calendars for two events at the LIFESPAN Arts studio:

- * "Jingle" Open House, will be held on December 8 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at the LIFESPAN Arts Studio at 2424 North Davidson Street, Suite 110. Artwork on display will also be available for purchase.
- * "Dinner with the Artists" will feature the artwork of Lisa Thompson and Neville Herbert Reynolds on January 13, 2012 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at LIFESPAN Arts Studio in Charlotte, NC. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Tracey Hartzog at thartzog@lifespanservices.org

HOLIDAY CARDS



Are you looking for the perfect gift to give to friends, family, or business associates? What about a thoughtful gift to LIFESPAN honoring those special people in your life. With a minimum gift of \$5.00, a beautiful holiday card will be sent by December 15th to those on your list. Call 704.944.5110 or email ameelee@lifespanservices.org for an order form or to learn more about this form of gift giving.

LETTER FROM SYLVIA HINES, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

On May 10, 2011 over 100 LIFESPAN individuals, family members, and staff from Mecklenburg, Surry, Iredell, and Guilford counties traveled to Raleigh for "Rally Day". Each stakeholder group advocated and shared concerns regarding what was shaping up to be a state budget shortfall which was sure to impact service delivery for the disability community in North Carolina.

Since that time, budget cuts have become a reality. As a result 22 individuals are no longer being served in our Mecklenburg County Day Activity programs. For fiscal year 2011-2012 our contract with the LME (Local Management Entity) was reduced by 15%. This was a result of the LME's funding cuts at the state level which was passed on to programs such as LIFESPAN.

With the significant budget cuts, the state is on track to implement a huge systems change called the 1915 BC Waiver which will change the way behavioral health care services will be funded in North Carolina. In its simplest form, a waiver means waiving certain guidelines and creating a network designed to save money. Think back several years ago when our health insurance plans moved to managed care; we heard terms such as PPO, PCP and were told that we could not go out of network. The system was intended to improve access of care, make services more consistent and save money through cost efficiencies. That became our world and we still exist in it. One factor to remember is that health insurance costs are still sky rocketing and we are still looking at ways to reduce costs. What have we gained as a result?

Just as we came together on May 10th in Raleigh, stakeholders must become intimately involved in this paradigm shift and remain committed to ensure quality services exist for their loved ones. This is not the time to wait and see. The most powerful voice is the voice of the families and individuals we support. "Providers and families must come on deck and help steer the ship."

WISH LIST

- Financial Gifts
- Gift Cards: Lowes, WalMart, dollar stores, gas cards
- Horticulture supplies: pots, soil, garden gloves, rakes, garden tools
- Art Supplies: brushes, paint (water/oil), canvases, art smocks and T-shirts, art chalk, paper
- Wii games
- Batteries: AA, AAA
- Toiletries and paper products: plates, napkins, toilet paper, paper towels, hand soap
- Office supplies: black pens, notebooks, copy paper, file folders, Post-it® notes

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BOARD OF VISITORS MECKLENBURG COUNTY

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LIFESPAN is a 501(c) (3), non-profit organization. Contributions to LIFESPAN are tax deductible. Donations can be made payable to LIFESPAN and designated to the program location of your choice. Contact Lori Avery, Senior Director of Development, at 704.944.5112 or by email to lavery@lifespanservices.org. Donations can also be made to LIFESPAN by credit card or electronic funds transfer on our website: www.lifespanservices.org. Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 888.830.4989. The license is not an endorsement by the State.



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