

MARCH 2008

LifeSpan news and information

Programs in Albemarle, Asheville, Burlington, Charlotte, Concord, Dobson, Greensboro, High Point, Huntersville, Matthews, Monroe, Mt. Airy, Statesville, Troutman, Waynesville, and Wilkesboro

our MISSION

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

LifeSpan currently supports over 2,000 individuals in our collection of community programs across North Carolina from Haywood to Alamance counties.



Spotlight a Friend

Meet my friend Guy.

I am the Community Coach for Guy, my dear friend. When I first came to LifeSpan and took the position of Community Coach for the newly-created CAET program, I was a little leery about the responsibility of working with an individual with developmental disabilities and being responsible for assisting this person as we worked together to achieve their dreams for community inclusion. In July, I was assigned my first case—a man named Guy. Guy is a 42-year-old man who was formerly in the LifeSpan Employment program at Clanton Road in Charlotte. I was told before meeting him that everyone knew Guy as the friendliest person at LifeSpan and as the one who always stated, “I am never leaving Clanton Road—I love working at LifeSpan.” I figured I had a challenge ahead in helping him understand that he had options in the community. As soon as I met Guy face to face—I instantly knew my job was going to be a joy and that this man was going to make a profound difference in my life.



Guy & Tereka

Guy has a great personality, positive outlook on life, and a fabulous sense of humor. Our time together is filled with laughter. On his birthday I told him I would take him anywhere he wanted to go. We were friends going out on the town for a birthday celebration. He chose Outback Steak House. As we sat at Outback eating our steaks, enjoying each other’s company, and making it through bouts of uncontrollable laughter—I realized the depth of our friendship. I realized that initially Guy hadn’t selected me as a friend—I was appointed to him as yet another person who was paid to work for him. And, I hadn’t selected him as a friend—I was taking a job assignment—prepared to give 100%. But something happened and Guy and I chose each other for friends. We enjoy many of the same activities. Basketball is one and we recently enjoyed an evening watching the Bobcats. We rooted for our team, ate a little popcorn, and had an evening filled with laughter and friendship.

I was once asked if my friends or family thought it was strange that I had a dear friend who had developmental disabilities. All of those who are close to me know that I light up when I talk about my friend Guy. I see him as a friend, not as a friend with developmental disabilities. Those who are close to me know that I am thrilled that Guy chose me as a friend.

Tereka R. Brown
Community Coach/CAET Program

Artists at Work in Their Own Studio in Charlotte

Just a few short years ago, artists with developmental disabilities were doing contract work in the LifeSpan employment center on Clanton Road in Charlotte. Their artistic talents were undiscovered. Several participants in the employment program expressed an interest in taking painting lessons. The art program was started by a group of dedicated LifeSpan staff and a few volunteers who donated their time, talent, and financial gifts in order to launch some classes for those who were interested in learning about art. It soon became clear that we were surrounded by many people with developmental disabilities who had real artistic talent. Quickly, we saw evidence of lives being transformed and self esteem being raised because of a paint brush, dedicated staff who believed in the transformation process and the opportunities that we were offering. After proving that the concept of an art program worked, staff quickly accelerated plans for an art program and began to look for funding. Thanks to a generous gift from a United Way Focus Area Grant in 2002, the art program was launched with astounding measurable outcomes. Participants who had shown talent in the earlier program were yearning to go beyond arts and crafts and create fine art. Others saw what was happening and made choices to take part in the program. Volunteers from Bovis Lend Lease did a one-day renovation and created an art studio. Small

grants provided materials and supplies... and the art program was launched to a new level. From the inception of this program in 2002—through the growth to a fine art program in 2004—the goal was to establish the program and then move it to NoDa, an arts community in Charlotte.



Mary Anna Bingham, Ph.D.
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The highly-established and well-respected program has now found a home at 516 East 15th Street in Charlotte. Adults with developmental disabilities are now participating with resident artists in the NoDa community, making new friends, and making choices about their lives. They choose if they want to take art lessons for fun once a week or spend hours at an easel creating art that may later be for sale.

LifeSpan is transforming lives and is leading the way in North Carolina by offering opportunities and creating change for the people we support. People with disabilities have the right to be part of the community and to make choices about where they live, work, learn and play. Our artists are at work in THEIR studio.

Business Enterprises – A Must for Non-Profits

Scott Mauney
GENERAL MANAGER – BUSINESS ENTERPRISES



There are many thoughts regarding the benefits and appropriateness of profit generating ventures within a non-profit organization. Non-profits' use of business activities to finance their missions has been going on since the creation of the non-profit sector. Many years ago the religious abbeys started selling wine and

cheese to finance their mission, and the YMCA and YWCA have always had a revenue-generating component to their programs. The Girl Scouts survive by selling cookies door to door and making a profit on the Thin Mints and Peanut Butter Patties. And of course, Goodwill and Salvation Army retail outlets have popped up in most towns. Starting a business within a non-profit is a necessity in the 21st century if a non-profit is to survive. LifeSpan operates on a social enterprise model and utilizes a workforce of people with developmental disabilities and those without.

Today, LifeSpan is operating four business enterprises. LifeSpan's revenue-generating enterprises include **Just Plain Country** where hand-built primitive reproduction furniture is created in Troutman.

Furniture is sold through the website, at specialty shows, and in a booth at Farmers Hardware on King Street in Boone. **LifeSpan Woodworks** is a niche business working in specialty wood cutting and assembly work and is also located within our Troutman facility. **LifeSpan Custom Sewing** is located in Wilkesboro. This business enterprise provides custom sewing services to the textile, medical, and military industries. **LifeSpan Custom Packaging** operates from our Greensboro facility and provides custom packaging and fulfillment services for medical, education, and government industries. Currently, LifeSpan has two new ventures in the planning stages that will be up and running within two years. The business includes **MARC Custom Medical Products**, which will be located in Wilkesboro, and **LifeSpan Arts and Gardens**, which will be in various locations.

No longer can LifeSpan sit back and wait for the government, business, or independent sector to meet the increasing budget—the proven business enterprise model is a must so that we can continue with our mission to transform the lives of children and adults with developmental disabilities.



2008 Philanthropy

Charlotte

The 2008 Philanthropy season kicked off in Charlotte with a crowd of over 350 guests. Emory Austin, grandmother of a child attending LifeSpan Circle School Graham Street, regaled the guests with a riveting story of her love for her beautiful granddaughter, Georgia. Lisa Johnson, from Kidville-Kovar Child Development Center, spoke about her commitment to diversity in the workplace and how hiring someone with developmental disabilities has enhanced the atmosphere at the center. Jeff Katz, a WBT talk show host, added the final comments and made the ask for support to the guests. The goal for the event and sponsorship in Charlotte was \$118,500. Guests poured out support for the programs of LifeSpan and exceeded the goal by raising \$160,868! Thanks to the presenting sponsor of the 2008 Philanthropy Events, the **Law Offices of Porter & Schwartz**, who have returned for the third year!



Greensboro

Stories of transformations, of hopes and realized dreams, were the theme of the Greensboro Philanthropy luncheon held on February 28 at the Greensboro Country Club. At this seventh annual event, over 180 guests learned about LifeSpan's forward vision of building bridges of support as individuals with developmental disabilities move further into community inclusion. Roger and Jamie Corriher of High Point shared the story of their daughter, Natalie, who now proudly works in her first community job. Heather Joyner told of her daughter's challenges as she re-learns to walk and talk, and to prepare for school. The event closed with a heartfelt request for community support from Lora Songster of WMAG Radio.



Upcoming Events

(For more information, please call 704.944.5110 or visit www.lifespanservices.org.)

April 16, 2008

Philanthropy Lunch
Charles Mack Center, Mooresville

May 8, 2008

Philanthropy Lunch
The Village, Concord

May 2, 2008

Art Open House/Gallery Crawl
LifeSpan Arts, Charlotte

May 22, 2008

Philanthropy Lunch
Cross Creek Country Club, Mt. Airy

- COMPUTERS, MONITORS AND PRINTERS
- COPY MACHINE
- TV/DVD PLAYERS
- CD PLAYERS/CDS
- LAMINATING MACHINE-LUGGAGE TAG SIZE
- LIVING ROOM FURNITURE
- OFFICE FURNITURE
- CARPETS
- CHILD SIZE TABLE AND CHAIRS
- CHILDREN'S BOOKS (LIKE NEW)
- COAT RACKS
- CRAFT ITEMS
- PAINTING CANVASES
- ART EASELS
- LARGE ART FRAMES
- ACRYLIC AND WATERCOLOR PAINT
- GARDENING TOOLS
- OUTDOOR BENCHES
- TICKETS TO SEASONAL EVENTS
- DISPOSABLE CAMERAS
- MICROPHONE AND SPEAKERS
- TRACTOR (CALL 704-393-0333 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS)

VOLUNTEER NEEDS

- Offer to host a golf tournament to support LifeSpan (704-944-5109)
- Clear trees and brush in Troutman at the Blue Sky Nature Center (704-873-5646 ext 5) or on the Sensory Trail at Joshua's Farm (704-393-0333)
- Organize a supply drive
- Provide space in a gallery or retail storefront to display artwork created by LifeSpan artists from various locations
- Open your home to four friends learn about LifeSpan over coffee or lunch
- Assemble information packets

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Significant Financial Impact of the Drought to LifeSpan at Joshua's Farm

LifeSpan at Joshua's Farm is a therapeutic horseback riding center with an animal interaction

component for children and adults with developmental disabilities that is located at 3701 Kidd Lane in north Charlotte. Due to the recent drought conditions, one of our pastures is barren and the cost of hay has doubled and must be shipped from New York (adding significant shipping charges). There is speculation that there will be a significant nationwide shortage of hay in the spring and that prices will further escalate. **Please consider giving a special financial gift to LifeSpan at Joshua's Farm and help us feed the seven horses as we struggle financially through the drought.**



Online Giving

Make a donation without writing a check. LifeSpan offers a secure site at www.lifespanservices.org where you can click on the DONATE NOW and give a gift to support the programs of LifeSpan.

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NOTE:

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