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“People love working here,”

Stephanie MacKay

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Columbus Shredding Co. gives the disabled opportunities

By Haley Cavanagh

The Columbus Shredding Co. was started by the parents of disabled children who wanted more choices for their disabled children. So in 1968 they created a community foundation that would give the disabled an opportunity to learn and work in a professional, friendly environment—Columbus Shredding Co. and now they’re celebrating 40 years.

As they’ve evolved through the years, the Columbus Shredding Co. works with the Salt Lake City School District to provide special education programs and job placement for disabled students. The collaboration serves as an alternative High School for transition students; with five different training programs that include lawn maintenance, janitorial and warehouse, food service and an industrial sewing program.

“A lot of employees have severe disabilities and it has



Pictured above: Cody Duran works in the shred room at the Columbus Shredding Co.

been a challenge to find something they really wanted to do,” said Stephanie MacKay, director of development, Columbus Community Center “People love working here. The majority of the people working here have been with us from the beginning, four years ago. We’ll be able to add another twenty-five people at the end of the year.”

Branching operations, the Columbus Secure Shredding company was formed about five years ago as another way to employ people with disabilities.

One employee whose has benefited from the program and been with the shredding company for three years is 21-year-old, Cody Duran.

“He has learned a variety of work skills in the Columbus Secure Shredding facility,” MacKay said. “He is an integral team member.”

Reaching beyond the shredding company’s walls, MacKay said the Columbus staff recently helped Duran move into an apartment with a roommate.

“For the first time in his life, he is a young man living on his own, with a promising career and support from Columbus staff to ensure that he succeeds in living independently,” MacKay said.

Mackay also said the service and security provided of both documents and staff is a top priority and the same as any other work environment.

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What do the disabled riders think of UTA’s service?

By Deborah De Vos

The Committee on Accessible Transportation Services wants to know what Utah Transit Authority users think about UTA’s bus service.

All this month they are distributing surveys to riders asking them to rate the riding conditions, fares, reliability, parking and overall service.

The Disability Outreach Committee was asked to in-

clude a link on their website, www.doconthefirst.org, in an effort to get the word out to the disabled population. DOC Chairman and CAT committee member, Mark Miller said he supports the survey because “we have to let the riders say if the service is good or bad – not management,” he said. “What we’re trying to find out is how we can understand the needs of riders and make suggestions to UTA about current and

future transit issues.”

The CAT committee is an independent advisory group of disabled men and women created by UTA, who work hand in hand with UTA to give input and suggestions on issues that could impact disabled riders.

“The CAT committee provides ongoing advisement to UTA on accessibility issues

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Pictured: Janice Kimball

"We want to keep folks housed as long as possible."

~~Janice Kimball

Grace Mary Manor fights homelessness in Salt Lake County

By Mark Miller

Recent figures released by The Utah Department of Community and Culture and other groups, show Utah has a significant homeless problem.

"There were 2,573 sheltered homeless persons and 280 unsheltered homeless persons counted on Jan. 24, for a total of 2,853 individuals," the report said. "To combat homelessness in the State of Utah private nonprofits such as 'Crusade for the Homeless' and 'The George S. and Delores DoreEccles Foundation' joined forces with government agencies like The Salt Lake County Housing Authority to build a new housing complex for the homeless titled "Grace Mary Manor."

Housing and Resident Services Director for the Housing Authority, Janice Kimball said they've received money from the State of Utah and Salt Lake County. "It took a lot of different money to put it together, but we were able to build the building without any debt which is really important because if we had to pay debt on this we would not be able to rent to really low income people," she said.

Information provided by The Housing Authority shows the purpose of the Manor is to

"help bridge the gap in affordable housing for homeless men and women in Salt Lake County by providing housing, rental subsidies and on site services to help insure successful tenancy for residents," as written.

The large complex has many community areas such as a library and game room. "We have 84 units and 80 of them have renter subsidies tied to them," Kimball said. "So, the tenants pay 30 percent of their income and the rest is paid up by rental subsidies."

The manor opened in late February, which Kimball believes it has proven to be much more than an apartment building, "it has a staff working with the tenants on a regular basis," she said.

There are four supportive services (and workers) on staff. Service Coordinator, Jeniece Olsen, is responsible for overseeing how the services are run in the building, and the daily duties of three Case Managers.

"This is one of the greatest jobs I've ever had... [because] I've seen the transitions in the people that come into the program that were homeless and now have a place to live



Pictured: Jeniece Olsen, McKinley Goreham, Emily Beatty and Brandon Hanson

and some of them even have jobs," Olsen said.

Tenants are assigned a case worker who works on their behalf one step at a time. "A lot of [the] people who are moving in now don't have money so [often the case workers first goal] is helping them get money so they can pay rent [there's a \$25 minimum rent] and helping them find food resources" Kimball said. "The Department of Work force Services [are] going to have staff that will work here regularly each week... and if anybody is not getting benefits that they're titled to they'll get them enrolled for those benefits and then we will work with them on jobs and that sort of thing later."

Kimball said some of the people that come into this program have been homeless for the last 10 years and have to be taught how to use a stove or a thermostat and "we need to teach them not to sleep in their clothes," she said.

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Magna Health-Fair set for another season

On Saturday, May 17, Magna Healthy Community and The Utah Housing Coalition are sponsoring "The 6th Annual Magna Healthy Community Fair" from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The event will take place at the Magna Fitness and Recreation Center, 8400 W. 3270 S.

This year 35 sponsors will

attend the event to provide information about services that promote health, wellness and safety.

There is room for 40 more sponsors who may want to participate.

The Lion's Club is also sponsoring a "Fun Walk" which will begin at 8 a.m. on the morning of the event.

The walk will kick off at the southwest corner of the Chevron, 2700 S. 8400 W., and ending at the Magna Fitness recreation center.

According to information released by The Utah Housing Coalition, "This event has had continued participation from service providers and community members alike.

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Vendors for the 2007 Health-fair share health and wellness information with visitors.

Bus rapid transit delayed

By Deborah De Vos

The Utah Transit Authority's bus rapid transit system, which was reported in the March issue of *The Edge*, as launching in April; has been rescheduled to launch sometime in the mid-to-late part of July.

The Belgian manufacturer, Van Hool, received the engines for the BRT buses, but the specifications given to them (Van Hool) from their (engine) supplier were incorrect so the engines do not fit the buses. And new emission standards in both the U.S. and Europe have added to the delay ~ Van Hool has had to redesign the filters to meet the

new standards.

UTA's Sr. Media Relations Specialist, Carrie Bohnsack-Ware said the delay is not costing UTA any money and we could see at least a couple of the new BRT buses soon. "Right now we have two of our BRT buses on boats coming over from Brussels. They will be here in a few weeks," she said in an e-mail. "Then we'll get more buses every other week after that for a while."

Bohnsack-Ware has said that BRT lines will operate in the same capacity and speed as light rail for a fraction of the cost to install and implement.

Plans for the 3500 South line show that the exclusive center lane will eventually run east to west from the Millcreek TRAX Station at 3300 South to 8400 West "They will not have their own lane at the start but will once 3500 South is widened," Bohnsack-Ware said.

With a price tag of about \$430,000 a piece; the new buses will also come equipped with stainless steel frames and body panels, top mounted cooling systems, 330 horse powered engines, low-floor boarding capabilities, ADA boarding, object detection systems and more windows.



Picture and map courteous of UTA.



Magna Health-fair Continued from page 2:

Last year, more than 60 service providers dispensed information to nearly 1,000 community members," it reads, adding that there is a \$25 suggested fee for each exhibitor and each exhibitor will receive:

1 table, 2 chairs

Electrical outlets are available upon request on a first come-first served basis

Table skirt provided, please provide your own display and table cover

Light Snacks will be available

Applications can be found at: www.doonthemove.org/media.aspx.

For more information about the event, contact Tara Rollins at :

801-364-0077.

UTA survey continued from front page...

related to facilities, plans and programs," Miller said. "I believe they were established through a charter by the Board of Trustees for UTA but are independent of the board in operation and opinions on issues."

Riders will also be asked how often they use public transit, what things they'd improve, what routes they frequent most and which municipality they live in.

"There is also a section for suggestions, which I hope everyone will take the time to fill out because I think we all need to be focusing on the solutions that could help fix the problems and issues disabled riders have had with some of UTA's recent changes," Miller said.

Results of the survey will be shared with UTA officials in an effort to help improve service for disabled riders.

Grace continued from page 2...

Kimball also said the staff will continue to monitor the tenant's progress over time and do their best to keep them housed, adding that "primarily, our main objective is to [track] how many [chronically homeless] stay housed and for how long," she said. "We want to keep folks housed as long as possible."

Columbus shredding continued from front page:

"Items to be shredded are locked and stay locked, and CSS picks them up and takes the items in a secure truck to the facility," she said, adding that loads of paper will come in and be put on the 'kipper' (loading dock) and distributed to a work room that has three shredders, two strip shredders and a cross cut that feeds into a big baler. "The bales weigh about 1500 pounds."

After they are baled MacKay

said that each one is tagged, weighed and stacked in a secure area, "kept until they have a full semi-trailer load," she said. "They are sent to the pulp mill where they are pulped and recycled."

Red tee shirts identify the staff as being the routine employees that work full-time and everyone must go through background checks and drug screenings to be trained and work at the facility.

"It is a great employment model," MacKay said. "We could be head to head with commercial shred businesses."

With 15 employees on staff, new plans are to double that amount of jobs when they (Columbus Secure Shredding) secure a contract with the State of Utah sometime later this month.

LOW COST Health care

In an effort to help reduce the cost of prescriptions and general health care, the Disability Outreach Committee is working to find ways individuals can decrease their medical bills and get care they need.

The result is a new link on their home page, www.doconthemove.org, where you can find information on ways to receive free or low cost health care and prescriptions in the State of Utah.

The link will continue to grow and evolve as the month's progress so they are encouraging people to check back for updates and new information.

The Disability Outreach Committee would like to take the time to thank all of those who donated money at Wells Fargo Bank.

The money went to help support events and projects for the disabled.

For anyone looking to continue their support of the disabled living in the Salt Lake Valley, we encourage you to donate whatever amount you can at any branch of Wells Fargo.

Make checks payable to "The Disability Outreach Committee."

~~ Mark Miller

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Editor:

My name is Tom Brownlee. I am 43 years old and living with a cognitive disability.

Growing up I was often teased—all the way up through High School. It was real hard for me to accept, however I was in special classes to get the kind of help I needed to get me through school.

I also was in shelter workshops as well, but I didn't like or agree with them because I knew I could do better than the program they had for me.

I went to college for a few years and in 1997 I became a self advocate.

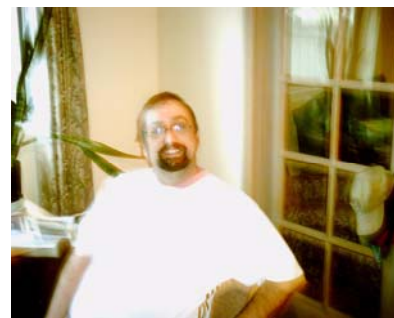
Since then I've spoken and trained others at many conferences both locally and nationally.

I've also served on some federal review teams as well.

I currently serve on a few boards as well, as I am actively involved in helping people first.

And I also do a lot of legislative advocacy.

For me making a difference is what it's about.



Pictured Above is Tom Brownlee.

Tom's story is inspiring to us and the Edge News Journal wanted to share it with readers. To members of the Edge, Tom represents the perseverance and vision it takes to look past one's disabilities in order to accomplish what you're truly passionate about. We congratulate Tom for all he does to make life better for disabled people everywhere and himself.

~~~ Edge News Journal staff

### Employment opportunities:

People with disabilities encouraged to apply

Columbus Community Center is expanding its training and employment programs and we have a number of positions available.

For those with SSI and other benefits from entitlement programs, we will work with individuals to place them in a position that balances their skills and interests with their income limitations imposed by the Social Security Administration.

We also provide on-the-job training, some flexibility in schedules and assistance with transportation.

We have positions open in the following areas:

- Grounds maintenance workers (seasonal ~ April through November)
- Custodians
- General warehouse workers
- Sorting and production workers
- Equipment operators

For more information or to apply, contact LuAnn Barney, Human Resources Manager, at 262-1552, ext. 123 or e-mail [luann.barney@slc.k12.ut.us](mailto:luann.barney@slc.k12.ut.us).

For more information about Columbus, visit our website at [www.columbuscommunitycenter.org](http://www.columbuscommunitycenter.org).

Letters to the Editor:

Are printed on a first come, first served basis as a companion piece to Edge News Journal.

Send letters to:

[docpress@gmail.com](mailto:docpress@gmail.com)

We want to hear from you!

Deborah De Vos

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Edge News Journal

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