

Soaring

A newsletter for the family and friends of Wingspan Life Resources

Three Directions Employment and Alternative Service Begins at Wingspan

“Three Directions,” Wingspan’s new alternative employment services program, opened on September 17 with eight people currently served by Wingspan and four people brand new to Wingspan.

Over one year ago, the county human service departments from the seven county metro area asked providers to submit proposals for a different kind of employment services that would meet the needs of those who do not fit into what is now available. They strongly pushed ideas for services “without walls,” or not based in a “center,” and also ideas that would be more affordable to the counties than what is presently available. People especially in need of new ideas for service included those reaching retirement age and specific cultural groups.

Wingspan proposed a program called Three Directions that would assist people in developing leisure and relationship based events and activities for those no longer up to working full time or at all; volunteer opportunities for people of any age, and volunteer work that might lead to paid employment for those in need of jobs. Wingspan’s proposal was chosen, along with a few other providers.

In addition, Walker Residences, a large provider of elder care services in the Twin Cities, agreed to partner with Wingspan in offering these services. Their CEO, Lynn Starkovich, is on Wingspan’s board of directors, and has long wanted to see the

two organizations pool their expertise and resources.

The result is the array of activity and bustle that began during the week of September 17. Two women are signing on as volunteers, in training for paid jobs at Walker Residence on Bryant Avenue in Minneapolis. Both love working with elderly people and hope for a great deal of patient contact. Wingspan staff assist them through this process. In addition, ten more people are meeting in small groups at six of our homes, morning and/or afternoon, doing things like baking, “spa day,” arts and crafts, bingo, Karaoke, weekly brunch, and classic films. Also on the agenda are bowling, visiting friends or family, running errands, or checking out new restaurants. At least once a week, this group, too, will be at Walker, joining the elders there in ceramics or choir, and volunteering in small but meaningful ways.

Future plans for the program include elders from Walker who, for example, in younger days ran a school kitchen or did needlework, will volunteer for our activities, teaching small groups the skills and pastimes they still have, but maybe seldom use.

All in all, the program is off to a terrific start. The participants are thrilled with their new activities and friends and look forward to each new event.

choice * independence * dignity * fellowship



Melvina and Elaine S. work on putting the cookies into the oven, while Elaine L. looks over the results of their day’s work.



Spotlight on Board Members: Nancy Jones

Nancy Jones has served on the Wingspan Life Resources Board of Directors since 1999. During her board tenure she has served on numerous committees and has provided leadership with orientation and mentoring of new board members.



Currently, Nancy co-chairs the Development Committee, diligently working to help raise funds for the organization. She has been co-chair of Wingspan's annual Spring Gala fundraiser for the past five years and is very involved in our new "Taking Flight" marketing and fundraising program. Nancy also has been a member of the Finance & Audit Committee, sharing her expertise in employee benefit planning and ensuring the organization sustains financial stability.

Nancy unselfishly gives her time and expertise to Wingspan. She regularly attends Wingspan functions and brings friends and family as well. For almost two years she conducted a weekly knitting class for the Hmong elders at Tsev Laus Kaj Siab. Beyond Wingspan she serves on the boards of the Weavers Guild of Minnesota and Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin.

Not only is Nancy an exemplary volunteer for Wingspan, she is also legal guardian for her cousin James, who lives in a Wingspan home. She is very involved in James' life, visiting him regularly, taking him to medical appointments, and advocating for him and all served by Wingspan whenever necessary.

Nancy's strong commitment to, and her strong belief in, the mission of Wingspan is an excellent model to all at Wingspan.

Wingspan Employees Happy to Receive Scholarships

Six Wingspan employees are happy to be able to advance their career in long-term care because of scholarships received from a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Pictured from top to bottom are scholarship recipients Samuel Abraham, Wendy Thomas, and Charles Mikely.



"By having this (scholarship) it will make it easy for me to pursue my goals. Thank You." -- Samuel Abraham



"You cannot imagine what enormous difference this scholarship has made in my studies and my current job at Wingspan." --Charles Mikely

Family Day at Made in the Shade

This year's Made in the Shade on September 29, proved to be a big day for family get togethers. In the top row are the Mooneys and Eickhoffs. The bottom row are the Ryans and Homan/Thomsen's. Everyone had a great time at Lake Calhoun, despite the ominous threat of rain, which thankfully held out until the very end of the event.



Tsev Laus Kaj Siab News

As summer comes to an end, the elders harvest the crops they have tended over the summer and prepare for fall. A picnic celebration held at Keller Park was enjoyed by all and the food was wonderful! The fall promises to be filled with interesting activities, including visits to the Science Museum, the Star Tribune, and Shrine Circus. Plans are underway for the traditional Hmong New Year's Celebration, to be held in November.



Tsev Laus Kaj Siab gardeners enjoy the reap of their harvest.

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www.wingspanlife.org

Save the Date!

- ***Power of Love Luncheon, Thursday, February 21, 2008, 12 noon, Radisson Roseville. A one-hour fundraising luncheon where you will be inspired by the stories of Wingspan.***
- ***Annual Spring Gala, Friday, May 16, 2008, 6:00 p.m. , Metropolitan Ballroom. Our annual FUN-raiser with superb live and silent auction items, terrific food, great music, and lively company!***

For more information, call Lesley at 651-646-3846, ext. 246.

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