



# the HomeFront

a newsletter for REACH residents

May Issue

## Going Green

With today's emphasis on using environmentally friendly practices, REACH continues to look for ways to work more wisely and sustainably. One way to go green is to cut down the use of paper products. Doing so reduces the amount of paper used for printing and copying business materials and helps to create a paperless office environment.

REACH has been successful in our Green efforts. As we continue to do business in a socially and environmentally responsible way, beginning with the May 2015 issue of HomeFront, you will no longer receive this publication through the mail. The newsletter will only be available online and a limited number of printed copies will be available in your building.

We need your email address if you wish to continue to receive the HomeFront, please contact your Resident Services Coordinator with this information or send to [HomeFront@reachcdc.org](mailto:HomeFront@reachcdc.org). If you do not have an email address, you may want to contact your Resident Services Coordinator to get help in setting one up.

## Debbie Lowder: A Gift for Service

We are always fortunate whenever we encounter another person who chooses to see the best in us, perhaps beyond the immediate moment – who chooses to believe in us, to encourage us and give us the occasional nudge toward our full potential to be the person we truly want to be. What a gift! And with Debbie Lowder as the keystone of Resident Services at REACH, such gifts have been much less rare than they otherwise tend to be in life.

Debbie has a passion, dedication and energy for supporting others, and particularly for supporting recovery in all its forms – recovery meaning “the process of returning to a normal state after a period of difficulty” – which, in a housing context, can involve financial recovery, freedom from addiction and conflict, recovery from abuse, as well as rebuilding community connections and relations. Over nearly 15 years Debbie has brought this value to her work and has helped to instill this value as the core of Resident Services at REACH, having nurtured and mentored the majority of the current Resident Services staff as we have continued to acquire the skills of the craft.

Debbie first joined Resident Services in the year 2000, when it was just a department of two, as part of establishing the Ritzdorf Court Apartments community for those impacted by homelessness. Over 10 years she helped to build and support a very vibrant community at the Ritzdorf, and simultaneously served numerous other apartment

communities with the same tremendous values and dedication.

Debbie has grown as the Resident Services department and REACH overall have grown. And as a manager, she has been a true source of support and inspiration in the work and communities we love so much.

Here are some words from just a few of the many in the REACH community whom Debbie has touched and inspired through her work here: We wish Debbie very well as she goes on to do her great work in the larger community. Thank you Debbie!





# Community Connections



*as a winner. With your beautiful smile and your warm heart that I'm sure has charmed many within. You may have never known Debbie, but soon after my tragedy with my only child you were the one that helped me overcome some of the grief and pain I was enduring by sharing some of your many kind words. I'm saddened with your leaving REACH and I will miss you. But, I'm sending you my best regards, that you continue conquering all of your endeavors. Again, thank you for being you and all that you have done to help me become successful in my higher educational goal."*

**BLESSINGS!!!!**

Sharon Hayes- McCuller Crossing Resident

*"Debbie, we have missed you here at the Ritzdorf Court Apts.*

*Since Tim and I met you before we moved in; can you believe 10 years? That's a record for me. You have been helpful and supportive of the people here at REACH. I miss our chats and your advice. You have a big heart and we hope you succeed in your endeavors. You have been a light to people when they are in a dark place. We will always love you and the boys and consider you family."*

Charolotte- Ritzdorf Court Resident

*"Debbie was an amazing trainer, advocate and cheerleader for her staff. As a supervisor, she saw the very best in us and treated us as individual lives, change makers; versus employees. Debbie encouraged leadership in me and I took on the challenge. When I became her co-manager for Resident Services, I gained a new respect for this woman. I was able to see the vast amount of work Debbie put into this department. She has held this team together for years and never strayed from the REACH mission. I will miss*

*Debbie ridiculously and am excited for her next step."*

Erica Tucker- REACH Resident Services Program Manager

*"With a heavy heart we say goodbye to Debbie Lowder. She has been a wonderful advocate and friend to us at Prescott Place Apartments. I first met Debbie when she facilitated the "Write Around Portland" class I attended in 2006. She made the class so interesting and fun. Debbie also was a godsend for our gardens. Taking us to the nursery and delivering plants for us to use. Debbie will be greatly missed by us all and we wish her the best in all of her endeavors."*

Marty Van Zee- Prescott Place Resident

*"During her time at REACH, Debbie was an excellent supervisor. She was an inspirational leader and a passionate motivator. She cared strongly about her staff, and commented often about how much she cared about our well-being. She frequently told me that she loved working for REACH because her job involved creating communities and providing resources that improved the lives of others. She empowered residents by challenging them to overcome adversity and manifest healthy, happy lives. Residents respected, valued and trusted her judgment. I will miss working with her."*

Joanna Morrill- REACH Resident Services Coordinator

*"It is my pleasure that I met Ms. Debbie Lowder and spent some quality time with her at REACH's old main office. I met her about eight years ago at a smoke cessation class she helped facilitate. As we know, the first impression is usually the best impression and Debbie continued to demonstrate her character. Debbie, I will always admire you for your work ethic, beautiful smile and the little jazzy lady that wear the cowgirl boots at best; for the times you have taken to respond so quickly on such short notice when I needed another letter of recommendation to help complete my scholarship applications, for which I hope to be announced*





## Community Leadership Institute

This past October, REACH sent two Resident Services Coordinators and 5 REACH residents to Cincinnati, Ohio for a Community Leadership Institute, put on by NeighborWorks® America. There they had the chance to take courses in community leadership, ranging in topics from “Going Green” to “Celebrating Diversity” to “Community Gardening”. The catch for this exciting excursion was that the team from REACH was to organize an event that would improve the larger REACH community. The idea that they generated was that of a “REACH Resident Empowerment Expo”, where all of REACH’s residents would be invited and encouraged to share their passions...from art, music, culinary arts, volunteering and spoken word. REACH submitted this idea to NeighborWorks® and received a grant to help put it on. This event is scheduled to occur on May 30th from 11-3 pm at St Philip Neri Parish on SE 17th and Division St. It will include Cooking demonstrations, art booths, an open mic, raffles, snacks and vendors such as TriMet, Portland Metro, Scrap to name a few. Just another exciting event to build REACH’s community and engage our residents in some creative activities to spice up their lives!



## Clark County Workshops

Residents of REACH in Clark County have been very busy! Approximately 30 people graduated from skill building workshops in less than two months.

Gateway Gardens residents in Washougal participated in a series of three Leadership Development Workshops with Allen Kvalvik. The workshops focused on qualities that help parents and leaders to build healthy relationships. Some of the topics included realizing ones value, building trust, and searching for significance and building self-worth.

In March the residents of Covington Commons, Cascadia Village and the Mews participated in a series of financial capability workshops.

Week 1, residents engaged in an activity called “Habitudes”, a card game to help them determine how their core values, beliefs and outside influences impact their financial decisions. At this point they also began the task of keeping receipts and tracking their expenses to the penny!

Week 2 was all about Credit Reports; what they mean, why we have them, how they can help or hurt us and dealing with debt. Credit reports can affect our lives significantly; residents met the challenge of understanding and repairing their credit and committed to continue their work in individual coaching sessions.

And then Week 3 - budgeting! How do we budget on very limited resources? The work done in previous classes, including vision mapping, and resident dreams are becoming reality. Nothing happens overnight, but with a dream, a plan, and the follow through...YOUR DREAMS are possible!

Sign up with your Resident Services Coordinator Kim Matic at 360-334-4106. These classes will be held at other properties in the next few months.



# Community Connections

## Summer Camp Options

Nothing's better to shake off the last chills of winter than thinking about summer and nothing can be more summer than camp! If you're looking for summer camp options keep in mind that REACH maintains a list of summer camp options for residents to peruse with links to what is offered, scholarship and financial aid forms and other information to help you decide which option is right for you. You can find this list by visiting our website at [reachcdc.org](http://reachcdc.org) or by contacting Angie Lancaster [atalancaster@reachcdc.org](mailto:atalancaster@reachcdc.org) or 503-501-5732. Information is updated regularly, so check back often! Spots go quickly so applying early for any camp that you might be interested in is also highly recommended. The earlier you apply, the more likely you are to reserve a spot and the more financial assistance is available.

## Thank You Gold Star Volunteers!

We would like to thank our Gold Star Volunteers for all of the time and effort they have given to REACH. We would like to honor them as a REACH volunteer who has contributed an extraordinary amount of service to help REACH help more people in need. Congratulations "Gold Star Volunteers!"

Gold Star Volunteers are people who have dedicated at least 25 hours or volunteered 10 times in a year with REACH. Volunteers at REACH are a tremendous resource. We rely on hundreds of volunteers in our communities to supplement our work. Our volunteers provide thousands of hours of labor and services through our Community Builders Program (CBP), our free home repair program, teaching classes and facilitating workshops at our properties, building garden beds, helping at the Paint & Repair-a-thon and Annual Donor Lunch. There's an amazing ripple effect of goodwill and greater community awareness as you tell your family and friends about REACH.

Our goals for the Gold Star program are to:

- Honor those who have made a special contribution to REACH
- Build stronger relationships with volunteers
- Encourage more people to volunteer and/or increase their commitment

In 2014 we had 50 volunteers: 24 REACH residents, 12 in Washington and 14 outside, which went above and beyond. REACH residents contributed over 62% of the total hours recorded. It is an honor and pleasure to know that these volunteers are part of the REACH team.

Aieda "Zoe" Barba	Irene Londrville	Regina McPhearson
Andrea Downing	Jackie Bell	Robert Krause
Andrew Carlman	Jackie Davis	Roberta Gibson
Barbara Bushong	Janet Moore	Robin Smith
Barbara Werner	Jessica Carpenter	Ron Alexander
Bobby Berstler	Jim Johnston	Rosamonde "Sunny" Schurr
Bonnie Riley	Karen Patterson	Scott Kueny
Christine Lee	Kharlyn Curtis	Sharon Hayes
Christine Lipari	Lauren Mills	Stephanie Bliss
Christopher Kites	Lori Weldon	Steve Goodwin
Connie Molina	Mark Dority	Tammie Holloway
Edward W. Knightly	Mark Howard	Tom Holmes
Emilie Urick	Maximiliano Zapata	Tracy Blackmon
Emillie Kuo	Megan French	Virginia Noggle
Felicia Arrington	Nichelle Watson	Vivian Mak
Heidi Kellar	Paula Cracas	Warren Zimmerman
Immanuel "Tony" Yessi	Quintin Inman	