

TRANSITIONS

Black Hills Workshop & Training Center

P.O. Box 2104, Rapid City, SD 57709

Jimi Obretenov South Dakota DSP of the Year



Black Hills Workshop associate instructor Jimi Obretenov has been named the 2011 Direct Support Professional (DSP) of the Year for South Dakota by

the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR). Jimi was first chosen by Black Hills Workshop as their Direct Support Professional of the Year, then went on to ANCOR's national DSP Recognition Contest. She will be honored at the ANCOR conference in Washington DC, June 5-8. The purpose of this contest is to recognize the best of the DSP workforce from each state and at the same time raise awareness about the devotion, professionalism and quality supports DSPs provide in their daily work.

Jimi exemplifies these qualities. Her supervisor Jacki Schoenrock says Jimi potentially supports up to 224 people and that she sees at least 50 people every month. One of those people is Darcy Peterson, who Jimi supports in her involvement with the Ups of Downs Family Support Group. After participating in the Buddy Walk in 2008, Darcy told Jimi that she was interested in joining the group. In November 2008, Jimi supported Darcy to her first of many meetings. Thus began what has become a social network as well as an avenue for community involvement for Darcy. The group has fueled Darcy's desire to spread the word that people with Down Syndrome can lead independent lives.

With Jimi's support, Darcy went on to be nominated and elected to the Ups of Downs Board. And, in February 2010, she traveled to Washington, D.C. on behalf

of the group. Darcy says, "I think she definitely deserves this award because she's been a good person to me, (I'm gonna cry) and I care a lot about her. . . . Jimi is a gorgeous person!"

Among other organizations and activities, she has supported people to volunteer at the Humane Society, Rapid City Clean-Up Day, United Way Day of Caring, and SHARE. Thanks Jimi for all you do!

Pickering and Schaefer win national honor

Andrea Schaefer and Heather Pickering have been chosen by the ANCOR Foundation to receive the 2011 Community Builder Award. Andrea is the owner of Barefoot Dance Studio and Outright Dance Theatre, a new mixed-ability dance company in Rapid City. Heather is a writer, actor, director and teacher. The two were nominated for the award by Black Hills Workshop because of their efforts to include people with disabilities in the Rapid City theatre and dance scene through several major productions: Flutter, Vita and Winter Bloom.

The Community Builder Award recognizes "exemplary initiatives that create community inclusivity through opportunities for people with disabilities to build social capital and live full, meaningful lives as contributing and valued members of their community." ANCOR is a nonprofit trade association which represents and advocates on behalf of more than 800 private organizations who provide services and supports for nearly 500,000 Americans with disabilities. The award will be presented at ANCOR's Conference in Washington, DC on June 5.

Black Hills Workshop's Chief Executive Officer Brad Saathoff says Pickering and Schaefer have helped to change perceptions about what people with disabilities can do. "Andrea and Heather are well-known as professional performers in our community, so their belief in the abilities of those with disabilities lends a new credibility to the efforts of artists from Black Hills Workshop. Thanks to them, we see a bright future for those we support who are interested in dance and theatre."



Andrea Schaefer, Heather Pickering and Andrea's daughter Elsie pose after learning of their selection as Community Builder Award winners.

BHW receives highest accreditation

The Black Hills Workshop has been awarded the highest possible accreditation from the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). And we were the first in South Dakota to receive the new Person Centered Excellence four-year accreditation. CQL is an international organization dedicated to the measurement and improvement of quality of life for people with disabilities. The criteria for this new CQL process include: 1) doing personal outcome interviews with people supported and using the information gained to create support plans with the people at the center; 2) Data gathered biennially by the South Dakota Division of Developmental Disabilities regarding the quality of services to individuals; 3) A plan created by a group of stakeholders with regular progress reports sent to CQL; and 4) and continuing to meet the basic assurances of health, safety and rights.

A group of 43 stakeholders including people supported by Black Hills Workshop, parents, staff, employers, volunteers, board members, and others spent many hours over the course of three days learning about CQL's Key Factors and Success Indicators. Out of this meeting, they identified goals for the plan they will address over the next four years. Major goals include:

- Community membership by people we support will facilitate personal opportunities, resources, and relationships.
- Making sure that all planning is done with the people served at the center.
- Ensuring that people have authority to plan and pursue their own vision.

While we do a lot of this already, we will continue to improve and expand our efforts in person-centered services and helping people to have a life in the community that they want.

Susan Utter volunteers at elementary school

Once a week for much of the school year, Susan Utter volunteered at South Canyon Elementary School in Karen Thorson's fifth grade to teach the students about living with blindness. When she was 14, Susan was involved in a car accident which left her blind and with short-term memory challenges. She attended a school for the blind in Michigan before coming to Black Hills Workshop in 1993.

Along with reading to the class from Braille books, she translated a book they wrote about her as well as an autobiography she wrote for them to keep in the classroom. She demonstrated her Braille and her slate and stylus which she also uses to write in Braille. She showed them her talking watch and how she counts money and she even taught them how to guide someone who is blind. "I enjoyed working with the kids," says Susan. The feeling was mutual. Mrs. Thorson says, "It has been a wonderful experience. The kids really bonded with her." She says when any of the children see Susan, they run up to her for a hug."

Susan had expressed an interest in volunteering to work with children so instructor Jennifer Garcia contacted several schools until she made contact with Mrs. Thorson. Susan works on the Black Hills Workshop contract at Rapid City Regional Hospital where she does a variety of tasks including cleaning binders, assembling a variety of kits, and folding towels. But on Wednesdays, her day off, Susan visited South Canyon Elementary. School is out for the summer, but both Susan and Mrs. Thorson are planning on Susan being back in the fall.



Dear Friend of Black Hills Workshop,

When several local radio stations did a telethon in May to raise money for St. Jude's hospital, Connie Whitley volunteered to answer phones. She said, "I can't give money, but I can give time. I have ability to do something to help the world and I love to use it!"

Susan Utter volunteered at South Canyon Elementary School throughout the year to read to Karen Thorson's fifth grade class in Braille and teach them about living with blindness.

And on April 30, with wind gusts up to 50 miles an hour, nine employees and people we serve, participated in Rapid City Clean-Up Day. Despite the weather, they cleaned all of Range Road and the building frontages between Sioux San and 44th Street.

These and many other stories remind me again of how, when given the chance, people with disabilities live out the Black Hills Workshop's vision: A community where all people are good neighbors, valued friends, productive workers, respected leaders, and caring volunteers. In doing so, they benefit our entire community. We are proud of their efforts and grateful for their contributions.

Sincerely
Brad Saathoff,
Chief Executive Officer

**Black Hills
Workshop
CanDu Week
August 13-22
Be watching
for details!**



Lee Woodruff headlines brain injury conference



*Ron Sasso, Director of Community Transitions, Lee Woodruff, co-author of the best-selling book, *In an Instant*, and Brad Saathoff, Black Hills Workshop Chief Executive Officer pose during the 6th Annual Black Hills Brain Injury Conference May 5-6. Woodruff garnered critical acclaim for the compelling and humorous chronicle of her family's journey to recovery following her husband Bob's roadside bomb injury in Iraq. Bob is an ABC television journalist. Lee gave the keynote address at the conference.*

Artist of the Year, Connie Whitley honored at tea



Black Hills Workshop Artist of the Year Connie Whitley was honored at Suzie's Royal Tea on May 1 at the Suzie Cappa Art Center. The tea was sold out with 137 people in attendance. Connie has attended the Suzie Cappa Art Center since 2004. She has a passion for painting and has shown her work at the Dahl Art Center, the Central States Fair, and many other venues. She has participated in theatrical performances and is a member of Outright Dance Theatre, a local mixed-ability dance company. She has also performed in bell choir and at piano recitals.

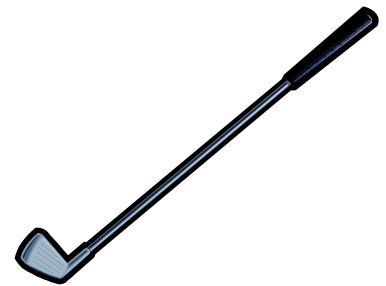
The Black Hills Workshop
Foundation

Golf Classic

Monday, July 18

Arrowhead Country Club

**Contact Brian Munsell
605-718-6207**



See what you can do



Jo Mundaniohl (above) and Beth Dubay (Switchboard Supervisor) attended a press conference on April 14 to help present Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired's new initiative: "See What I Can Do!" Jo was invited to demonstrate how SBVI has helped her and to demonstrate their "See What You Can Do!" campaign. Jo is employed on the BH Services contract at the Ellsworth Air Force Base Switchboard.

BLACK HILLS WORKSHOP AND TRAINING CENTER, INC.
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New homes win Chamber's Beautification Award



By unanimous vote, the Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors chose Jake's Place and Helena's Home to receive the Beautification Award, a monthly award which goes to a different location April through August. The Ambassadors hosted a ceremony Thursday, May 5 at the homes which are located on Allen Avenue.

Address changes?

Please check your address label carefully. Send your address changes to:

Sheila Muehlberg
Black Hills Workshop
P.O. Box 2104
Rapid City, SD 57709.

You can also e-mail your changes to smuehlberg@bhws.com or call 605-718-6208.

If you would prefer to receive your newsletter via e-mail, send your e-mail address to smuehlberg@bhws.com. Your address will not be shared with other organizations.

Transitions is published bimonthly by the Black Hills Workshop Foundation. The Black Hills Workshop Foundation is dedicated to supporting comprehensive, quality services for people with disabilities. The Foundation is committed to ensuring those services now and in the future. Comments and questions are encouraged and may be addressed to Dorothy Rosby, Editor, Box 2104, Rapid City, SD 57709, or call (605) 343-4550. You can also e-mail drosby@bhws.com. Visit us at our web site at bhws.com or bhwsfoundation.org.

Thank you contributors!

Donations received March 1-April 30

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BHW Maintenance Department
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Dale Huether

Huether, Wilfred & Arleen

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In Memory

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Avery, Byford & Bonnie
Schaeffer, Stacey & Jamie

Dan Robinson

Kahler, Janet M.
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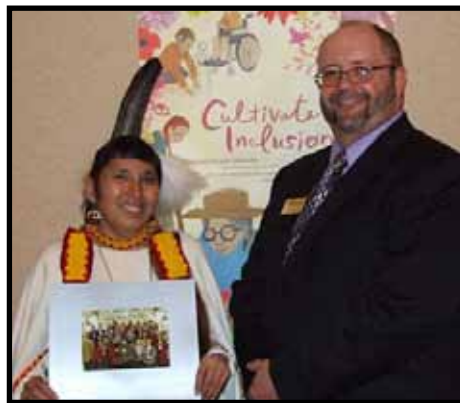
Clavel, Calvin & Martha

In Kind

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Smith, Brenda
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Two complete Partners in Policymaking

Tim Neyhart, representing SD Advocacy Services, presents a certificate to Cindy Roan Eagle and Kevin Papen. Both recently completed the leadership course Partners in Policymaking and were honored at a banquet held in Sioux Falls on April 9, 2011.



BHW writers and artists published

For six weeks last fall, ten people served by Black Hills Workshop and Training Center met once a week in the Suzie Cappa Art Center to journal for ninety minutes. Some of their efforts are now featured in *Creativity Unleashed*, a new book which also features South Dakota artists with disabilities who displayed their artwork, photography, poetry, and more at the 2010 Dare to Dream Conference Art Show.

Creative Journal Writing Workshops were also held in Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, and Yankton. Writing workshop participants were introduced to the basics of journal writing and a variety of methods they could use to journal. A sampling of their insightful writing completed in these workshops is included in *Creativity Unleashed*. Thanks so much to Qwest and Brenda Smith for giving us this opportunity.

Artists featured in *Creativity Unleashed* include Shawn Stratton, Cindy Roan Eagle, and Nancy Weiss. Writers include Andrew McMullin, Rodney Keffeler, Connie Whitley, James Janis, Nancy Weiss, Patrick Hicks, Shad Bebout, Scott Vearrier, Bob Mason, and Charlotte McLean. Congratulations to all of you. Leading the class were Maryann Blanchard, Dorothy Rosby, Jennifer Dupont, and Margie Munroe.

NCCC members serve again at Black Hills Workshop

Black Hills Workshop welcomed nine AmeriCorps NCCC volunteers with an open house on May 6. The volunteers will be with us for eight weeks, working throughout the Black Hills Workshop's facility on Range Road to support people in a variety of activities. This is the third time NCCC members have assisted Black Hills Workshop. Samantha Czerkas, the media representative for the group, says that this is the second stint for this particular group in their ten-month service. Most recently, they worked with Habitat for Humanity in Waterloo, Iowa and they will have one more, yet-to-be announced assignment when they leave Rapid City.

AmeriCorps NCCC is a full-time, team-based residential program for men and women ages 18-24. NCCC members are organized into teams of 10-12 members and serve in communities in the areas of disaster preparation, response, and recovery; environmental conservation; public safety; urban and rural development; and education. NCCC and other AmeriCorps programs are administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Each year, the Corporation engages four million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and Learn and Service American programs. For more information, visit <http://www.nationalservice.gov>.



AmeriCorps members Jacob Cherry (Chaska, Minnesota), Brittany Bergstrom (Bethel, Connecticut), and Kellie Mattingly (Loogootee, Indiana) enjoy the welcome party held in their honor on May 6.

Cougars bring home the gold

The Black Hills Workshop Cougars took home the gold from the state Special Olympics Basketball Tournament in Yankton March 11-12. They went undefeated in four games. Matt Blauvelt was named All Tournament Player by the coaches. Pictured left to right are Tina Boschee, Coach Bill Molitor, Mike Studer, Rocky Allard, Matthew Blauvelt, Jenny Molitor, Aaron Flack, Coach Dennis Hettich, and Melissa Richmond. The Black Hills Workshop Wildcats had a record of 2-2 and earned the bronze medal.



New Lions Club meeting at BHW

Rapid City has a new Lions Club, and it is meeting at Black Hills Workshop. Rapid City Community Pride Lions Club met for the first time on May 4. Along with selecting their name, they selected their officers: Colton Thiesfeld-President; Joe Burmeister-Vice President; Michelle Aman-Secretary; and Sharla Woodhead-Treasurer. The 35 people who attended also selected the projects they would initially like to focus on which include the adopt-a-park program, fund raising for tornado relief, and collecting donated eye glasses for those in need. The club is open to new members. Anyone interested can contact Joe Burmeister at 593-1144. The club will meet once a month at the Black Hills Workshop, 3603 Range Road. The next meeting will be held Saturday, June 25 at 7 p.m. in the gymnasium.

The Lions Club is not the only community organization that utilizes the Workshop's facility. Top 5 Toastmasters has been meeting at the administration building, 3650 Range Road, for several years. Meetings are held each Friday at noon. Toastmasters is an international organization devoted to helping its members improve their public speaking and leadership skills. For information contact Dorothy Rosby at 605-718-6205. Both groups are open to anyone interested.



Do you Facebook?

For one day only July 20, we need you to vote for Black Hills Workshop on

Facebook to win a new Toyota van valued at \$35,000. Go to the Toyota Facebook page (www.facebook.com/toyota), look left to "100 cars for good," click in and ask them to remind you on Facebook to VOTE on July 20! We're competing against four other non-profits for the car, so we need YOU! If you aren't a "fan" of the Black Hills Workshop Foundation, become one and encourage all your Facebook friends to do the same before July 20. (<https://www.facebook.com/BlackHillsWorkshopFoundation>)