

Donations

Organizing Closets Can Lead to Jobs and Therapy

How do people with disabilities benefit from your clean closets? When you organize and set aside items that you no longer use, you can stuff the Big Blue Truck™ and support Northwest Center's programs for kids and adults!

The first step in getting your closets back in shape is to pare down. You probably have the space you really need in there; it's just filled with clutter. Empty out the entire closet—and ask yourself whether you really need that sweater you haven't worn in two years. You'll be able to minimize your storable items dramatically. After paring down, donate your re-usable clothing items to Northwest Center. ♻️



Donating is Easy!!!

800-992-2060
bigbluetruck.org

Drop off at one of our convenient locations; visit our website for a current list.

OR

Schedule a pickup at your home by calling or filling out our online form.

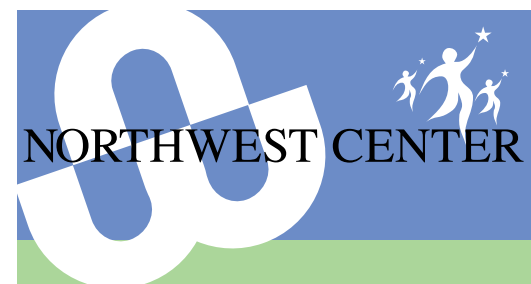
Want to be notified when The Big Blue Truck™ is going to be in your neighborhood? Sign up for epickup notification service!

Northwest Center founding parent reflects on our 45th year pg. 2

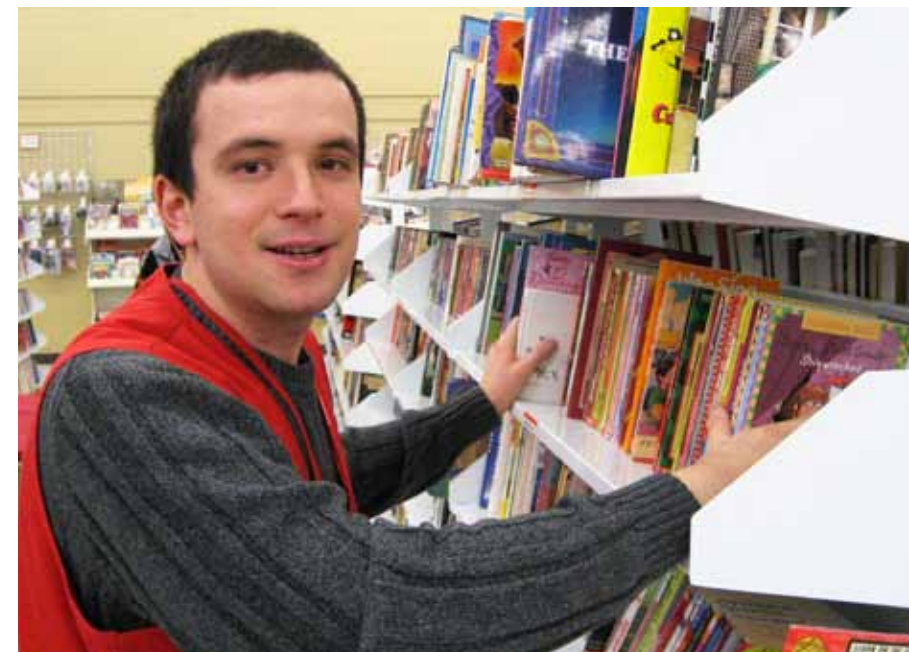
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January 2010



A Message from President & CEO Tom Everill

In their wonderful book *Better Together*, Robert Putnam and Lewis Feldstein profile 12 community and corporate organizations that have discovered the power of connection and engagement to achieve unprecedented results. Northwest Center is another good example of the way individual strengths are amplified when people engage fully with each other in learning, work and play—the way, in other words, people are “better together.”

I recently toured half a dozen sites around the Seattle area where people with developmental conditions work in inclusive public and commercial environments for market wages in demanding jobs. The employees were proud to explain their job duties and showed me some of the ingenious tools (checklists, timetables, color-coded maps and calendars, etc.) their Northwest Center job coaches had devised to help them be successful.

The employers and co-workers universally turned away my thanks and instead thanked Northwest Center for making the beneficial experience of inclusion possible for their organization. It's not that any of these employers chose inclusion instead of productivity or profitability; they all reported that inclusion made their organizations stronger and more productive—that they were indeed “better together.” Inclusion is a smart strategy for organizations and communities who aspire to success! ♻️

Spotlight on...Kurt!

Kurt believes each person should enjoy their job, and he sets a great example by enjoying his own. He works at Value Village and is most animated when he's focused on one of his daily tasks—like meticulously organizing the bookshelves in the store or keeping the restrooms tidy. Kurt's attention to detail is impossible to miss, and his job coach says it's one of his biggest strengths. He also sets high expectations for himself and is very bright; his biggest interest outside of work is entomology!

Kurt became connected with Northwest Center when he was still in high school and participated in the School to Work program. He is ultimately interested in working at a Disney Store, and the experience he's gaining at Value Village is a great step toward that goal. Kurt is also learning about work in general—how to manage his workload and when to take breaks, as well as how to get through tasks that aren't his favorite. All of these are important elements of any job, and Kurt is picking them up quickly. Keep it up, Kurt! ♻️



Save a tree!

You can receive this newsletter electronically; visit our website at www.nwcenter.org to sign up!

Then and Now: The Power of Collaboration

As Northwest Center turns 45 this year, we'd like to pause and reflect on our roots. Following is an interview with Janet Ward Taggart, who banded together in 1965 with two fellow mothers of children with developmental disabilities and the cousin of a young boy with Down Syndrome. This group became a force that ultimately contributed to the development of Northwest Center. (Note: This is an excerpt; the complete interview is available at www.nwcenter.org)

Q: What kind of exclusions did your daughter face that made you want to act on her behalf?

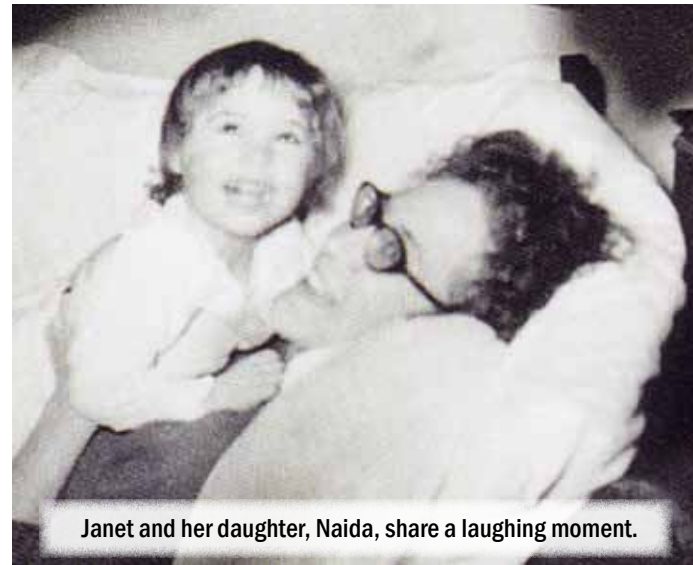
A: First, Naida couldn't get medical coverage. In fact, she never had insurance until she turned 18 and became eligible for Medicaid. Also, when she was five years old, I wanted to enroll her in Sunday school and was told it would upset the other kids. Then, when we went to our neighborhood public school, we were literally ushered out of the building. Many, many families were facing this type of rejection.

Q: How did Northwest Center get started?

A: There were four schools that were termed "basement schools" around town for kids with disabilities and a workshop. All were parent-run. This was the first time these parents had ever felt secure in the knowledge that their children wouldn't be rejected. They came together and received funds from the Boeing Employees Good Neighbor Fund. There were some of us who refused to stop there; we paid taxes and expected the schools to cover teacher salaries and other expenses, so we fought for it. Once some funding got started, we became a functioning Northwest Center.

Q: How did you get involved in the political system?

A: We continued to be frustrated. I started a speakers group that included fellow founders Katie Dolan, Evelyn Chapman and Cecile Evans Lindquist. This group



Janet and her daughter, Naida, share a laughing moment.

ultimately became a self-named committee – Education for All – that joined with law students George Breck and Bill Dussault to write and successfully lobby House Bill 90. This legislation mandated the right to a tax-supported public school education in our state. It also became the model for the federal law that mandated special education for all children with disabilities; the federal law took our name and became the Education for All law.

Q: What was your proudest moment as a champion for people with disabilities?

A: Going to the Governor's office for the signing of the law. We'd had such great support from people like Governor Evans and Senators Magnuson and Jackson. When we first met with Senator Magnuson in Washington, D.C. and did our dog and pony show for him, he said, "Do you mean to tell me there are little boys and girls in our state who can't go to school?" He got it! It was that simple! 🌱

Newspapers Feature Northwest Center Writers

The opinion pages of the Marysville Globe and Arlington Times have been featuring content about people with disabilities—by authors you might recognize!

Northwest Center CEO Tom Everill has penned three columns for the publications, which have appeared on the first Wednesday of each month. Tom's columns have focused on the effect that labels have on

the people who bear them, redefining the word "normal," and creating environments where people of all abilities can thrive.

The January 6 editions of the two newspapers feature a guest column by Mike Quinn, Northwest Center's Vice President of Manufacturing. Mike operates several businesses that employ people with disabilities—people who have opened Mike's eyes to the



human potential that is unlocked when the right training and support is in place. Look for Mike's piece in both newspapers! 🌱

Look for Campaign Sightings in 2010



By now, you've probably seen Northwest Center's awareness-building billboards around the Puget Sound region. The billboards started popping up during Disability Awareness Month in October and are continuing into the New Year. We've even turned our South Park building into a billboard! Our location next to Hwy 99 by the 1st Avenue bridge is turning out to be a great opportunity – when the drawbridge goes up, thousands of drivers stop and see our message of inclusion and engagement each day.

Keep your eyes peeled for additional campaign sightings in 2010! We are currently working on a commercial that will appear on KIRO TV throughout the year; the 20-second spot will feature families that have been impacted by our programs for children with developmental disabilities. You'll also notice our iconic Big Blue Trucks™ carrying our campaign message this year. The back of several of our trucks will bear the familiar words and images that represent our "it's what's inside that counts" campaign. With the visibility our trucks have in neighborhoods throughout the area, we expect to reach hundreds of thousands of people this year!

We still need help. If you have contacts with any local media outlets, we'd welcome an introduction. Sometimes papers and stations need public service announcements for unsold space, and we can help fill that space. Anything you can do to help further the campaign this year would be welcome. Call Alice Thavis at 206-378-6368 if you have ideas! 🌱

Partnership Means Many Things

There's a movement afoot, and it's time to spread the news! More and more local businesses are creating opportunities for people with disabilities—and they're finding that the returns are great.

ReBinder, for example, is a growing business that relies heavily on Northwest Center's workforce of people with disabilities to handle the packaging, assembly and distribution of its recycled office supplies. "We compete in a multi-billion dollar market against powerful players," says Brant Williams, Chief Marketing Officer. "It is critical for ReBinder to have reliable, flexible and scalable production systems that are cost competitive; Northwest Center and the people with disabilities who work there embody these traits and enable us to compete in our market."

Other community businesses are filling their open job positions with people with disabilities. At the Ballard Health Club, Harvey was hired to detail the machines and equipment—which serves the critical purpose of keeping them germ-free and working properly. "Harvey's work is essential to our business, and he does a thorough and capable job," says Lowen Clausen, Managing Partner. "In addition to Harvey's work contribution, he brings a positive and joyful attitude to our business that raises the spirits of staff and members alike. We all feel like smiling when Harvey is with us."

Businesses like Salty's are demonstrating their commitment to opportunities for people with disabilities through financial and in-kind resources. The Salty's partnership started several years ago and is going strong. "This relationship is a great investment for Salty's; when people with disabilities are engaged, our whole community benefits." says Celeste Stubner, Merchandise Coordinator. "We get far more out of it than we put in." 🌱



Tell Us What You'd Like to Read!



This is your newsletter, so please help us make it relevant to you. Whether you're passionate about programs or interested in our social enterprise model, we want to know. We'll use your feedback to shape the content of future issues, so share your thoughts today! We also welcome letters to the editor at news@nwcenter.org. 🌱

Thank You!

Northwest Center Donors: July – December 2009

\$10,000+

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Value Village

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Tom and Sue Ellison
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Sally Thompson
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Robert and Jacqueline Wells

\$250-\$499

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Akvelon
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Deborah Wardwell
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Donna Zirkle

Matching Gift Companies and Employee Giving Campaigns

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Fairmont Olympic Hotel
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Daniel and Linda Labriola
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Molly Moon's Homemade Ice Cream
Museum of Flight
Nancy Treder Photography
Jacqui Olver
Olympic Athletic Club
Pan Pacific Hotel
Codie Patrick
Salty's Restaurant
Satch & Sol
Seattle Sheraton Hotel & Towers
Sheraton Seattle
Taphouse Grill
The Children's Museum
Top Ten Toys
Usborne Books
Woodland Park Zoological Society

Honorary Gifts

Gifts were made in celebration of the following people and occasions:

Debbie Anthony
Bernel Goldberg
Jennifer, David, Toby and Elijah Glick
Joaquin's birthday
Leo Thavis Bronk
Marti Louther and Rik Adams
Mary Maddox and Kevin Cole
Michael Leslie
Nora Adams
Sharon Long's 75th birthday

Memorial Gifts

Gifts were made in loving memory of the following people:

Ethan Allen Hauser
Daniel Leslie
Bill Ellison
Lynn Redd
Spencer Stoker