

Spring 2005 Newsletter

We say hello to some a new face and say farewell to a longtime friend on the EBI Board

Carole Shein has served on the EBI Board of Directors since 1998 and served as President of the Board from 2001 to 2003. Carole's grantwriting and fund development expertise has been invaluable to our agency. Carole will be stepping down from service on the EBI Board this Spring, but will continue as a member of the Fund Development Committee. Thanks for all your time, energy and expertise Carole!

Gina Gourley joined the EBI Board in November. Gina has been involved in special education services in the Pleasasanton Unified School District for seventeen years and is currently the WorkAbility/ Transition Coordinator for PUSD. In her capacity as Transition Coordinator, Gina worked collaboratively with EBI's Student Employment Transition Project to help high school students in Pleasanton learn about employment options. Gina is also the mother of a 26 year old son, Kevin, who has a developmental disability. Gina's volunteer involvement in supporting people with disabilities is also extensive. She served on The Parent Advisory Committee at Kaleidoscope Activity Center, established and coordinated the SPRED (Special Religious EDucation) program at St. Augustine's Parish and was the chairperson of the Tri-Valley SELPA Community Advisory Committee. At EBI Gina is serving as the chairperson to organize an EBI Friendraiser for June 12th in the Tri Valley. Welcome Gina!

Capitol Watch : Governor proposes cutting pay for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) workers.

In January, Governor Schwarzenegger stated that he intends to reduce the funds the State contributes to IHSS worker wages. Presently the State contributes enough to pay approximately \$10.10 per hour for IHSS worker pay and benefits. He proposes to reduce that rate to just \$6.75 per hour. He outlines in his budget proposal that Counties can choose to contribute their funds to keep the pay rate higher. However it seems unlikely to observers of the California budget saga, that the Counties will have the resources to make up the difference.

This is the second year that the Governor has attempted this reduction. Last year the State Assembly and Senate voted down the proposal. Many people with disabilities rely on the IHSS funds to help them pay for personal attendant services they need to be able to stay in their own homes. A reduction of the magnitude the Governor proposes, would make it extremely difficult to for people with disabilities in high cost of living areas like the Bay Area to recruit and retain IHSS workers. If people are not able to find workers many may be forced lose their independence .

If you feel strongly about the Governor's proposal to reduce IHSS worker wages and wish to express your position, you can write or fax the Governor at the following address:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
FAX: 916-445-4633

10th Anniversary! Party Time!

On March 12th, 150 consumers, their family members, and EBI staff attended the EBI 10th anniversary celebration at the Karp Community room in San Leandro. A great time was had by all. Festivities included; an awards ceremony (some awards serious and some definitely not), a tasty Italian food buffet and the rockin tunes of the Back Pages.

Serious awards went to Cris Jaye Shupin who received the Pioneer award for her trailblazing efforts in forming EBI's Supported living service and a EBI Lifetime Achievement Award to EBI Supported Living Co-Director Sara Feldkamp for her eight years of wonderful service.

To symbolize the 10th anniversary (the "tin" anniversary), partygoers donated two large containers of canned food to the Davis Street Resource Center.

Special thanks to our intrepid party planners: Donna Pleva, Andrew Pleva, Lynnel Wells-Pereira, Lee Anne Goldsmith and Jennifer Powell.

EBI Staff Help Alameda Community Food Bank

Over the holidays, EBI staff collected and donated 325 pounds of food to the Alameda County Community Food Bank. Special thanks to EBI's Lisa Zinza for coordinating the food drive. The Food Bank serves 120,000 low-income people each month. If you want to participate in a food drive contact Kim Hansen at khansen@accfb.org.

Business Advisory Council: Volunteers Forge the Way in Supported Employment

In October, EBI through funding from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities launched its Business Advisory Council (BAC). The BAC is made up of volunteer business leaders in the East Bay. The mission of the BAC is threefold:

- To increase job opportunities for people that EBI serves.
- To identify careers opportunities in industries that typically have not employed people with developmental disabilities.
- To assist EBI with employer outreach and marketing efforts.

The Business Advisory Council presently has 11 members from a variety of professions including Retail (Lowe's, Safeway), Financial Services (Wells Fargo), Business Services (ADP Payroll) Technology (IBM) and organized labor (Service Employees International Union). BAC members have already developed three opportunities: 2 positions at Institute for One World Health (light clerical) developed by BAC member Virginia Hayes, and one position at Pro-Business division of ADP (receptionist) developed by BAC member Russ Deloach.

BAC member Don Routh and his son Josh, who works at Nob Hill Foods, have taken on the task of speaking about the benefits of supported employment to local business associations. The Routh's have made two presentations, one in Oakland and one in Fremont and Josh will appear on the TV program Comcast Local Edition (on CNN Headline News channel) to be broadcast in April.

If you are a local business leader and are interested to find out more about the Business Advisory Council please contact Tom Heinz at EBI, phone number is 510-618-1580 ext.11.

Alameda County Transition Faire: Celebrating Successful Transition From School to Work

The Developmental Disabilities Council of Alameda County (Barbara Garcia, Coordinator) in partnership with a number of local school districts hold an annual transition fair. The Fair is an important opportunity for young people with developmental disabilities and their families to understand the support service options available to them when they leave high school.

This year, Keith Storey, nationally recognized researcher and educator on supported employment and transition issues and longtime EBI Board member was keynote speaker, In addition, Scott Mitchell, his boss Justin Rios and his supported employment staff from East Bay Innovations presented Scott's successful transition from Village High School in Pleasanton to working at the Regal Imax theater in Dublin.

EBI Member: Spotlight (Kiera Barry)

ILS Coordinator Kiera Barry, jumped into her position with both feet and hit the ground running. In January of 2004, Kiera was hired as an ILS Coordinator supervising 4 ILS instructors. Kiera had no experience providing independent living services. Undaunted, Kiera took to her new job quickly and after an astonishingly short amount of time was performing like a staff person who had been at EBI for years.

First hired by EBI as a Project Assistant for the Youth Empowerment Project in 2002, Kiera impressed many with her organizational skills and her great rapport with the young people in the Project. In 2003 after graduating from UC Berkeley, Kiera left EBI to find a full-time case management position with Walden House assisting parolees to overcome substance abuse issues. After Walden House lost their contract with the Department of Corrections, Kiera contacted YEP Director Val Vivona and applied for a position in EBI's ILS program.

Kiera says she enjoys EBI because of the "agency's philosophy of service and the commitment of the agency to uphold it". She likes the fact that her job allows her to "both directly serve people and to supervise staff". Most of all she loves helping people to overcome obstacles and to realize goals or to do things that they've always wanted.

Originally from Rochester, New York, Kiera likes to hang out with close friends, listen to music, go camping and watch football, especially the Raiders.

EBI Member Breaks the Homeownership Barrier

For close to ten years homeownership programs for people with disabilities have assisted many people in other parts of the country to own their own homes. In the high cost Bay Area, it seemed that homeownership for people with developmental disabilities, most of whom are extremely low-income, was nothing more than a dream.

It is a dream no more for Rebecca, who purchased her first home in December! Rebecca has been living on her own in an apartment for close to ten years with support from EBI's Supported Living Service. Rebecca and her roommate Angela have lived together happily for five years. Several years ago they began talking about getting a bigger place and started looking but to no avail. Then Angela heard about a lottery for new single family houses affordable to people who are low-income funded by the City of Pleasanton. Not knowing whether it would work for Rebecca, Angela entered her in the lottery. She was chosen sixth out of hundreds of applicants and was offered a home to purchase, but that is when the real challenge began.

First, Rebecca and her family connected with the Housing Consortium of the East Bay (HCEB) which has a program to assist people with developmental disabilities to purchase their own homes. Secondly, HCEB made available to Rebecca a \$10,000 grant to go towards the down payment and assisted Rebecca to receive another \$3,000 from Citibank to cover closing costs. Then HCEB worked with the Alameda County Housing Authority to establish a program to allow Rebecca to use her rental subsidy to pay her mortgage. This was done quickly with much help from Housing Authority staff Kurt Wiest and Sharon DeCray.. Finally, she had to qualify for a home loan, another huge challenge for Rebecca who had little credit history, and receives just \$800/mo. from Social Security. This challenge was answered by a special home loan program for people who have low-incomes offered by Citibank.

Rebecca says she likes her new home because "there is more room and its more comfortable" and Angela's dog "Molly can play the backyard if she wants".

Congratulations on your new home Rebecca, may you have many happy years there.

Make Contribution to EBI Online

Go to the EBI website at eastbayinnovations.com and click on the new “donate now” button to support the mission of EBI. You can use your credit card, its easy, quick and secure.

EBI T-Shirts Are Here!

Don't forget to order your commemorative 10th anniversary EBI T-shirt! They sell for \$20 and are available in a variety sizes, styles and colors including: Men's sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL and colors Royal Blue and Ice Gray. Women's sizes M and L and colors Light Blue and White. To order call Jennifer at EBI (510) 618-1580 ext. 10.

(T-shirt models photo)

EBI Classifieds

Personals/Connections

Albany- I am a friendly woman seeking a male friend for long talks, movies, etc.. Please contact my ILS staff person Maria (510) 418-1815 to reach me.

Berkeley- My name is Ben, I am 44 years old. I have dark brown eyes and a great love of life. My passion is music and I enjoy being creative. I am looking for a woman who is pretty, independent, spontaneous, relaxed, enjoys music and going out. Please contact my ILS staff person Maria (510) 418-1815 to reach me.

Richmond- My name is Ron. I'm a good person. I'm on the Board of EBI. I like dining out, going to the movies, shooting pool. I would to meet a nice lady who likes the same things I do. 510-860-7177.

Marketplace:

EBI office needs a **large conference table to fit 15 people** and a **half sized refrigerator**. Call Tom @ EBI 510-618-1580 ext. 11.

Funders:

Regional Center of the East Bay, Department of Rehabilitation, State Council on Developmental disabilities, California Endowment, Manuel D. and Rhoda Mayerson Foundation, True North Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, Morris Stulsaft Foundation, Special Hope Foundation, Van Loben Sels-Rembe Rock Foundation.

Donors: October 2004 to March 2005

\$1000 - \$4999

Bruce Johnston
Frank Inami
Gene Tanaka
Alfred Weissman
Julie & Mike Steinbaugh-Weissman
Brendan Timmer

\$500 - \$999

Peg & Cornelius Frydendal
Alex Grograns Sr.
Susan Heinz

\$10 - \$99

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Hertha Basch
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Wendy Byrnes
John Cahoon
Joyce & Gerald Correia
Florence Fearon
Janet Fischer
Leslie & Judy Foppiano
James & Barbara Garcia
Tim & Chris Gonzales
Bobbie Gonzales
Jack Grossman
Ann Hallam
Joan & Charles Hartley
Margot Glen Heltne
Cathleen Hiromoto
Charles & Joan Howe
Robin Keller & Mark Geliber
Joanna Koo
Julia & William Landau – Taylor

\$100 - \$499

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Connie & Mark Buckman
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Gloria & John Rhodes
Dennis & Ruth Sasaki
Barbara Shaurette
Rocio & Carl Smith
Dorren Steneberg
Uta Swiatecki
Marie Timmer

In memory of Bernadette Ferrerio

Ann Yankovich Huley
Marion Mumper
Sherry Bringham
Jennie Simpson
Glenda Norris
Jack & Peggy Voloni
Jack Radisch
Michael Moran
Marilyn Fraser
John & Janet Attaway
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