



# Body, Mind & Spirit

## Opportunity Center Monthly Update

I am proud to serve as the Director of Bay Area Rehabilitation Center's Opportunity Program, where I work with some of the most extraordinary and dedicated people in the world. Our program is designed for those individuals with developmental and/or physical disabilities. Our various programs enhance work habits, promote social skills, and provide vocational skills needed to become productive individuals in their community. Admission requirements vary but in general are contingent upon verification of a disability, assurance of non-violent behavior towards self and others, an up-to-date medical examination and TB test, recent psychological exam, and the ability to care for one's own bodily functions. In addition, there are minimum age restrictions. Our Day Habilitation participants must be over the age of 18. Another facility based program, the

Youth Transition to Adult Program (YTAP), requires the individual to be a high school student, between the ages of 16-22, with a referral from their high school's Vocational Adjustment Coordinator, and observation of the Youth Transition to Adult Program Coordinator from the Opportunity Center.

The programs themselves vary in the types and scope of activities. The Day Habilitation provides many services including social, life, and employment skills training, which assist and enhance their ability to interact within the community. Participants attend classes on personal and social development, daily living skills training, appropriate grooming and hygiene skills, effective problem solving and communication skills, time management and basic money counting. Participants are also invited to attend field trips to local attrac-

tions, which encourages integration with the community. Vocational training addresses individuals' immediate and future employment and educational needs. Individuals learn employment skills which are practiced on- and off-site and are transferable into competitive employment. Competitive paid employment is offered through specific contracts with area employers. Participants will perform these tasks in our sheltered workshop or at contracted sites. Our program staff transports and supervises participants in these settings. Contracted tasks or vocational training include: constructing pallets and stakes, recycling for local employers such as Exxon, providing lawn care at our Center and at contracted sites, cultivation and maintenance of bedding in our greenhouse, janitorial services for on-site and on contracted sites, and janitorial and maintenance of the local parks for the City of Baytown.

The Career Development team works closely with a State agency, the Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services, to assist individuals who wish to gain or maintain employment in the community. The program offers support to the community employer during orientation/transition phase, eventually fading out of services as the individual maintains employment on his or her own merit. This allows individuals to be better prepared for employment and gain confidence in their skills and abilities to maintain the employment.

Our Youth transitional program (YTAP) works directly with local school districts and focuses on assisting transition-aged students, 16-22 years of age. We help them learn vocational skills and achieve successful employment after exiting school or transition into a program which is appropriate for the individual's needs. Students develop and improve vocational skills to ease the transition from school to work. Individuals receive vocational classes which assist them in the working environment as well as being their own advocates. A Youth Transition Coordinator counsels high school students to maximize the independence and employability of students coping with personal, social, and vocational difficulties that result from birth defects, illness, disease, accidents, or the stress of daily life. The Youth Coordinator assess student's needs, designs, and implements a training and rehabilitation program that may include personal and vocational counseling, training, and job placement. This program is a collaboration between the Opportunity Center, Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services and a number of area school districts.

Home Community Services (HCS) and Texas Home Living (TxHmL) are state programs designed specifically for the individual. Clients must first qualify for entrance and enrollment into these programs through coordination with the State of Texas HHSC. Once enrolled they are eligible for participation at our center. These programs of



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fer flexible and individualized options that may include hands on support in all aspects of daily living and personal care, respite services to help family members in the daily care of the individual. The services provided by these programs assist individuals and their families with.

If you are interested in our program, please feel to contact us to schedule a tour; we would love to show you our facility and program. You can learn more about this program and Bay Area Rehabilitation Center at our website, [www.bayarearehab.org](http://www.bayarearehab.org).

*Kimberly Frederick-Brown*

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*Kim has been with Bay Area Rehabilitation Center Opportunity Program for over 5 years, she is a native of Michigan now calling Texas home. As the Director, she enjoys all the aspects of her job. She networks with outside resources to expand opportunities and contracts. She works hands on with clients to promote social skills and enhance work habits. Kim supports the organization's mission by serving those persons with disabilities and helping to enhance their ability to interact within their community. We believe the Opportunity Center makes disabilities become possibilities. You will find Kim working around the center with clients and assisting in all areas needed. Kim often tells people that she has the best job in Texas, she enjoys working for Bay Area Rehabilitation Center.◆*

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