



THE DESERT ENTERPRISE

**Second Half
issue
Jan – Jun
2020-2021**

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661-948-8402**

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SUBARU AV SHARES THE LOVE AGAIN WITH DHE



Over the last 13 years, through the Subaru *Share the Love* event, Subaru of America, Inc. and its participating retailers have donated more than \$200 million to charity, with customers choosing between four national and more than 1,440 hometown charities to be benefited each year. During the “Share the Love” event, for every new vehicle purchased or leased, Subaru donates \$250 to the purchaser’s choice of participating charities.

In July 2020, Desert Haven was selected by Subaru Antelope Valley for a second time to participate in the Share the Love event as a Hometown Charity, having previously been selected in 2018. From mid-November 2020 through January 4, 2021, each new purchase or lease resulted in a donation to each buyer’s designated charity, as outlined above. At the close of the fundraising period, Subaru Antelope Valley held a special celebration at the local dealership on April 27, 2021, at which time Desert Haven was recognized by the CEO of LA Car Guys Mike Sullivan and his outstanding Subaru AV team.



Accepting on behalf of Desert Haven Enterprises, Sr. Contract Services Manager Jeff Whiteford, accompanied by a DH work crew, was presented with a check for \$24,347 to be used to support the operations of the organization, to the benefit of persons served. An elated Jenni Moran, Executive Director of the organization, exclaimed, “We are so incredibly excited and blessed to have been selected by Subaru Antelope Valley for this tremendous



gift...not once, but twice! In light of the pandemic and the impact it has had and continues to have on Desert Haven, we are deeply, deeply appreciative! There are simply not enough words to express our gratitude! Thank you, Mike Sullivan and Subaru Antelope Valley...from the bottom of our hearts...Thank you!”



DHE BIDS FAREWELL TO TWO OUTSTANDING LONG-TERM EMPLOYEES...NOW RETIREES



After serving nearly 33 years in a multitude of different roles here at DHE, most recently as a DTAC Instructor, Becky Dillon decided it was time to ride off into the sunset and enjoy the other side of work...retirement. She was celebrated on June 18, 2021 by the consumers of Project Independence and coworkers of many years during a “Siesta Fiesta”, complete with taco cart and cupcakes. Becky has more than earned a siesta, but will be greatly missed!

Site Supervisor Lisa Cooper, aka “Coop”, after more than 15 years of service, opted to follow her husband’s lead into the wonderful world of retirement to enjoy some travel and camping...and to prepare for her new role...that of Grandma. She was celebrated by a group of her coworkers, along with the Executive Director, at a distanced luncheon in the tent at Medrano’s Restaurant in Palmdale. Hers will be some “big” shoes to fill...and she, too, will be greatly missed!



How are we doing?...Keeping a finger on the pulse of our consumers

Following is a summary of performance in DHE's key program areas, based upon a review of data for the second half of the 2020-21 fiscal year:

Accelerated Work Readiness Services: Off-Site Hab Crews - AV and SCV

- ✓ Twenty percent of consumers placed in the Work Readiness program were trained on jobs new to them.
- ✓ The availability of paid work averaged 64% for all consumers in the Work Readiness program.
- ✓ A total of twenty-two additional contract opportunities were developed or expanded in the first half of the fiscal year.
- ✓ Five consumers obtained individual, community-based employment from the Work Readiness Program during this review period
- ✓ One hundred percent of consumers placed in the Work Readiness program expressed satisfaction with DHE's services, as did 95% of the customers utilizing the off-site hab crew service.

Community Employment Services: Supported Employment - Individual Placement

- ✓ A total of 10.2 individual placements were achieved for the 2nd half of the year for consumers seeking community employment.
- ✓ Hourly earnings exceeded minimum wage with an average of \$14.25per hour for consumers in individual placement.
- ✓ Two consumers transitioned into follow-along status this review period, while another one moved into competitive employment.
- ✓ Consumers within active job search averaged 9.0 months of job seeking for the job of their choosing.
- ✓ One hundred percent of responding consumers placed in program expressed satisfaction with DHE's services, as did 100% of employers responding to the survey.

Day Training Activity Services: Project Independence

- ✓ Thirteen percent of consumers in the DTAC program achieved individual ISP/IPP goals.
- ✓ No (0) consumers graduated from the DTAC program into the Work Readiness Program this review period.
- ✓ Due to the program's being closed to in-person services and given the COVID-19 restrictions, there were no community outings conducted during the review period; though, DHE did hold a drive-by Halloween and Holiday party, as well as a virtual Snowflake Ball.
- ✓ Twenty percent of consumers in the program demonstrated skill acquisition and retention in a key area.
- ✓ One hundred percent of consumers placed in program expressed satisfaction with the services offered.

NEW COMMUNITY CONTRACTS

The following companies and corporations have recently contracted with DHE for the listed outsource services within their business:

Employment Skills Training Contracted Opportunities

Antelope Valley

- ✓ **Agua Dulce Airport** Weed Abatement Services
- ✓ **AMC, LLC**
 - Arbor at Date and Lofts Pressure Wash Service
 - Arbor Gardens Landscape Rock Installation Svc
- ✓ **AV Boys & Girls Clubs** Grounds Maintenance Service
- ✓ **Calvary Chapel** Janitorial/Custodial Service
- ✓ **Limon Chiropractic Office** Janitorial/Custodial Service
- ✓ **Love This Horse Equine Ctr** Ranch Hand Service
- ✓ **NASA** Weed Abatement Service
- ✓ **Park Somerset Apts** Grounds Maintenance Service
- ✓ **Rocon Group** Trenching Service
- ✓ **Spears Property** Brush Hog Service
- ✓ **Valley Oasis** Mulch Removal and Installation
- ✓ **The Children's Center**
 - Wellness Homes Janitorial/Custodial Service

Please show your appreciation to these businesses for supporting persons with developmental disabilities in developing/enhancing their vocational skills toward future employment.

The following companies and corporations have recently contracted with DHE for the listed outsource services within their business:

Employment Skills Training Contracted Opportunities

Santa Clarita Valley

- ✓ **Neotech Products** Neonatal Medical Products
(Valencia) Production and Packing Service
- ✓ **Excel Hotel Group** Janitorial/Custodial Service
(Valencia)

Please show your appreciation to these businesses for supporting persons with developmental disabilities in developing/enhancing their vocational skills toward future employment.

STATE OF THE STATE

California State Budget Update

For years...decades actually....service providers, serving the nearly 400,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout the State of California, have been struggling to survive an antiquated rate structure that consistently lags exponentially behind the cost of doing business. We were hopeful when, in 2018, Governor Brown and the Legislature called for a rate study to be conducted, with the final results to be submitted by the Department of Developmental Services to the Legislature by March 1, 2019. Just as expected, the study revealed a grossly underfunded system...underfunded by some \$1.8 billion!!!

Flash forward to 2021...to date, there has still been no rate reform enacted for the crumbling system of critical services and supports to the IDD community, and despite a \$75 BILLION surplus in the State of California, not counting an additional \$25 BILLION in federal money to the state, the current Governor has included NO rate increases for service providers in the May Revise Budget for the 21-22 fiscal year! Despite hundreds of program closures throughout the state in recent years...Despite persons with disabilities and their families crying out for help to the state for years...Despite service providers and other stakeholders demanding that the Lanterman Act continue to be upheld...Despite staunch support on both sides of the aisle for rate reform and protection for the services and supports so desperately needed by persons with disabilities and their families...Despite proof of the years of negligence perpetrated by the State of California with regard to this critical system...and despite a multi-billion dollar surplus...the Governor, as so many have done before, simply looks the other way to other "more important" issues.

Well....we say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!!! The time for talk is over!! The time for task forces and stakeholder meetings is over!!! Governor Newsom has a unique opportunity to repair the years of neglect...to revitalize, rejuvenate, and restore the system once and for all...and to ensure persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities in California have the services and supports they need to live as any other citizen of our beautiful state into the foreseeable future!!! To that end, we are calling upon the Governor and each member of the Legislature to FILL THE GAP NOW!!! Please join us in making our voices heard by sending a loud and clear message to Governor Newsom and to the Legislature to act now, to do the right thing, and to, at long last, properly fund services and supports for the IDD community!

DESERT HAVEN'S GOING GREEN

COMMERCIAL GROUNDS CREWS PREPARE TO COMPLY WITH NEW LANCASTER ORDINANCE

In light of the City of Lancaster's move to eliminate the use of gas-powered grounds maintenance equipment within the city by April 1, 2024, DHE is preparing to transition its commercial grounds maintenance equipment to electric only in the very near future. To that end, the agency is currently partnering with the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District to test green equipment options to determine what brands and types would best suit our personnel as they service DHE's myriad of contracts.



Thanks to AVQMD Executive Director Bret Banks, Desert Haven has been linked with distributors of electric grounds maintenance equipment, in order to put them to the test. Additionally, grounds maintenance management has had opportunity to meet with other local grounds maintenance professionals who are already using electric equipment, to discuss the pros and cons. Needless to say, the pros far outweigh the cons, including lower maintenance costs, savings on fuel and oil, quieter operation, and significantly less wear, tear, and exertion on the operator due to the lighter weight of the equipment, not to mention no emissions.

To a person, every crew member having operated the test equipment has given their stamp of approval. We very much look forward to completing the conversion and doing our part to support the City of Lancaster and our community in this very important endeavor.



In 1987, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed March "Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month," a time to raise awareness about the importance of inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of community life, particularly employment.

Here at Desert Haven, persons with disabilities demonstrate each and every day that they are more than CAPABLE of making significant contributions to the workplace, to the community-at-large, and to the world around them!

On behalf of the more than 500 individuals served by DHE, we thank our customers, employers, and community partners for providing opportunities for persons with disabilities to realize their hopes and dreams for a full and productive life lived similarly to any other member of the community.



DHE'S EXPANSION IN THE SANTA CLARITA VALLEY CONTINUES

It has been almost two years since Desert Haven opened up its satellite office in Santa Clarita and, despite the ongoing pandemic, we have continued to grow and to expand...in terms of consumers served through employment skills training opportunities and businesses served through our professional outsource/subcontracting services in the area.

Participants in the Work Readiness - SCV Program gain competitive, marketable job skills while working on a variety of subcontracts throughout the local community, designed to develop and to enhance both hard and soft employment skills. In turn, local businesses benefit from high quality, smart outsource solutions that save

time, lower costs, and get the job done with proven results. If you or someone you know may be interested in participating in our program or in supporting the employment skills training of those whom we serve by contracting with us, please contact Desert Haven Enterprises at (661) 948-8402.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF TERRY SKINNER

This newsletter is dedicated to the memory of our beloved colleague and friend, DHE Counselor/Program Manager Terry Skinner, who passed away unexpectedly on January 12, 2021. A gentle giant of a man, his personality was even bigger than his stature; his laughter was infectious; and his smile was a permanent feature on his face. No matter the circumstances, Terry spent his days encouraging and uplifting those around him with his joyful spirit and positive outlook.



Each of us should take a page from his playbook and make each day a "Terry Day" by being kind to one another; finding the positive side of all situations; helping others whenever possible; working hard; being a team player; and always striving to be and to do better. We will miss you, Terry, but the undeniable mark of your influence here will live on forever!

NEW JOBS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

The following employers have recently hired consumers into regular jobs within their business:

Individual Placements

- ✓ **City of Lancaster** (Lancaster) **Maintenance Assistant - 2**
- ✓ **HoneyBees Learning Academy** (Lancaster) **Janitor**
- ✓ **Macy's** (Antelope Valley Mall - Palmdale) **Customer Service Associate**
- ✓ **Desert Haven Enterprises** (Lancaster) **Janitor**
- ✓ **Pacific Seismic Products** (Lancaster) **General Laborer**
- ✓ **Stater Bros Mkts** (East Lancaster) **Courtesy Clerk**

Please show your appreciation to these businesses for supporting persons with developmental disabilities in achieving their career aspirations.



Desert Haven Enterprises
43437 Copeland Circle
Lancaster, CA 93535



DHE REMEMBERS JOHN FRISK

For the past four years, John Frisk has been a lifeline for Desert Haven in working more effectively with the government and improving services on the grounds maintenance contract at Edwards Air Force Base.

At the time of his passing on March 15, 2021, John was a Sr. Account Manager with SourceAmerica, out of the Seattle office. SourceAmerica creates employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in partnership with nonprofit agencies serving the I/DD community and the federal government, including the military. John regularly visited DHE and EAFB to provide technical advice and support to both enti-

ties, assisting DHE to successfully reorganize the contract and to further strengthen the relationship with the customer.

In addition to his invaluable support on the contract, John also became a friend and a mentor to the leadership of DHE. In fact, with rare exception during his travels to the area, he typically enjoyed dinner with members of the administrative/management team. "John did not like to eat alone, so I was privileged to get to know him on a deeper level over the course of the past several years," noted DH Executive Director Jenni Moran. "He was a phenomenal human being, who loved God, loved his family, loved his country, loved his friends, loved his work, and loved life and its many, related adventures! It was a privilege to learn from him professionally and to be mentored by him personally. They say we are all replaceable, but I can guarantee you this, there will be no replacing John Frisk! He absolutely was one of a kind!"

CARF ACCREDITATION

DHE last participated in the CARF accreditation survey in April 2018, receiving a three-year accreditation. Interested persons may review the most recent CARF survey report by visiting Desert Haven's website at www.deserthaven.org and clicking on "About" and then on "Accreditations".

DHE's next CARF accreditation survey shall be conducted virtually sometime in the months of November or December 2021.

Mission Statement

Desert Haven Enterprises, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to developing, enhancing, and promoting the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities.

The primary objective of the agency is to enable persons served to maximize their potential to become independent, self-sufficient, and participating members of their community through pre-vocational and vocational training, independent living and community skills training, job placement, community-based employment, and supportive services.

ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

Following are a few of the objectives authorized by the Board of Directors during the June 2021 Board Retreat to be pursued/achieved in the 2020-21 fiscal year:

- ⇒ *Coordinate with the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District to test and to secure green grounds maintenance equipment to ensure timely compliance with the City of Lancaster's ordinance to eliminate gas-powered grounds equipment in 2024;*
- ⇒ *Continue to conduct high quality remote services via various technological means until all consumers have returned to in-person service;*
- ⇒ *Implement plan for use of technology in the field for completion and submission of paperwork by job coaches and other designated personnel;*
- ⇒ *Complete vendorization process for the Paid Internship Program and for the Competitive Integrated Employment Incentive Program.*
- ⇒ *Explore options for increased wages for direct care staff as rates and budget permit.*

For more information regarding the strategic plan, please contact the office of the Executive Director

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