



THE DESERT ENTERPRISE

**Second Half
issue
Jan – Jun
2021-2022**

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Wants...**



Interested in supporting the mission of DHE by employing those whom we serve, donating your time or financial resources, or joining our team as an employee...

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Accredited Agency



Commission on
Accreditation of
Rehabilitation Facilities

DHE RECEIVES A PERFECT CARF ACCREDITATION

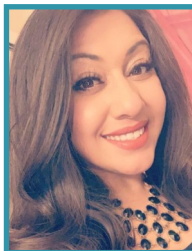


On December 8 - 10, 2021, Desert Haven Enterprises participated in a virtual accreditation survey conducted by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), an independent, not-for-profit accreditor of health and human services, since 1966. The mission of CARF is to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process and continuous improvement services that center on enhancing the lives of persons served. Administrative Surveyor Chris Cale and Program Surveyor Kerry Pottle poured through policies and procedures and hundreds of pages of reports and other key organizational documents and records; observed services and supports to consumers in process; and interviewed consumers, family members, referring and funding entities, employees, business leaders, and other key stakeholders to determine DHE's conformance to the very stringent CARF standards.

The surveyors' report expressed that DHE demonstrated substantial conformance to the standards and cited many core strengths within and throughout the agency including: DHE's pivoting away from sub-minimum wage to minimum wage employment skills training opportunities for consumers; DHE's having successfully maintained its contracts and employing its employment crews throughout the pandemic; DHE's development of innovative means for remotely serving and supporting consumers, who were not yet ready or able to return to in-person service; DHE's commitment to person-centered planning and the opportunities for accommodation of consumers on alternate crews or within other services based upon their needs, desires, health, and abilities; DHE's board of directors and executive director who provide clear leadership, vision, and direction for the organization; DHE's creation of a YouTube channel with a multiplicity of training content for consumers; DHE's top-notch safety program; and the demonstration of dedication and joy of staff members for working not only with the consumers, but also for the organization itself.

Desert Haven Enterprises was awarded the maximum level 3-year accreditation, and, for the very first time, did so without a single recommendation. "To say that I am proud of this organization and the dedicated team that does the heavy lifting day in and day out, would be an absolute understatement," stated Executive Director Jenni Moran. I am deeply humbled by each and every member of Team DHE and privileged to see those whom we serve reaping the benefits of their extraordinary efforts."

DHE WELCOMES TWO NEW MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Amanda Petryshyn is the Sales Manager at Lamar Outdoor Advertising's Lancaster-based plant. With a passion for helping others and a knack for seeking out creative ways to achieve positive change, Amanda brings determination and proven experience in growing business and heightening awareness about the impact that organizations like DHE delivers to the community and, more importantly, to those whom it serves.

Prior to her joining the Desert Haven Board of Directors, Amanda served on the board of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Antelope Valley, as well as on the fundraising committee for the AV Hospital Foundation.

Previously employed by Desert Haven as a Counselor/Program Manager, **Emily Blumenshein** has returned in a new capacity, that of board member, bringing back that same commitment and passion for the consumers she has served and for the organization she regards so deeply...if not more so!



With a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology and extensive professional experience serving persons with disabilities, both within DHE, as well as within the San Diego Regional Center as a Service Coordinator, Emily brings a unique and much needed perspective to the board, as a former employee and as a consumer advocate.

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 2021-22 fiscal year:

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

- ✓ Sixteen percent of consumers placed in the Work Readiness program were trained on jobs new to them.
- ✓ The availability of paid work averaged 63% for all consumers in the Work Readiness program.
- ✓ A total of twenty-five additional contract opportunities were developed or expanded in the second 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 100% of the customers utilizing the off-site hab crew service.

Community Employment Services: Supported Employment - Individual Placement

- ✓ A total of 4.4 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 \$15.23 per hour for consumers in individual placement.
- ✓ Two consumers transitioned into follow-along status this review period, while another two moved into competitive employment.
- ✓ Consumers within active job search averaged 4.3 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

- ✓ Forty-three percent of consumers in the DTAC program achieved individual ISP/IPP goals.
- ✓ No (0) consumers transitioned from the DTAC program into the Work Readiness Program this review period.
- ✓ There were 113 community outings in the review period, including trips to the QH Library, As You Wish Pottery Painting, Fox Airfield, the Poppy Reserve, Lancaster Animal Shelter, the AV Indian Museum, and Vasquez Rocks.
- ✓ Thirty-nine 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 Antelope Valley

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

- ✓ **AMC, LLC**
 - Sage Brush Apts Grounds Maintenance
 - Longhorn Pavilion Apts Weed Abatement Service
 - Tree Removal/Stump Grinding Svc
- ✓ **Edwards Air Force Base**
 - Various Addtl Buildings Weed Abatement Service
- ✓ **Lockheed (Rosamond)** Janitorial/Custodial Service
- ✓ **Lost Angels Children's Prjct** Desertscape Installation
- ✓ **NASA** Weed Abatement Service
- ✓ **QH Little League** Grounds Maintenance Service
- ✓ **Village Pointe Apts** 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.

NEW COMMUNITY CONTRACTS Santa Clarita Valley

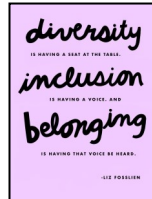
The following companies and corporations have recently contracted with DHE for the listed outsource services within their business:

Employment Skills Training Contracted Opportunities Santa Clarita Valley

- ✓ **City of Santa Clarita** Temp Porter/Custodial Service
- ✓ **Crawford Funeral Home** Janitorial/Custodial Service (Northridge)
- ✓ **FPI Management**
 - Bana @ Tujunga Apts 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.

AT DHE...
**DIVERSITY
IS OUR
SUPER
POWER**



STATE OF THE STATE California State Budget Update

On June 26, 2022, budget trailer bills and the revised budget bill were released, indicating an apparent budget deal with the Governor and the Democratic legislative leaders. The Burns & Associates Rate Study, to be implemented with targeted rate increases between April 1, 2022 and July 1, 2025, was accelerated to result in full funding of the study by July 1, 2024. While many organizations will benefit from the new rates, unfortunately, Desert Haven's largest program, Work Readiness, will not. However, plans are already underway to redesign the program, to better meet the intent of the HCBS Final Rule, by lowering the consumer to staff ratio to increase and thereby enhance community integration, and the lower ratio will likely also garner an improved rate as well.

With regard to the threat by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to "claw back" fees for service paid to organizations having secured a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan, the attorney representing The Alliance, an advocacy group of which DHE is a member, filed a class action lawsuit against DDS to prevent the claw back. According to DDS, such was a form of "double-dipping, given the continuation of absence billing paid to service providers to pay direct care staff during the COVID shutdown. Therefore, per DDS, those monies should be repaid by service providers having received a PPP loan, the purpose of which was to continue to pay staff. In April 2022, DDS agreed to the issuance of a stay order, that stays the implementation of any of the claw back directives for at least six to nine months, including any fiscal audit reviews of PPP-related documentation. According to Attorney Chad Carlock, this will likely be the end of the attempt to claw back those funds. On a side note, although DHE did secure a PPP loan, once it was determined that DDS would continue to fund for services (remote and in-person), DHE opted to pay consumers enrolled in the Work Readiness employment skills training program from the point of closure through July 2020. For this reason, DHE has no concerns regarding DDS's intent to claw back funds paid during the time at which DHE had obtained the PPP loan.

DESERT HAVEN RECEIVES TWO AMERICAN GREEN ZONE ALLIANCE CERTIFICATIONS

Desert Haven Enterprises is the first nonprofit organization of its kind to achieve not one, but two AGZA certifications. Having eliminated the health and environmental impacts of gas landscape maintenance equipment on site, by transitioning to e-powered equipment, DHE received the AGZA Green Zone Certification for its 5-acre headquarter property located in the Lancaster Business Park.



DHE grounds maintenance crew members also participated in AGZA Service Pro training for electric landscape maintenance operations, whereby all participants received certificates and are now "low noise, clean air operators".

For more than a decade, the American Green Zone Alliance has been recognized as the global leader in zero-emission sustainable grounds maintenance strategies. "Desert Haven has been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to partner with AGZA. AGZA President Dan Mabe provided a variety of electric equipment for our crews to test, as well as training regarding the proper operation and maintenance of that equipment. As a result, Desert Haven has gone green well ahead of schedule and, as a result, has been honored with this remarkable distinction." Thank you, AGZA!



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 IS ALL (GREEN) THUMBS AT KENSINGTON CAMPUS

Kensington Campus is a therapeutic community, located on 14-acres in the City of Lancaster, offering 100 supportive housing units for persons experiencing homelessness. In November 2019, Kensington Campus first contracted with Desert Haven crews to provide janitorial/custodial services at the site. Then, in November 2021, DHE was contracted for volunteer gardening services at the site, as well.

Two days per week, DHE volunteer crew members are responsible for tending 18 raised planter boxes within the courtyard area of each of the six villas and tending 18-20 individual planter boxes throughout the campus. Crew members plant and maintain a variety of plants conducive to the high desert weather, particularly drought tolerant plants. Crew members have also planted, raised, and harvested tomatoes, bell peppers, and other vegetables used for food at the site.

Participating consumers have expressed the fulfillment they experience as they plant seeds and grow mature, healthy plants, as well as knowing that they are helping others in need. Way to make a difference!

SPECIAL RECOGNITION FROM NEOTECH PRODUCTS



Neotech Products, located in Valencia, has partnered with Desert Haven since January 2021. Here consumers aligned to DHE's Santa Clarita-based employment skills training program are responsible for the assembly and packaging of medical products and devices, such as temperature probe covers, eye shields, nasal oxygen cannulas, and more for neonatal and pediatric patients.

Recently, consumers working on the crew were recognized by Neotech as Outstanding Team Members within their company. Neotech leadership awarded Team DHE for teamwork that goes above and beyond to help the company in its mission to *Make a Difference!* Job Well Done, Team DHE!!!

NEW JOBS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

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

Individual Placements

- ✓ **Delta Scientific** (Palmdale) **Facilities Maintenance Helper**
- ✓ **Desert Haven Enterprises** (Lancaster) **Grounds Maintenance Laborer**
- ✓ **Smart & Final** (West Palmdale) **Stocker**

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

WE LOVE OUR KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS



Executive Director Jenni Moran and participants of the Project Independence Program accept the check presented by Grand Knight Anwar Caram and Vince Fisher.

Once again, our faithful friends from the QH Knights of Columbus have come through in a very big way on behalf of persons with intellectual disabilities, raising \$4,066 in a single weekend, through the annual tootsie roll drive.

Standing outside local supermarkets, this mighty band of brothers collected funds from hundreds of Valley residents, who demonstrated their commitment to Desert Haven and their devotion to the Knights.

Over the years, the Knights have raised nearly \$90,000 for DHE through the drive, in addition to awarding DHE a \$10,000 grant in 2018 for the purchase of 12 new computers for the Project Independence computer lab.



CARF ACCREDITATION

DHE last participated in the CARF accreditation survey in December 2021, 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 will be conducted sometime in March or April of 2024

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 2022 Board Retreat to be pursued/achieved in the 2022-23 fiscal year:

- ⇒ Complete process for transition of all grounds maintenance equipment from gas-powered to e-powered through grants offered in partnership with the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District;
- ⇒ Upgrade phones used by direct service personnel in the field from 3G to 5G technology;
- ⇒ Implement Paid Internship Program (PIP) component upon receipt of vendorization from North Los Angeles County Regional Center and submit vendorization packet for the Competitive Integrated Employment Incentive Program;
- ⇒ Complete process for Manager of Fleet, Facilities, and Safety to become a certified commercial driver trainer to train/supervise/support internal commercial driver candidates through the licensing process; and
- ⇒ Explore additional targeted measures to cut rising costs and/or garner increased revenue.

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

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It's that easy!! Amazon will make a donation of 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to Desert Haven Enterprises!