

Holiday Celebrations



Ashley, Mary & Christy, Nursing

Like many organizations, OU enjoys any opportunity to celebrate the holidays! Persons Served and their loved ones attended a party at the OU Community Center on December 10th. Despite some snowfall in the morning, a record number of OU friends and family members gathered together to join in the fun. A luncheon of soup, sandwiches, and holiday desserts were served while guests joined in caroling lead by

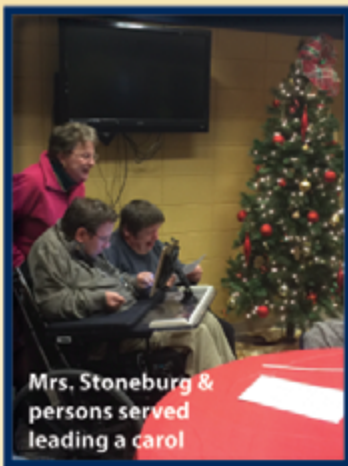
accompanist, Mary Frances Stoneburg. Santa and his entourage were available for pictures, holiday crafts were created by some, and a special group of holiday elves joined in the Christmas cheer and blessed our persons served with many gifts! It was a wonderful way to begin the holiday season! Holiday festivities also included the Christmas tree decorated by OU and donated to the Festival of Trees. OU has participated in this tradition for a few years, and enjoy the holiday decorating knowing that proceeds benefit local charities.



Mac & Stacey, HCBS Team



Brooke & Brandy, Therapy Dept.



Mrs. Stoneburg & persons served leading a carol

OU Honors Veterans

In honor of Veteran's Day, Opportunities Unlimited welcomed Colonel Stephanie Samenus from the 185th Refueling Wing as she helped us in thanking our veterans! OU proudly supports all veterans and on this special occasion paid tribute to those who are part of our OU Family. OU has served veterans through our residential and HCBS programs, and is fortunate to also have veterans in our employ. Colonel Samenus shared the origin and history of Veteran's Day and then led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. As a recipient of the Above and Beyond Award presented by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, it was a privilege to have Colonel Samenus join us for this celebration.



Colonel Stephanie Samenus with Jennifer McCabe, President and CEO



Colonel Stephanie Samenus with Nicky Eaton and Holly Chartier, both veterans and OU team members



Heart of the Mission ♥

Each year, Opportunities Unlimited honors an employee that has consistently gone above and beyond their typical job duties to provide exceptional service to our persons served. The award also takes into account someone that lives the OU mission, "Maximizing Personal Potential through Dignified and Purposeful Living", and shows respect to and is respected by his or her fellow co-workers. Selected by a peer group of previous award winners and leadership, Kela Cihak was selected as the Heart of the Mission award winner for 2016!

Kela is a graduate of Briar Cliff University and has been employed with OU for three years, serving in both direct care and leadership roles in our Employment Services and Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) departments. These programs support persons served who have been affected by traumatic brain injury and other special needs. Placing persons served first is natural to her, and her leadership approach has been crucial in the development of the teams she has been a part of. Jennifer McCabe, President and CEO stated, "Kela has been a strong team member of OU from the moment she joined our organization. Her peers, persons served, and extended team members often sing her praises. As a servant leader, Kela leads by example and is always willing to lend a hand."

Upon learning she had been awarded the "Heart of the Mission" award, Kela stated she was very surprised by this honor and she is just doing a job she loves. Kela has been able to positively impact the lives of several, and serves as an inspiration to many other employees.



Rain, Shine or Snow - OU Team is Committed

The winter season can place additional burdens on individuals when inclement weather occurs. The OU Team has demonstrated its dedication to serving others through the ice and snow of winter. Several team members continue to pull together through these times to make certain the proper needs are met so persons served are well

cared for. Leaders and staff managed schedules and communicated with interdisciplinary teams, assisted with administrative functions, cleared the sidewalks, prepared teams, arranged sleeping accommodations, picked others up who were unable to drive, worked extended shifts, and most importantly, made certain our clients had services! There are many committed individuals at OU and moments like these really highlight our best!



Employees are Commended

Opportunities Unlimited honored team members who celebrated five and ten year anniversaries during their annual Christmas Party and Mission Meeting. For twenty-five years, OU has supported persons served affected by brain injury and other special needs. The direct care staff and extended team members are critical to the delivery of quality services that OU has long been recognized for.

The OU Staff who were honored during this celebration for their dedication and commitment to the organization are:

- Kristi Sencenbaugh, Finance Assistant, 3/21/2011
- Brandi Enstrom, HR Assistant, 4/04/2011
- Judy Ray, Employment Services Counselor, 6/15/2011
- Mac Deeds, HCBS Counselor, 7/20/2011
- Dena DeStigter, HCBS Coordinator, 8/17/2011
- Mona Tremmel, Residential Counselor, 8/26/2011
- Heather Laumann, Residential Coordinator, 10/20/2011
- Dave Christensen, Maintenance Director, 6/30/2006
- Nicky Eaton, Residential Coordinator, 10/02/2006

"Our staff are our most valuable resource," stated Jennifer McCabe, President and CEO. "The employees we recognize for their five and ten year anniversaries have been critical to the success of our organization and delivery of exceptional services. We look forward to celebrating such milestones with many of our team members!" Those honored for their service were presented with an award and OU gear and/or engraved plaque.



Thank You ♥

