



Helping people with neurological conditions gain independence, one person, one job, at a time.

NEUROLOGICAL VOCATIONAL SERVICES AND NEUROLOGY VOCATIONAL SERVICES UNIT HARBORVIEW MEDICAL CENTER

# NVS & NVSU

## THE EMPLOYMENT BRIDGE NEWSLETTER



Volume V, Issue IV

Winter 2009/ 2010

### FOR JEFF, NVSU BEGAN THE SUCCESS CYCLE



Jeff could at times be an emotional "yo yo" then, in dealing with all his challenges, but he stayed the course relative to both mental health and substance abuse treatment. Meanwhile, our epilepsy docs did their job, convincing Jeff that he could be a successful

gaged in a master's degree program.

For the record, in attending our Spring Gala to receive his award, Jeff gave up his treasured "Grateful Dead" tickets for that night. He said, "I wouldn't miss **this** ceremony for the world!" As to the future, the sky's the limit for Jeff related to education and we anticipate he'll be an information systems analyst or engineer for Comcast or another company. He has come a **long way** from the medically unstable, dive-bar lifestyle in Florida and the future looks nothing but Sterling.

Thanks Jeff for allowing us to be part of all your positive addictions -- it's been a real treat to watch!

- Article by Robert Fraser

It was with a feeling of great pride that I awarded Jeff Lipscomb the NVS Career Achievement Award at this year's Chateau Ste. Michelle Spring Gala. As I looked at this well dressed 40 year old and his lovely wife Sandy, it was hard to picture the lurching young man in leather vest and massive tattoos who crossed my office doorway in the mid-nineties. Jeff had come to us from Florida, inspired by his mom, in order to get his epilepsy (and well, his life) in some kind of order. He was suffering from recurring partial complex seizures as well as alcohol and substance abuse. His work history was a tattered patchwork of bartending, bouncing, and cooking jobs. He was seeking vocational direction -- but in the grand picture -- he wanted to get his life in order both medically and psychosocially.

We (NVSU) did our job, with the help of DVR (the State's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation),

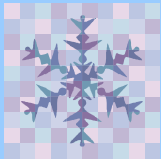
epilepsy surgical candidate. Dr. Holmes and Dr. George Ojemann performed the successful surgery.

Having his seizure problem stabilized, opened new doors for Jeff. He met Sandy while working out at the Renton Community Center. I attended their marriage in 2001, and after several years in auto parts work, Jeff returned to school "with a vengeance," completing two Associate's degrees and really honing his computer skills. At this point, Jeff said,

**"I again became addicted -- but this time to learning."**

Comcast hired Jeff on a "temp-to-perm" basis in 2006 in inventory-control/database management, and he has just kept churning forward. With the support of Sandy and his step-daughters Corrie and Anne, Jeff graduated with a Bachelor's in Business Administration, magna cum laude, in Technology Services Management and is now fully en-

#### IN THIS ISSUE:



- **Highlight on Client: Jeff Lipscomb**
- **Thank you to the Rainier Valley Cultural Center**
- **SAVE THE DATE SPRING GALA at Chateau Ste. Michelle- 5/15/2010**
- **NVSU CLIENTS WORKING**
- **GET INVOLVED with NVSU**

The mission of NVSU is to provide a full range of employment services to individuals with neurological conditions and assist them to work and to lead productive lives. In addition, the unit acts as a national resource in the field of vocational rehabilitation through research, teaching and distribution of information.

#### NVS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009

- |                                    |                                  |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>President</u>                   | Ruben Rivera-Jackman, KCHA       |
| <u>Vice President</u>              | Allison Bren, Wells Fargo.       |
| <u>Secretary</u>                   | Jean Fennessy, WA State DVR      |
| <u>Treasurer</u>                   | David Maloney, Financial Analyst |
| Emmy Hager, Crothall               |                                  |
| Carol Hiley, R.N., - HMC           |                                  |
| Sheena Lashomb                     | Marketing                        |
| Mark Mincin,                       | Microsoft                        |
| Angela Nefcy,                      | Microsoft                        |
| Chris Nefcy,                       | HMC                              |
| Matthew Storey,                    | Direct Interactions              |
| Brenda Vander Lugt,                |                                  |
| Advocate/ Tele-Writer              |                                  |
| Arthur Williams, PhD, Psychologist |                                  |
| Melissa Williams                   | Bookkeeper                       |



## Program Collaboration: Rainier Valley Cultural Center:

A Program of SEED (SouthEast Effective Development)  
Assists 8 NVSU job seekers in 2009 through  
job try outs.

“I appreciate the collaboration between RVCC and NVSU. It has saved my life!”  
- Kathya Alexander—Cultural Center Manager

Rainier Valley Cultural Center (RVCC) has been coined SouthEast Seattle’s premiere community performing arts center, by SEED.

RVCC is a subsidiary of SEED. Funding is provided through SEED, Performing arts programming and building rentals.

“The RVCC is a historic landmark building, located near Columbia City at 3515 S Alaska St, Seattle. RVCC provides a premiere space for performing arts and cultural productions, rehearsals, banquets, receptions, workshops and classes...” (<http://www.seedseattle.org/seedarts/rvcc.html>).

Kathya Alexander, a former dramatic arts teacher, is the building manager for the RVCC. She is an actor, playwright, author, storyteller, and is the only working artist working for SEED.

As the manager, Kathya oversees the programming for the center, as well as assures that the building provides enough funding to continue its existence, through building rentals. The center has several annual performing arts pro-

grams, such as Arts Gumbo, Young Playwrights Festival, and Summer Stage Performances.

NVSU and RVCC’s relationship began in 2009. A Community Based Assessment (job try-out) was organized for a gentleman. Formally of the IT world, this job seeker, post brain injury, could no longer perform the essential functions of his job. In prior years, he had been in the theatre and NVSU and RVCC joined to help him find a new avenue for his talents. NVS assisted with this unpaid job tryout by funding Labor and Industries insurance while he was on the job.

He did such a fantastic job that Kathya secured funds from their already tight budget to hire him. He has been an employee with SEED for 9 months as the Technical Coordinator, handling lights and sound during performances, to rescuing the building from disrepair. He has been called a “Superman” by Kathya.

The collaboration continued. Kathya and NVSU paired up eight other times with other job seekers looking to gain experience, a cur-

rent reference or just assess their abilities on the job. With so much happening at the RVCC, our clients have been able to experience many different types of activities that were of interest to them, such as: Ticket Sales, Janitorial, Customer Service, Landscaping, Marketing, & Computer use

Kathya stresses to NVSU counselors how much she appreciates the match of our job seekers to the duties of jobs at RVCC. She feels that each person that she has worked with has been experienced, willing to learn and did not need to be “trained to work.”

All of the job seekers that have tried their skills out at RVCC have gone on to seek competitive work. More than half of them are currently working. The collaboration between employers and the funding support of NVS, assure the ongoing success of our job seekers and benefit our clients and the community.

-Aliza Hauser

Visit SEED and  
RVCC on the web!  
<http://www.seedseattle.org>

## NVS / NVSU News & Thanks



In November, 2009 NVSU was surveyed by CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities). Two Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC) peers reviewed NVSU's program and NVSU was awarded a three year accreditation. - Specific strengths that CARF documented: Our location in the community, our great board that provides funding to assist clients with tools for accommodation / transportation / parking, allowing job seeking and employment. A thank you to all the staff and board members who helped to achieve this great accomplishment.



Congratulations to NVSU staff members David Strand, MA., CRC and Aliza Hauser, MA., CRC, who graduated from Western Washington University with their Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling in December 2009, finding out weeks later that they also earned their CRC, (Certification in Rehabilitation Counseling).



Job Club Speakers: Thank you!!! In 2009, we have had a tremendous response from community members in assisting job seekers with important career oriented skills and knowledge:

Brandon Hemphill—Kemph & McGraw  
 Jason DeLeon— Gateway Guest Services  
 Emmy Hager— Crothall Services  
 Chris Smith—NW Center  
 Cheri R. Baker, SPHR—Emergence Consulting

Maria Kim—UW  
 Christine Duvall—Starbucks  
 Matt Story—Direct Interactions  
 Bret Dow— Safeway Inc  
 Trena Cloyd—Airport Jobs

From resume reviews to how to choose the proper 401K, community professionals assist our job seekers with up-to-date information.

### Thank You for Supporting Neurological Vocational Services (NVS), our 501(C)(3) Foundation

We want you to know that every day your support of our Foundation (NVS) makes a difference in our client's lives. This can be the little things, such as paying for parking for clients to attend meetings at NVSU, purchasing a business license or voice amplifier or maintaining a business certification. These are very difficult times for all of us with unemployment at 17.2% nationally, many citizens receiving unemployment benefits and numerous discouraged job seekers. At this time, our clients need every assist they can get.

As the economic climate worsens in our state, it is NVS that provides a measure of security in a very uncertain world of delivering rehabilitation services. We thank you for thinking about us throughout the year and hope you will enjoy the Ste. Michelle Spring Gala with us on May 15th. Our very best to you in 2010. - Warm regards from Rubén Rivera-Jackman, NVS President and Bob Fraser, Ph.D. and the NVSU staff.

**I AM OF THE OPINION THAT MY LIFE BELONGS TO THE COMMUNITY, AND AS LONG AS I LIVE, IT IS MY PRIVILEGE TO DO FOR IT WHATEVER I CAN. -George Bernard Shaw**

## NVSU INFORMATION

We're on the Web  
[www.nvsrehab.org](http://www.nvsrehab.org)

HELPING TO BRIDGE THE EMPLOYMENT GAP FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

## WAYS TO BECOME INVOLVED WITH NVS & NVSU

**Become a Board Member** of our nonprofit organization, **Neurological Vocational Services (NVS)** and get involved with an organization assisting individuals with neurological conditions to achieve long term gainful employment. Time commitment of 8-12 meetings a year, flexible financial commitment, involvement with our fundraising efforts (right now two times a year) as well.



### ❖❖WANTED❖❖ ❖❖VOLUNTEERS❖❖

We have been fortunate to have human resource professionals and professionals in other specialties volunteer an hour of their time to speak at Job Club to Inspire job seekers. Our client's benefit tremendously from your visit.

**TO VOLUNTEER** an HOUR at Job Club:  
[dmstrand@u.washington.edu](mailto:dmstrand@u.washington.edu)

### NVSU CLIENTS WORKING !!

NVSU would like to acknowledge and thank Safeway Rainier Beach, Puget Sound Blood Center, UW Medical Center, Westland Associates and Sea Mar Community Health Center for hiring our clients. We would also like to thank Penny Salsa and CDL Recycle for their generous support of clients involved in community based assessments.



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**NVS SPRING GALA**  
at the  
**Chateau Ste. Michelle**  
**5/15/2010**



**REQUEST A  
VISIT TO YOUR  
WORKPLACE  
FROM A VOCATIONAL  
SPECIALIST  
TO LEARN ABOUT  
HIRING NVSU CLIENTS  
CALL: 206-744-9132**



**Neurology Vocational Services Unit NVSU**  
Office Location: **NVSU / NVS, 401 Broadway, Suite 2088, Seattle, WA**  
Mailing Address:  
**NVSU / NVS, Harborview Med. Ctr., 325 9th Ave, Box 359744, Seattle, WA 98104**

**Tel: 206-744-9130**  
**Fax: 206-744-9988**  
**[www.nvsrehab.org](http://www.nvsrehab.org)**

**NVSU STAFF**  
Robert Fraser, Ph.D., CRC,  
NVSU Program Director  
Barbara Beach, M.Ed., CRC  
Aliza Hauser, M.A., CRC  
Steven Lashley  
Louie Lopez  
Brandon Muller  
David Strand, M.A., CRC  
Bryant Milliman  
Roy Kristiansen

Newsletter Editor:  
Aliza Hauser  
Comments to:  
[ahauser@u.washington.edu](mailto:ahauser@u.washington.edu)