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INSIDE JEVS

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JEVS Human Services

Making hope happen.



ALLETTA, transitioned from an institutional setting back to life in the community with support from the Nursing Home Transition program of JEVS Support for Independence.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



While the tragedy of people losing their homes due to the subprime mortgage debacle is a now familiar story, we hear little about the hundreds of thousands of Americans who continue to face a housing crisis of a different sort. People with disabilities, struggling to live outside nursing homes and other institutions, face a chronic shortage of available housing. Whether due to high cost, physical inaccessibility, or

unlawful discrimination, individuals seeking independent living options continue to face multiple challenges in securing viable housing.

This issue of *Inside JEVS* explores the various dimensions of the housing crisis for people with disabilities. As a longtime stakeholder in Pennsylvania's movement to rebalance its long term living system, JEVS understands that helping people obtain personal assistance services is only part of the equation. Our Nursing Home Transition and Home Modifications programs are aimed at helping people find or adapt housing that can accommodate their desire to live in the communities of their choosing.

Community-based living is the preferred option for consumers as well as the most economical use of the public dollars that support their services. There has been considerable progress on this front in the past decade but unless all of us—policymakers, advocates, service agencies—work to find creative solutions, this “hidden” housing crisis threatens to thwart our vision of ending unnecessary institutionalization.

JAY SPECTOR | JEVS PRESIDENT & CEO

JEVS Programs Active in Census Count

JEVS Human Services has continued its partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau to make sure that JEVS clients are accurately counted in the 2010 census. Philadelphia Regional Census Center representatives have visited JEVS program sites over the past several months, educating over 150 staff and clients about the importance of participating. **JEVS Northeast EARN Center** and **Orleans Technical Institute** also plan to serve as testing centers for prospective census employees. Census forms will be mailed in March 2010. For every person not counted, a community risks \$12,000 in federal funding, as well as the loss of political representation in Washington.

For more information > www.2010.census.gov

Award Honors Hiring & Retention of Aged 50+



JEVS Human Services was presented with the prestigious 2009 Encore Opportunity Award by Civic Ventures, a national think tank on baby boomers, work and social purpose. This award, sponsored by the MetLife Foundation, honors eight employers nationally in the nonprofit and public sector with effective strategies for

engaging experienced adults over 50 in meaningful “second careers.” The award recognizes **Orleans Technical Institute**, where more than half of the roughly 120 employees are 50-plus. In addition, the school helps the instructional staff, most of whom are former trades people with decades of experience, transfer their skills to the classroom and offer a unique experience to students.

For more information > [215.854.1800](tel:215.854.1800)

The Hidden Housing Crisis

The Search for Affordable, Accessible Housing for People with Disabilities



While the political environment in Harrisburg is often divisive, one public policy goal on which consensus exists is the need to create a better balance between institutional and home and community-based long term living options for Pennsylvanians with disabilities. The state's Office of Long Term Living (OLTL) would like to attain a 50/50 balance between the amount of public dollars spent on community-based and nursing home services by 2020. The Commonwealth has made great strides over the last decade, increasing enrollment in home and community-based (HCBS) waiver programs by 10 percent and transitioning over 4,000 nursing home residents to community settings.

JEVS Human Services has been a key partner in Pennsylvania's efforts to expand HCBS. For over 25 years, **JEVS Supports for Independence (SFI)** has been helping people with physical disabilities avoid unnecessary institutionalization. In addition to assisting consumers who wish to direct their own services, SFI has, since 2007, transitioned over 60 people in Bucks and Montgomery counties from nursing homes to their own residences.

Despite progress, barriers remain to helping people stay in the community; chief among them is the shortage of affordable, integrated, accessible housing. In 2007, Pennsylvania counties identified 248 individuals who desired to transition from nursing homes to community living, but lacked necessary housing options. Donna Boyer, director of community services for SFI, estimates that 47 people in JEVS **Nursing Home Transition** program are currently waiting for housing.

Addressing Multiple Barriers

The essential problem of Pennsylvanians' inability to meet their needs for housing and services is one of affordability. There is a wide gap between the housing costs and people's ability to pay. This is an issue for many JEVS clients, but it hits physically disabled consumers particularly hard.

The likelihood that an older adult or person with a disability is living in poverty is substantially greater than for the state as a whole. The poverty rate among people with disabilities between ages 21-64 in Pennsylvania in 2005 was 25.7 percent, more than three times the rate for the entire state.

The poorest households, those whose sole income is Social Security or SSI¹, face a housing cost burden* that is far beyond that of households headed by persons without disabilities. While many people qualify for government housing subsidies or other rental assistance programs, the need for this funding far outstrips the available resources.

Additionally, people seeking community options face problems locating accessible housing. Accessibility has several dimensions. One, referred to as "visitability," is the degree to which the physical design and construction of a dwelling accommodates the needs of persons with mobility impairments, or can be modified to do so. Other important factors include: whether available housing is integrated with other community housing for people without disabilities, proximity to employment, public transportation and other essential services.

Finally, despite protection under the federal Fair Housing Act, people with disabilities are frequent targets of housing discrimination, including



ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS

The federal Fair Housing Act makes it unlawful to discriminate in the sale, rental, lease, or financing of housing based on a person's disability.

Prohibited acts include:

- Refusal to rent or sell housing
- Making housing unavailable or denying that housing is available
- Setting different terms, conditions or privileges for the sale or rental of housing.

The Fair Housing Act gives additional protections to people with disabilities in order to ensure full enjoyment of a unit or living space. The protections are called Reasonable Accommodations and Reasonable Modifications.

What is a Reasonable Accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation is a change in policies, practices, or services, which may be necessary to afford a person with a disability equal opportunity and access to use and enjoy a dwelling. Common examples include waiving a "no pet" policy for a service animal or providing accessible parking.

What is a Reasonable Modification?

A reasonable modification is a structural or other physical change to the unit or housing structure to provide physical access to a person with a disability.

the refusal to rent or to make reasonable accommodations or modifications to a property, as required by law. At a recent seminar on housing rights at JEVS, attorneys from the Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania stated that nationally, disability is the most frequently reported form of housing discrimination. Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) reports that it has seen a steady rise in the number of complaints alleging housing discrimination due to disability.

Ideas and Initiatives

A number of Pennsylvania organizations are working to resolve this issue. JEVS recently joined the Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council's (PA-SILC) Housing committee. PA-SILC strongly supports a state housing trust fund that would attract federal dollars and finance projects to increase the availability of

accessible housing. The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency offers direct financing and housing tax credits to develop affordable, accessible apartments. The agency also co-authored a strategic study for the OLTL that calls for expanded resources for home modifications, nursing home transition, tenant-based rental assistance, and for the development of additional units.

There are myriad fiscal and economic benefits to Pennsylvania to reverse and prevent unnecessary institutionalization and increase available community-based options. With continued collaboration among policymakers, advocates, and housing experts, the Commonwealth appears to be headed in the right direction.

 [For more information](#)

Public Policy Department / 215.854.1869

RESOURCES

O'Hara, A., Cooper, E., Zovistocki, A., Buttrick, J. Priced Out in 2008. Boston, MA: Technical Assistance Collaborative, 2008. Housing for Persons with Disabilities. Accessed from www.phfa.org/hsgresources/housing_study.aspx.

Report of the Housing Advisory Committee to the Pennsylvania Office of Long Term Living (OLTL) and the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA). Prepared by Diana T. Myers and Associates, Inc. September 2008. www.carie.org/policy/takeaction.php

1 Supplemental Security Income. The monthly benefit in Pennsylvania in 2010 is \$674/month or \$8,088/year.

*The percentage of a person's income paying for rent plus utilities. Housing is considered affordable if rent or mortgage plus utilities do not exceed 30% of annual household income.

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT



PRICED OUT IN PA

- Housing is considered affordable if rent or mortgage plus utilities do not exceed 30% of annual household income.
- Social Security Retirement Income is the only source of income for 25% of single elderly and 11% of elderly couples, which is \$12,900 per year for singles and \$21,168 for couples.
- More than 250,000 elderly and persons with disabilities have SSI as their sole source of income, which is \$8,088 annually.
- An individual in Pa. receiving SSI would have to pay 87% of his income to rent the average efficiency apartment and 99% of his income to rent a one bedroom apartment.
- In the Philadelphia region, the area served by JEVS Nursing Home Transition program, the corresponding numbers are 127% for a one-bedroom and 110% for an efficiency apartment.



Janice

Program Participant
JEVS Nursing Home
Transition Program

After suffering a stroke in June 2008, Janice Dulisse entered Garden Springs Nursing Center in Montgomery County. Physically separated from her husband Jimmy and daughter Dawn, Janice longed to be able to return to her own home. Dawn described leaving her mother after each visit as "beyond hard," and Jimmy would travel three hours on public transportation each day to visit Janice. After several months, Dawn found out about JEVS **Nursing Home Transition** program. Working with a JEVS service coordinator and with the help of Garden Springs' social work team, the family began to explore options for bringing Janice home.

Janice is supported to employ Dawn as her personal attendant by JEVS. Dawn received training that would allow her to become her mother's caregiver and, with the help of the family's pastor, they were able to locate a house with two empty apartments. JEVS helped with everything from paying the security deposit to purchasing a folding ramp, securing a moving van, and purchasing renters' insurance. Janice returned home on April 6, 2009.

Being paid for some of the hours that she spends taking care of her mother means that Dawn can continue to provide this care, knowing that she is relieved of some of the financial burden of being a caretaker. Dawn now lives above her parents and calls it a blessing that she is available to help her mom. Janice and her family are thrilled with these developments. "Leaving loved ones in a [nursing facility] home is not ideal and things are just so much better now," Dawn says.



in our communities

"Yes We Can Change" was the theme of the **JEVS Program for Offenders** graduation held last November at the Riverside Correctional Facility for women of the Philadelphia Prison System. Sixty-five inmates graduated from five classes in Customer Service and Environmental Maintenance.

"When I leave jail, I know what to say in an interview about having a criminal background," said the graduation emcee. "Many former offenders have no job skills. Educational programs reduce recidivism. As of today, I am proud to be myself."

For more information 215.685.7114



what's new

JEVS Career

Strategies was recently awarded a grant expanding its educational services. 21st Century PASS (Preparing for, Attaining & Sustaining Success) will help George Washington High School juniors and seniors in need of support to find internships, learn job and/or college readiness skills, graduate from high school, and make post-high school choices that increase the likelihood of becoming self-sufficient adults. It is supported by The Philadelphia Council for College and Career Success and the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board.



For more information 215.854.1864



announcement

Orleans Technical Institute offers scholarships to high school seniors who are interested in training in two of its building trade areas or court reporting. The application can be downloaded on www.orianstech.edu. Hurry! The application deadline is March 31, 2010.

For more information 215.728.4733

FUNDING the VISION

NEWS FROM

JEVS Business and Fund Development Department

To support JEVS programs, scholarships, and fund-raising campaigns, contact us at 215.854.1827, supportjevs@jevs.org, or use the online donation form on our website at www.jevshumanservices.org.

JEVS Receives Grant For Home Modifications

Thanks to the continuing generosity of the Fredericks Foundation, JEVS Human Services will again this year be able to help low-income seniors with visual impairments remain safe in their own

homes. Administered by Wachovia Bank, the Fredericks Foundation supports programs that enhance the lives of blind or partially

sighted individuals to increase their independence and mobility. They must reside in Philadelphia and be unable to afford such services/devices.

Modifications may include: adaptations for lighting, large print and talking clocks and watches, magnifying lamps and other tools, enlarged washer and dryer knobs, and talking reminders for medical needs. Simple changes such as the removal of tripping hazards can help eliminate the risk of injury and provide a more secure environment.

Assessments and home modifications are offered through **JEVS Supports for Independence**.

This year's Fredericks Foundation grant award to JEVS in the amount of \$10,000 will enable Supports for Independence to modify approximately 18 homes.

 **For more information > 267.298.1300**



INDEPENDENCE WITH HOME MODIFICATIONS

JEVS consumer Luis, who lost his lower legs due to an illness he had as an adult, is now, with the use of his chairlift installed on the front porch, able to enter and leave his house without having to rely on the assistance of friends and family.

DONOR PROFILE



EDWARD J. RYAN'S values and core beliefs were developed at an early age, and throughout his life he has continued to be guided by them. "If you have a passion for something, and it needs your help, get behind it," says Ryan, executive vice president of Citizens Bank, "Latch onto that which is important to you as an individual."

Ryan, a JEVS board member, credits Ned Kaplin, his friend of over 30 years, for sparking

his interest in JEVS through memorable stories about programs and the lives they touch. At JEVS' Orleans Technical Institute, he was struck by the diverse individuals served. At JEVS' personal care home in Germantown, Philadelphia, Ryan watched how respectfully staff worked with clients from diverse backgrounds and religions. "I would feel perfectly comfortable with one of my family members in a JEVS group home," he said.

"Everyone at JEVS is so focused on the mission," he says, with pride.

Honor Roll of Donors

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT

The following is a list of individual, corporate and foundation donors who supported our programs through our campaigns from April 1, 2009, to December 31, 2009. Individual donors supported: The Friends Campaign, Board of Directors Campaign, JEVS Scholarship Fund, Facilities Improvement Fund, The Franklin C. Ash Scholarship Fund, and the Isabelle Schneider Life Enrichment Fund.

List may be incomplete. JEVS apologizes for any inadvertent errors or omissions.

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JEVS partners with the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia and the United Way of Southeastern PA.

The official registration and financial information of the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Making Hope Happen for Armindelis

Setting a Strong Example for Parents of Children with Disabilities



It's important for single mothers to know you can have a career and be successful. We can all get up from that couch and turn that TV off and get a job, no matter the age." That's what Armindelis Toledo says about being a working mom to six children, the oldest of whom is age 12 and living with severe disabilities.

Armindelis Toledo came to **JEVS Maximizing Participation Project (MPP)** in July 2006. She wanted to work, but finding services for her oldest son was difficult. Alex is tube-fed and in a wheelchair, and she was skeptical about leaving her children every day.

MPP helps Philadelphians receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) to find work. MPP clients have a medical exemption and do not have the same work requirement that other welfare-to-work clients have. In this case, Armindelis' main barrier to finding

steady employment was finding childcare, particularly for Alex.

Thanks to help from the staff at MPP, Armindelis was hired as the bilingual intake coordinator on the Special Education Help Line at Philadelphia HUNE (Hispanos Unidos Para Niños Excepcionales).

HUNE is an organization providing free bilingual training, technical assistance and individual assistance to parents of infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. The position is a great fit with Armindelis' skills and experience.

Armindelis established the help line, but she does more than just answer questions. She finds resources for callers, posts information about HUNE on the Internet, and speaks in public about HUNE's services. "I know it's hard to get what I need, and I speak English. Many of our parents only speak Spanish. I want to help them; that's why I'm here," she said.

Two years after MPP case coordinator Carmen Cruz helped Armindelis find her job at HUNE, she still visits Armindelis to see if she can be of assistance. Cruz says, "For her to get out there, find a job and hold it down while dealing with a severely disabled child is huge. Other people use their kids as an excuse not to work, but not her."

Thanks to MPP, Armindelis no longer feels trapped in the welfare cycle. She recently won the JEVS Inspiration Award for her



OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO HELP OTHERS

Family is very important to Armindelis, both hers and that of her clients. "If I have to work and spend time away from my family, it should be doing something that benefits families, and my job does," she said.

PICTURED: Armindelis with her son Jay.

persistence in reaching her goals, and is looking forward to her kids going to school. "I would change some choices I've made, but never my kids. They all have their own character and bring something different to my family."

 [For more information](#)

[Maximizing Participation Project / 267.238.3100](#)

From Deployment to Re-employment: JEVS Opens Doors for Vets

Dozens of military service members and vets have taken advantage of the job training programs provided at JEVS' **Orleans Technical Institute** as part of their education benefits. For 25-year-old John Jones from Philadelphia, coming to Orleans Tech after serving in the U.S. Army as a unit supply specialist was "the best thing I've done since I've been home." Jones took advantage of the G.I. Bill by enrolling in one of Orleans' six-month building trades programs. "Orleans provided me with a great opportunity. As I learned in the Army, I tried my best and worked my hardest." Jones succeeded in the classroom and now works as an HVAC technician.

Orleans continues its commitment to those transitioning to civilian life and employment through a recent initiative with U.S. Representative Allyson Schwartz (13th Congressional District of Pennsylvania). In recognition of Veterans' Day, Schwartz held her annual Veterans' Resource Expo at Orleans Tech. More than 200 people attended the event, which featured more than 20 national and local organizations, including federal agencies and non-profit organizations, to provide one-on-one information and resources to vets on employment and training, services available, and benefits assistance.

 [For more information](#)

[Orleans Technical Institute / 215.728.4733](#)



REACHING VETS

U.S. Representative Allyson Schwartz (middle, second row from bottom) held a Veterans' Resource Expo for the community at JEVS' Orleans Technical Institute, where veteran instructors and students were also honored for their service.



did you know

JEVS Achievement through Counseling and Treatment (ACT) received recognition from an international accrediting agency, Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), in the form of a three-year accreditation. This outcome represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to such a program and shows that JEVS' services are of the highest quality, measurable, accountable, and conform to the standards established by CARF. ACT received two "exemplary" notations—for ways in which the program is performing over and above others—in the areas of financial management, and training and staff development. ACT served a total of 860 clients in its two methadone clinics in 2009.

For more information 215.236.0100

A Makeover Inside and Out



Northeast EARN Center, Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation, and Chez Sonia Hair Studio and Spa recently collaborated to give EARN participants free makeovers as part of the Chez Sonia "New Beginnings Community Day." They also received résumé assistance and job search tips.

Through EARN (Employment Advancement Retention Network), JEVS Human Services provides a range of services for individuals who are receiving public assistance benefits and are in need of employment services.

"Sometimes people do not get the job because they don't look the part. We at Chez Sonia's care about our community and hope to make a difference," says Sonia Miller-Hill, CEO of Chez Sonia Hair Studio and Spa in South Philadelphia.

The two organizations continued the partnership on November 22, 2009, at Chez Sonia's "Annual Show of All Shows," one of the largest hair and fashion shows in the tri-state area. Chez Sonia presented a \$500 professional development scholarship to an EARN Center participant.

 [For more information](#)

[Northeast EARN Center / 267.350.8500](#)



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**INSIDE
JEVS**

volume 23
winter 2010

JEVS Human Services
Making hope happen.

THE HIDDEN HOUSING CRISIS Search for Accessible Housing for People with Disabilities

GRANT FOR HOME MODIFICATIONS JEVS Helps Blind and Visually Impaired Seniors

FROM DEPLOYMENT TO RE-EMPLOYMENT JEVS Opens Doors for Vets

in this issue...

Our Vision

Individuals strengthen communities by realizing their highest quality of life through the achievement of personal and vocational potential.

Our Mission

JEVS Human Services enhances the employability, independence, and quality of life of individuals through a broad range of programs. Consistent with our core principles and entrepreneurial spirit, JEVS Human Services creates innovative and sustainable solutions to address current and future community needs.

Our Programs

SKILLS TRAINING
JOB READINESS AND CAREER SERVICES

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
RECOVERY SERVICES

ADULT RESIDENTIAL AND DAY SERVICES
IN-HOME PERSONAL ASSISTANCE

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Current job openings are available on our Job Hotline at 215.854.1796, our web site, or www.careerbuilder.com. Résumés may be submitted to JEVS Human Resources Department at jobs@jevs.org.

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