

Hydroponic gardening providing new employment opportunities

Black Hills Works has formed a partnership with Todd and MaryAnn Gregson, owners of Gregson's Gardens, that will provide not only employment opportunities in hydroponic gardening to those we support, but also the opportunity to run their own business.

The Gregsons have restored the old greenhouse behind Black Hills Works to grow lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and eggplants. A new greenhouse will soon be added.

Gregson's Gardens has been providing organic and hydroponic culinary herbs, flowers, tomatoes, seasonal vegetables and fruits to businesses and restaurants since 2003. They have recently added Rapid City Regional Hospital to their list of customers.



People served by Black Hills Works will assist in the greenhouse with planting, caring for, harvesting, packaging, and delivering fresh vegetables to local customers. They will also have the opportunity to operate their own microbusiness. The Gregsons have developed six training modules to teach individuals the skills to take that step.

Hydroponic gardening is ideal for microbusiness because it requires less space and water than traditional gardening. It can also be done year-round because it uses mineral nutrient solutions in water, rather than soil. Terrestrial plants may be grown with their roots in the mineral nutrient solution only or in an inert medium, such as perlite or gravel.



Donald Oliver works with Gregson's Gardens doing hydroponic gardening.

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Gala winners announced

Congratulations to **Kim Flowers, Tom Kaiser, Kelley McMains, and Vincent Saucedo** who have all been selected to receive Outstanding Achievement Awards at this year's Black Hills Works Recognition Gala on November 7.

Kim works on a custodial crew; Tom spends his days in the sensory room at Black Hills Works; Kelley works in food service at the Raider Cafe at Ellsworth Air Force Base; and Vince recently started a new job at Regional Health's laundry.

We will also be honoring volunteer Lynn Nelson and the Rapid City Fire and Police Departments for their support.

The Gala is our chance to recognize those who have made outstanding progress in our programs as well as the businesses and individuals who support us. This year's Gala will be held November 7 at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center. For ticket information, see our website www.blackhillsworks.org.



Olympic Flame of Hope comes to Rapid City



Athlete Loren Engesser carries the Olympic Flame of Hope accompanied by team manager Lissa Marotz. The flame was in Rapid City June 22-23 on its way to the World Games held this year in Los Angeles.

More than 50 Special Olympics athletes and coaches, Black Hills Works employees, and others took turns carrying the Special Olympics Flame of Hope through Rapid City June 22-23 on its way from Athens to the World Games in Los Angeles.

The path through Rapid City was divided into 53 different sections as it traveled through Rapid City with participants running, walking, biking, using wheelchairs, even roller skating their segment. Each participant raised a minimum of \$110 for Special Olympics International.

This may have been a once in a lifetime opportunity for those who participated; the last time the World Games were in the United States was in 1998. This year, the World Games were held July 27-August 2.

Finding a new home

Barbara Brings Plenty lived on the reservation her entire life. She was cared for by her sister and much of the time, they were homeless. Her sister could no longer take care of her, so last October, Barbara came to Black Hills Works.

Community Living Supervisor Jocelyn Haskell said it was a very difficult time for Barbara. She ran after the car as her sister drove away and running was a constant concern for staff. Jocelyn says staff Michelle Mechaley, Catherine Croteau, Lauren Patterson, and others worked hard to help ease Barbara into her new life. And their efforts paid off.

Jocelyn says she knew things had gotten better for Barbara when she saw her walking down the hall at the Black Hills Works Learning Institute with a new friend. "She was glowing. I couldn't believe the change in her."



Barbara Brings Plenty

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Engineers volunteer to help improve efficiency at Black Hills Works

What happens when a visitor walks into Suzie Cappa Art Center (SCAC) downtown? The result is two volunteers with engineering experience impacting the service areas in Industries, Concourse, and Suzie Cappa Art Center.

Marty Wozniak visited the Suzie Cappa Art Center in the summer of 2014. Wozniak said it, "Ignited something in you." He requested a tour of all the facilities. Brad Saathoff and Brad Winter obliged. Wozniak proceeded to take pictures and videos and sent them to a colleague in North Carolina who has been working as a mechanical engineer since graduating college. James Hoeft saw the artists "pouring themselves in their art."

In July, Wozniak returned to his home in Deadwood for the summer. Wozniak spends the rest of the year in his home in North Carolina. Hoeft joined him a few weeks later, and the two set on a mission to create better workflow at Industries, Concourse, and SCAC. Their engineering backgrounds allowed them to work with Larry Meendering at Concourse and Brad Winter to identify ways to increase production, improve safety, and meet the needs of persons supported. "Marty just sees it," said Hoeft.

As the two were interviewed, they added to each other's statements making it evident that they are a team who wants to "make it easier and simpler," according to Wozniak.

Wozniak and Hoeft spent six days developing models of the work spaces and interviewing the staff and the persons served about their work. They observed processes for persons supported to have access throughout the building as well as the amount of movement needed to complete tasks. Wozniak said it was necessary to decrease range of motion in repetitive tasks to reduce physical issues. "Marty and Jimmy looked at our processes and systems and gave us some practical suggestions to improve productivity and work flow," said Meendering. "The experience was excellent. It felt like we had shared goals and we were working together to achieve them."

At the SCAC, Hoeft worked specifically with an artist with visual impairments. "[Hoeft] offered suggestions on how to have Sean Sipes use braille on the markers that he uses so he will know the difference between warm and cool colors. He is looking into a way to make stencils for Sean that are thick with all kinds of designs," according to Winter. Winter

stated that Wozniak and Hoeft are very caring, smart, and devoted to helping others. "They are both wonderful to work with. [I am] Thankful they have an interest in BHW and the Suzie Cappa Art Center," said Winter.

Wozniak has worked in law enforcement and then developed the Law Enforcement/Military Products Division of Tri-Tech Inc. In late 1999, he realized a dream by starting his own company developing, manufacturing and selling tactical entry tooling to Law Enforcement and Military agencies. Dynamic Entry experienced dramatic growth over the next few years and quickly became the world leader in tactical breaching tools. In 2005, Blackhawk Inc. purchased the company and Wozniak changed his role to assisting Blackhawk in new product development and manufacturing continuous improvements. Throughout his time he has assisted in combined continuous improvement savings of over \$10.8 million. In September 2014, Wozniak retired.

"I will now spend my time consulting on continuous improvement projects and volunteering where I can be of the greatest help and pass my vision to the next generation," said Wozniak.

Hoeft graduated from Virginia Tech in 2009 with a Bachelors of Science in Mechanical Engineering. He moved to North Carolina and began working as an engineer. Hoeft provided contract work as a Quality Assurance Engineer and held the position of Design Engineer. Hoeft stated, "I began to search for alternate ways to leverage my talents as my life has progressed to a state where I now view the needs of others above my own."

Wozniak and Hoeft donated more than 40 hours in engineering consulting services, plus expenses. Their gifts of time and talent were purely philanthropic. They recognize that the persons supported have abilities and were able to work around the disabilities to improve work flow. Meendering added, "Their ability to offer suggestions to improve production and safety made working with Marty and Jimmy a pleasant experience."



Marty Wozniak and Jimmy Hoeft donated more than 40 hours of engineering consulting time to Black Hills Works.

Heather Morris appears in TV commercial



Artist Heather Morris dreams of using her artistic talents to work on a movie set. In July, she got a small taste of her dream when she appeared on the set of a television commercial produced by TDG Communications in Deadwood. Heather was a background extra in a commercial for the Silverado Franklin Hotel & Gaming Complex. Heather says her role was to play poker and slots. "I enjoyed it. I would like to do it again." She received a gift card for her efforts.

SCAC helps wrap Rapid City

Artists from the Suzie Cappa Art Center teamed up with Destination Rapid City and Clean Slate Group to further beautify Main Street Square and bring Suzie Cappa art to life on utility boxes. In partnership with Destination Rapid City and funding from the Bush Foundation Prize for Community Innovation, Clean Slate Group transformed utility boxes located in Pedestrian Alley at Main Street Square into works of art that showcase the talent of the artists.

Destination Rapid City sought artwork submissions from the Suzie Cappa Art Center for this project, with facilitation by Arts Rapid City. Sioux Falls-based Clean Slate Group wrapped the utility boxes in high-performance and graffiti-resistant laminates printed with the selected artwork on Friday, July 25. In total, four boxes-turned-art celebrate the vibrancy of Main Street Square and the community of Rapid City.

"Art and creativity are just exploding in Downtown Rapid City," said Dan Senftner, President of Destination Rapid City in a news release issued by Clean Slate Group and Arts Rapid City. "We're thrilled to be able to use funding from our Bush Foundation Prize for Community Innovation to keep feeding that fire. Partnering with the Suzie Cappa Art Center on this project makes it all the better."

Clean Slate Group works with cities to do beautification projects using 3M™ anti-graffiti vinyl. Destination Rapid City works to create a vibrant business district rich in appeal for the Rapid City community and its visitors.



An employee of Clean Slate Group adds art by Anna McDowell to a utility box at Main Street Square. Also pictured is art by Tommy Tamayo and John Clark. Ramona Spotted Eagle's art is also displayed on a box at the square.

Meet BHW's new receptionist



When you call Black Hills Works these days, you may speak to our newest

receptionist, Bettie Bsharah. Bettie previously worked scanning files both at Black Hills Works and for Regional Health. But since June 15, she's been working part time at Black Hills Works main office greeting visitors and answering and transferring calls.

Black Hills Works is working with Dakotalink and the Division of Rehabilitation Services to make some adaptations to Bettie's work space, including an enhanced screen and modified phone keypad. Bettie loves her new job and is enjoying the challenge of learning new tasks.

Thank you Hardrockers



Thank you to members of the Hardrockers football team who worked hard removing rock at Black Hills Works on August 12.

Thank you to all our generous contributors!

Donations received May 1-July 30

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Thanks YMCA!

Christopher Brown was getting water therapy exercise to alleviate chronic pain, but Medicaid discontinued paying for it because there was not a specific ending treatment. We are so grateful that the YMCA is now providing a scholarship so that he can continue his water exercises at their pool. Meanwhile, Cierra Martin has volunteered her time to help him with his exercises.



Christopher Brown and volunteer Cierra Martin.

Black Hills Works celebrates NDEAM in October

National Disability Employment Awareness Month, known as NDEAM is a nationwide campaign that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the contributions of America's workers with disabilities, past and present.

Black Hills Works employment staff work year round to help individuals we support find and maintain employment suited to their talents and wishes. Of the more than 640 people we support, more than 500 are employed either at businesses in the community, at Ellsworth Air Force Base, or in one of our inhouse work sites.



Ruben Leonard and Beth Parker are both employed at Sears. Ruben unloads trucks and Beth takes clothing out of boxes and prepares it for the floor. Employment Supervisor Kathy LaForest says Beth and Ruben work hard, show up on time, and have positive attitudes.

BHW does work for relief organization

A crew of ten people supported and seven employees at Black Hills Works Industries spent two days in June sorting 40 large boxes of coats, clothing, and household items for National Relief Charities, a nonprofit dedicated to quality of life for Native Americans.

Sandra Ollila, one of the staff who assisted, said the project was a great experience and everyone enjoyed helping out. "It was hard work and I am so proud of how well we all worked together as a team to get this job finished."



iPads bring families together

For those unable to communicate verbally, telephone conversations with friends and family are one-sided. Relatives can't see the facial expressions and body language people use to communicate.

Hampton group home has been involved in a pilot project using iPads to make staying in touch easier. Staff support Hampton residents to use Skype or Facetime with families and friends. Service Coordinator Michelle Kline says using the iPad in this way promotes closer relationships with natural supporters. The iPad is also being used to take video and photos that can be emailed to family so that they feel connected to the lives of their loved ones. "The families love it and so do the people we support."

Michelle says one Hampton resident was anxious because her mother's health problems were preventing her from making regular visits. Once the woman was able to use the iPad to communicate with her mother, her anxiety was reduced.

Michelle says says the technology also allows for staff to interact with the people we support to assist in planning trips and community activities they might enjoy. It is also used to play games that promote hand eye coordination, cognitive stimulation, and fine motor skills.



James Chambers "plays piano" on an iPad.

Golf FORE a Cause held

A ceremonial ball drop kicked off the Black Hills Works Foundation Golf FORE a Cause event, with the Rapid City Fire Department dropping golf balls, purchased as part of our raffle, onto the Rush's Chuck-a-Puck mat. Winners received golf get-away packages. From there, 29 teams proceeded to play the 18-hole course at Red Rocks.

We appreciate the 30 volunteers and 49 business and community partnerships who were represented at the event and we were honored to have Miss Rapid City, Alexia Vandersnick; Miss Rapid City Outstanding Teen, Alexia Wright; Miss Siouxland's Outstanding Teen, Hannah Lipp and Miss Rolling Plains, Megan Lipp all speak to our mission at the event. Sponsors were **FCE Benefits, Morgan Stanley, RBC Wealth Management, Howalt McDowell Insurance, Midwest Marketing, and Black Hills Regional Eye Institute.**



Volunteer line up to go to work at Golf Fore A Cause.

People First members give input for city's cultural plan

Keven Moulton, Liz Warner, Cindy Roan Eagle, Tracy McConnell, Kandie Ronfeldt, Chad Moore, Heather Kickery, and Nancy Weiss participated in a focus group for Rapid City's Cultural Plan and shared their ideas on how they would like to see our community grow. The members of People First met with Mallory Schwan, a member of the Steering Committee for the Cultural Plan, and shared information about their employment, the places they like to go, and the activities they enjoy.

Many said they participate in fewer activities in the evenings because of transportation troubles. Everyone agreed that affordable housing, transportation, and finances are barriers for many people in Rapid City. The group also agreed that, while the community is welcoming and helpful to people from BHW, more businesses need to be open to hiring people with disabilities.

DSP Recognition Week

September 13-19

Join Black Hills Works in recognizing the dedication and accomplishments of outstanding Direct Support Professionals and expressing our appreciation for their vital contribution to our community.

Barb Larsen honored



Barb Larsen was honored at the 27th annual Wind Beneath Our Wings Outstanding Performance Awards luncheon held June 30 at the Adoba

Eco Hotel downtown.

Barb has been diligently living out the mission of Black Hills Works for more than 30 years. Throughout the years, she has touched the lives of hundreds of people with disabilities and their families. She goes about the business of helping people live meaningful, productive lives without fanfare or accolades. Barb leads by example and mentors with calm and wisdom.

The awards are sponsored by the Health & Human Services Committee of the Chamber of Commerce.

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Shad's rhubarb patch



Love Rapid City volunteers planted 36 rhubarb plants behind the Black Hills Works Learning Institute in June. Shad Bebout (above) cares for them with help from Todd Gregson of Gregson's Gardens. The plants are for Prairie Berry Winery in Hill City.

Address changes?

Please check your address label carefully and send your address changes to:

Dorothy Rosby
Black Hills Works
P.O. Box 2104
Rapid City, SD 57709

You can also email your changes to drosby@bhws.com or call 605-718-6205.

If you would prefer to receive your newsletter via email, send your email address to drosby@bhws.com. It will not be shared with other organizations.

The Works is published quarterly by the Black Hills Works Foundation. The Black Hills Works Foundation is dedicated to supporting comprehensive, quality services for people with disabilities. The Foundation is committed to ensuring those services now and in the future. Comments and questions are encouraged and may be addressed to Dorothy Rosby, Editor, Box 2104, Rapid City, SD 57709, or call (605) 343-4550. You can also email drosby@bhws.com. Visit us at our website at www.blackhillsworks.org.