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AMIB Honors Long-Time Employees

In a professional field which traditionally experiences a fast turn-over in personnel, AMIB is proud of the loyalty of its employees.

Last year AMIB honored two of its employees who have given over 20 years of dedicated service. Roseanne Fetzer (left) a residential specialist at the Bayville home, started working with AMIB in May, 1982, and after a short separation has been with AMIB now for over 20 years.

Susan Smykla (right), a residential specialist at the AMIB home in Lacey Township, has been with the organization since October, 2005. AMIB is grateful for the commitment of these two dedicated people and for their long-time tenure in service to our residents.



Sight From Within

Spring 2006

A newsletter from the Association for the Multiple Impaired Blind, Inc.

Karen Kerrigan Receives NJACP Leadership Award



Above: Karen Kerrigan, resident manager of AMIB's Bayville home, receives the New Jersey Association of Community Providers Annual Leadership Award from Department of Human Services Commissioner Jim Davy at NJACP's annual Conference at Atlantic City on November 18. Karen was one of six New Jersey direct-care support professionals to be selected for this prestigious award.

Below: Among those attending the conference in support of Karen are Jody Segan (left) a resident of the Muller Avenue group home in Bayville that Karen manages, and Peggy Sherman, a member of the Bayville staff. Peggy began AMIB's self advocacy group, the Dream Weavers, and remains its advisor. Jody and Peggy were among those who helped compose the letters that outlined Karen's achievements and dedication to her job.



In nominating Karen Kerrigan for the NJACP 2005 Leadership Award, the staff and residents of AMIB cited her leadership qualities as well as her dedication, devotion and truly loving attitude.

Karen joined AMIB 23 years ago as residential manager for the group home in Bayville. Through those years Karen has diligently acted as a professional and personal helper and mentor to the residents, helping AMIB achieve its mission to provide them with life-long care. She goes above and beyond to advocate, research and comfort those in need and to ensure that their days are filled with meaningful activities that take their abilities and preferences into consideration.

Residents who know Karen describe her as caring, loving, fair, understanding, patient and a true friend. The staff considers her a truly genuine, honest, devoted role model with a knack for maintaining a homelike environment for the residents.

All eight residents have had 23 years of wonderful memories with Karen. One tells of how, when he was diagnosed with kidney renal failure, Karen spent long hours in the library researching his nutritional needs, creating special menus and learning more about his illness. He is grateful that he never had to go through dialysis alone, and that Karen was always there with him.

Karen is more than willing to lend a helping hand to a new management member or to assist a house that is short-staffed. With all her responsibilities, she continues to demonstrate her competency in multi-tasking, meeting deadlines and keeping things running smoothly.

Karen has been with the agency for two-thirds of its existence, and her commitment to keep her feet on the ground and her dedication to our residents has inspired other professionals to consider working in this field.

From the President



Dear Friends:
Thanks to you I am happy to report that AMIB has met the challenge provided by the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation. Our report has been submitted to the Weinberg

Foundation, and we anticipate receiving their \$150,000 challenge grant soon. When we do, this will completely close out our capital campaign for the construction of the first long-term care group home in the state of New Jersey for blind/visually impaired and developmentally disabled senior residents.

We are very grateful to you for helping us achieve the challenge and appreciate the opportunity presented to us by the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation.

Kenneth J. Carson, Jr.

From the Director



Greetings, I hope this finds you doing well. As promised in our last newsletter, this issue highlights and recognizes more of our staff members and their achievements. Roseanne Fetzter and Sue Smykla joined the

20-year-plus service group. Karen Kerrigan received the 2005 NJACP Leadership Award. These employees serve as an inspiring force for younger staff members to dedicate their time to human services and consider employment with AMIB as a career choice. I thank all my staff for the wonderful work they do.

We look forward to establishing relationships with the new state administration and strengthening efforts to provide the care individuals need to continue liv-

ing in the community. We also look forward to partnering with the state to provide additional group homes and community-based services for individuals on the waiting list. The services at AMIB can also be shared with a greater audience, and it is our intention to assist those individuals and families in need of support.

By May we will have completed our long-range plan, which includes opening additional group homes, expanding day programming and providing in-home services. We look forward to the opportunities ahead and will keep you posted on our progress.

I would like to extend a thank you to all the board members, staff and supporters of our cause and wish you a healthy summer.

Aaron Soto

A Bequest to the AMIB Endowment Fund

A tax-deductible bequest in your will is an excellent way to become a member of The Legacy Society and make a significant gift that may not be possible during a lifetime. If you have an up-to-date will and want to include a provision to provide permanent assurance of the future of AMIB residents, ask your attorney to add an amendment, known as a codicil. Suggested wording for a will or codicil could be:

*"I give and bequeath to the **AMIB Endowment Fund**, 909 Cedar Bridge Avenue, Brick, New Jersey 08723-4259, the sum of \$_____ (or _____ percent of my estate) and/or the following property _____."*

Some other opportunities to make a planned gift to AMIB's Endowment Fund and become a member of The Legacy Society include: creating a charitable remainder trust; giving a paid-up insurance policy; and arranging for a gift of appreciated long-term capital gain securities or real estate.

The Legacy Society

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following who have become members of The Legacy Society through a bequest or planned gift:

| | |
|---|---|
| Janet Andruss * | Robert Wood Johnson 1962 Charitable Trust |
| David R. Bixel * | Peter R. & Cynthia K. Kellogg Fund |
| Elaine O. Behr * | Mary Katherine Lightner * |
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| Betty Wold Johnson | Edna Thorsen * |
| The Keith Wold Johnson Charitable Trust | Polly Wilson * |

* deceased

Mary Carson's Legacy to AMIB

We welcome Mary Carson as the newest member to join The Legacy Society. To help ensure the financial future of AMIB and its residents, Mary recently provided for a significant bequest naming the AMIB Endowment Fund in her will. She is the mother of five children: Cecilia; Mark; Louise; Bayville home resident Mary Carol; and AMIB president, Ken Carson, Jr. She is the widow of Kenneth J. Carson, Sr., who served on AMIB's board for many years and after whom AMIB's long-term care home in Lacey Township is named.



A recent photograph of Mary Carson with her daughter, Mary Carol.



Mary Carson with son Ken, Jr., Mary Carol, and baby Cecilia (1952).



Mary and Ken Carson, Sr., at their 50th wedding anniversary in 1993.

Mary Carson's second child, Mary Carol, was born on October 5, 1948, in Cleveland, Ohio. A premature baby weighing only 2 pounds, 3 ounces, she was not expected to live. Her twin brother, Patrick, had died eight hours after birth.

Four months later, when the Carson family moved to New Jersey, they discovered that, because Mary Carol had been given too much oxygen at birth, she was blind. However, it was not until she reached the age of 10 that her parents discovered their blind daughter was also retarded.

Mary Carol stayed home with her parents until she was 14 when she entered the Woodbridge State School as one of 50 residential students. The school offered programs for children who were either blind or who had a wide variety of other developmental disabilities.

One day when she was visiting Woodbridge, Mary met Polly Wilson. She learned that Polly's daughter had the same conditions as Mary Carol. Polly and her husband, Al, were trying to set up a group home with a small number of children who would be able to receive individual attention in a homelike setting.

Polly eventually persuaded Mary to enroll her daughter as one of eight residents of the second AMIB home in Bayville. Mary and Ken became so delighted with the way Mary Carol settled

into her new home and the people who took care of her, that they decided to do all they could to help the fledgling organization.

Ken agreed to work on fundraising. He also created a newsletter for AMIB. Mary, too, helped to raise funds. She and her friend, Gloria Smith, started a regular bridge party, which raised between \$200 and \$300 each year.

Mary was also certified in Braille and transcribed books for the blind. Among the books she most fondly remembers transcribing were Winnie the Pooh and Christopher Columbus. Mary estimates that over a 30-year period she transcribed over 25,000 pages. She also taught Braille at various locations including Ocean County College.

Over the years, Mary and her husband were instrumental in the growth and development of AMIB. Ken served on the board of directors for many years, several as vice president. In 1980, after 35 years as executive vice president of the Inmont Corporation in Clifton, he retired and was able to devote even more time to AMIB. He died in December 2002.

Mary Carson says that AMIB has been a wonderful experience for her daughter. As a resident of the Bayville home where she receives one-on-one attention, her daughter has blossomed.

Before coming to Bayville, Mary Carol was quiet and regressed. She didn't even know what a telephone was and had never used one.

At the group home she enjoys talking on the phone, is sociable, happy, lives independently, does many things for herself, and enjoys the companionship of the other Bayville residents.

Mary Carson is grateful to the people of AMIB for all they have done for her daughter. She hopes that others will follow her example by becoming members of The Legacy Society and helping AMIB provide special care for blind, developmentally disabled children like Mary Carol.

Donors Making a Difference . . .

In gratitude we recognize donors to AMIB, Inc., the AMIB Endowment Fund, Inc. and the Vision of Independence Campaign in the year 2005. All of you have helped to make a difference in what we have been able to accomplish in our group homes and in the lives of our residents.

AMIB, Inc.

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AMIB HIGHLIGHTS OF 2005

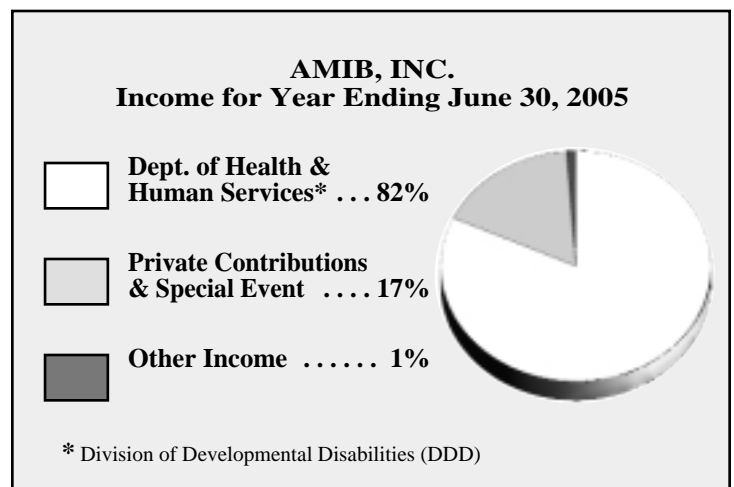
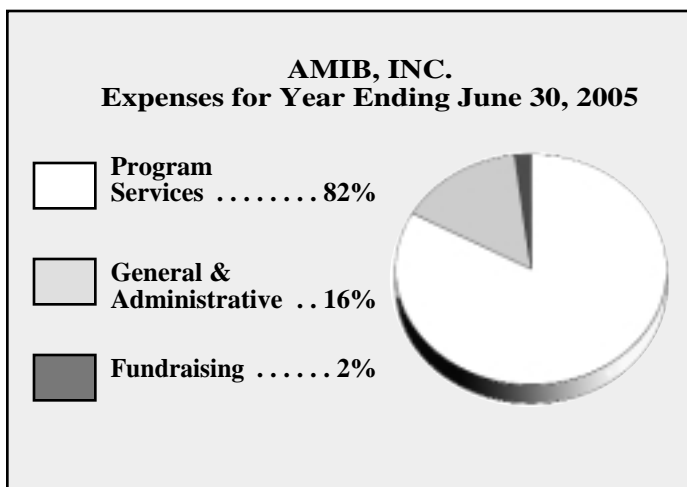
- ❖ Completed Phase II of the Vision of Independence Capital Campaign.
- ❖ Met the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation \$150,000 Challenge.
- ❖ August 22, 2005, David R. Bixel, AMIB Endowment Fund President and Chairman of the Vision of Independence Capital Campaign, died in a tragic automobile accident.
- ❖ From interest that will be earned on David Bixel's \$41,000 Legacy Gift to the AMIB Endowment Fund, the AMIB Board established the Bixel Respite Services Fund to provide respite for families with blind, developmentally disabled children.
- ❖ AMIB Board created a five-year plan — 2006 through 2011.
- ❖ In fulfillment of Capital Campaign, AMIB completed the sale of the Toms River Group home.
- ❖ On the death of David Mathey in February 2005, AMIB became a beneficiary of the David Mathey Charitable Remainder Unitrust. Over the next 15 years, distributions to AMIB from the trust are expected to reach well over \$1 million.
- ❖ AMIB staff members, Roseanne Fetzer and Sue Smykla, completed over 20 years of service to AMIB; Karen Kerrigan received the 2005 NJACP Leadership Award.

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Around the Houses . . .

Eric Weber Receives the Cochran Award for 2005

When Eric Weber moved into AMIB's house in Brick three years ago, he was not comfortable mixing with others. Often he chose not to participate in community activities. However, in the past three years Eric has made admirable progress. Through perseverance and patience, he has built a bond with the staff and other residents in the home. He now enjoys parties, dancing, taking walks in the neighborhood and in local parks, and spending time with others in community outings, holiday celebrations and activities around the home. In recognition of Eric's improvement, the staff and residents of the Revere Program in Brick nominated Eric for the Cochran Award for 2005. Eric received the award at a celebration in the Brick house on December 3, 2005. Seated center, Eric is joined by family members, from left, his sister's fiancé, Wayne; his mother, name?; sister Suzanne; father Louis; and brother Mark.



Douglas Schneider Settles into North Dover Home

New North Dover home resident Douglas Schneider enjoys a visit from his sister, Cynthia (left).

During Thanksgiving weekend 2005, Douglas moved into AMIB's North Dover home from the Woodbine Developmental Center, where he had lived since 1985.

Douglas first visited North Dover in October 2005. He met and chatted with house residents and stayed for lunch and a tour of the house.

From his initial interaction, the people at AMIB believed Douglas would love this home. After more day and overnight visits to make certain, Douglas and his family decided that AMIB was where he wanted to be.

Since moving in, Douglas has quickly adapted to his new surroundings, establishing relationships with his housemates and joining several activity groups, including the AMIB Dream Weavers Self Advocacy Group. He



shares a love of sports and music with several of his peers, and has adapted well to his day program which he attends Monday through Friday. Douglas looks forward to the warm weather and enjoying his spacious backyard with his new friends as well as other opportunities that living at the shore offers. We welcome Douglas Schneider and look forward to helping him become more and more independent in his new home.