



S.T.E.P. News

Building on a Foundation of Quality News

Number 58

www.stepagency.com

Winter 2008-2009

Contents

The Year in Review	1
Michelle Davis	2
Gratitudes & Recognition ..	2
2008 SLS Picnic	3
SLS Picnic Photos	4
Dress Code Philosophy	5
Yuba City News	5
Community Resources	6
ILS Report	7
CAC	7
Meet Atif Shabbir	8
The Art of Melissa Drake ..	8
Hollywood Holiday (STEP Holiday Party)	9
Purties Jewellery ad	9
Congratulations	10
Holiday Wishes and Reminders	10
Chef Willis	11
Coneheads	11
Holiday Word Search	12

S.T.E.P. News is published four times a year by S.T.E.P. Inc., 5945 Palm Drive, Carmichael, CA 95608. Copyright © 2008 by S.T.E.P. Inc. All rights reserved.

Design/Production: John Foss

Editor-In-Chief: Melanie Bazile

Production Assistant: Jen Jones

Printing: Carmichael Printing

All views expressed in these pages are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of S.T.E.P. Inc.

We invite editorial submissions of all kinds. Stories, pictures, milestones, events, art, poems! Send your materials to the address above, or via e-mail to melanieb@stepagency.com

Copy deadlines: We try to follow these deadlines for receiving your stories for the next issue.

Spring – February 1

Summer – April 15

Fall – July 15

Winter – October 15

Toy & Food Drive, thru December 19



For the children of our Parenting ILS clients, seen here at their Halloween Party, and children at the Sacramento Receiving Home

The Year in Review

As 2008 comes to a close, we can sit back and reflect on all that has occurred. The world has changed in ways we still do not completely understand. We will have a new President who has a vision of change we all desperately want. What we are unsure of is what this change will look like. But I can reflect with confidence on the changes at STEP in 2008. I am certainly fortunate to lead a company of committed, like-minded individuals who truly believe in the possibility of each other.

I have seen, amazing things happen through their dedication and vision. That the 5 Principles are not just words, but have become a part of who we are and how we work. I have seen people commit to Circles of Support, Essential Life Style Plans and meeting and exceeding these principles every day. I am amazed at how, when faced with challenges, this team pulls

together, focuses on the needs of those we support, and in the words of Larry The Cable Guy, we “get ‘er done!” Although we are uncertain of what 2009 holds, the struggles we will face, I know our line of sight, of providing quality services and supports, that wherever the journey takes us we will face it head-on with enthusiasm and synergy.

With those thoughts in mind, I wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the employees, families and stakeholders and most importantly those we support at STEP. I am honored to be part of the Circle of Support we call Strategies To Empower People.

– *Jacquie Dillard-Foss*
CEO, STEP Inc.

Super Recognition for Michelle Davis!

Two years ago, Michelle Davis weighed 242 lbs. Now her weight is under 200. YAY!

She complained of knee pains, sometimes refused to cooperate with staff and wouldn't get involved in activities. So staff had to assist her with errands around in the house, groceries, bank, and many other things. She brought her complaints of knee pain to her primary care physician, who recommended Michelle see Dr. Garcia (early 2008). She asked Dr. Garcia to help Michelle with her weight and the medication “depokate” that she was taking for a couple of years. Dr. Garcia reviewed her case and changed

her to a different medication. Big change for Michelle! We noticed Michelle's mood swings improve, and she finally came out and did her own errands. She was able to walk better, willingly made food changes, would do laundry and fold clothes without assistance. She was more involved in activities, more motivated and happier! She is now willing to ride the RT bus to communities.



Big applause to Michelle Davis for sticking to her goal to lose weight and get more involved in activities. And thank you to all of Michelle's PA staff for their excellent work with Michelle.

– *Wendy Spanton*
SLS Coordinator

Gratitudes and Recognition

Recognition:

Lei Bauman - I appreciate how you put thought into your work and the individualized support you give to people. You really think things through and put so much effort into finding a solution that will work for the person and help improve the quality of their life. The way you are helping Reyna to create her own journal demonstrates the principle of “choice and self-directed”. If I ever needed support, I would be lucky to have someone like you!
– *Melanie Bazile*

Thanks **Roger Wright** with Arden Arcade Payee Services for running Vickie's check over to the office with 20 minutes notice! She is so grateful!

– *Melanie Bazile*

Celebrations:

- Reyna Sanchez would like to say a big THANK YOU to **Ada Torres** for helping make her birthday party a success.
- Sam would like to recognize all of **Carl Poulin's attendants** for helping him make a home of his own
- Sam would like to recognize **Charlie Sommer** for providing flexible and tailored services for Jamal
- Congratulations to **Noe De Los Santos**—after removing medications he is becoming

more successful at improving his attendance for work.

- Bree would like to appreciate **Phil** for exposing John Tusing to new experiences and truly living out the 5 principles of Supported Living Services
- The trip to Yosemite was a success! Thank you to **Joshua Pinsky, Alex Hoffman, Mike Dyda, Cheryl Dub, and Mike Morris** for making it a memorable event.
- **Scott Cahill** – Lei would like to say thank you for your wonderful work with Matt Scott. The DSLS Unit would like to wish you continued success with your new PA 2 position.
- Brad Bougler would like to thank **Tyx Pulskamp** for assisting and encouraging him in making more endeavors into the community at large.
- Sarah Wombold and Jan Jessee would like to say thank you to **Trish Malone** for advocating to get Sarah's medical needs met
- Jan Jessee would like to appreciate **Nancy Morale's staffing arrangement** for helping make Nancy's life more active and out in the community
- Laura Tighe would like to appreciate **Tyx Pulskamp** and **Holly Stamm** for helping her and encouraging her in advocating for herself. Thank you!
- Bree would like to appreciate **Sarah Birdsong** for her patience, wonderful follow-through and excellent assistance in training new

staff for Sarah Gee

- Michelle would like to appreciate **Tom Sontag** for his wonderful assistance, patience and follow-through with Hugh and his difficulties.
- Wendy would like to appreciate all the **staff that work with Tom C.** for their wonderful work and dedication to Tom.

You never know when...

People might not recognize the importance of having emergency identification cards in their wallets or backpacks, so we would like to tell you a little story. Once upon a time a backpack was lost. This backpack contained a blood sugar checker (glucose monitor) for a diabetic woman. It also contained eye-cleaning gel, medication that would have been expensive to replace, a wonderfully healthy lunch and a wallet with her identification in it.

The glucose monitor would cost approximately a \$100, the medication itself ranges as to cost per pill, clothes that would need to be replaced, lunch for a diabetic person could be irreplaceable health-wise, an identification card from the DMV which could have been \$25 to replace. Total cost: at least \$200.

Finding that backpack just because it had an emergency card with the phone numbers and getting it back? PRICELESS!

– Sam Holden

2008 SLS Picnic

The 3rd Annual SLS Picnic was held on September 19th at McKinley Park. Every year, SLS agencies from around the Sacramento area gather to celebrate Supported Living Service and enjoy lots of fun, food, and friends. STEP's BBQ crew cooked up a storm for hundreds of consumers, staff and friends from many different agencies including: Alta California Regional Center, InAlliance, Summerhouse, Options, CLO, CEPS, Choices and North Star. The potluck buffet filled tables with yummy side dishes, salads, desserts and more. Thanks to all who attended to make this year's SLS Picnic a great success and a HUGE THANK YOU to those who worked so hard at the BBQ pit—you know who you are!

–Jen Jones

Photos on the next page

SLS Picnic 2008



Tony & Jen



Jacquie & Mike



Wendy & Tom



Mike, Thurston, Jeff,
Hermon, Dan

Dress Code Philosophy

Believe it or not, our dress code was not established to cause you distress, to force you to buy clothes you will hate, or to make you wear “grandma” shorts. Not that I see anything wrong with those. Instead, our dress code, for all positions, was established to remind all of us that we are paid to support our clients, and that is all of us, about RESPECT. You may ask yourself, what do my clothes have to do with respect? Well, let me tell you...

I can usually tell how people feel about themselves by the way they are dressed. Haven't you ever noticed that about yourself? Think about it. What do you wear if you are suffering with the blues? Do you just toss on the nearest pair of old sweats and your favorite worn out shirt because who really cares? When you feel great and you want to look great too, don't you grab the new jeans and that really nice top because it flatters you? Yes, most of us do. What about when you are going to meet your potential in-laws? How did you dress then? Didn't you spend a little extra time on it because you wanted to make a good impression?

So what are we saying to and about our clients when we throw on whatever is handy in the closet or when we wear a wrinkled, torn, or dirty piece of clothing? Are we saying 'I respect you and myself, and I respect that I am doing important work in a vital mission?' I don't think so.

I think when we do that, we are saying 'this is not an important day with an important person doing important work so I don't have to look or smell nice. It doesn't matter that I dress nicer to interact with strangers than I do for the person that I work with on a regular basis. They just aren't that important to me. If they were, I would dress for the occasion.'

Don't get me wrong. I am not saying you should be in a 3-piece suit or your best dress when you go to work as a Personal Attendant or SLS Coordinator, or even a Program Director. I am saying that every day, I need to remember that I am representing myself, my clients, and my agency. I want that to be a positive reflection on myself and those I represent. I want to show that I respect myself, my client, and my employer.

So, as you choose what you will wear to work your next shift, please keep in mind what you are doing, and what you are saying, and whom you are saying it to. It may cause you to rethink your decision, and go to work looking a little better than before, and that is a good thing. Happy Dressing!

– Sandy Jones



News from Yuba City

Most of our clients here are picking out their costumes to attend the People First Halloween dance, for a night of dancing, hanging out with their peers and eating lots of candy. We are also hoping to do a skit at the Christmas party this year, so there is a lot of planning going on for that. Yuba City continues to move forward in the quest for growth.



Sharon Shidler,
Yuba City

Sharon Shidler came to our SLS unit in August 2006. Sharon attends the art program Monday-Friday in Yuba City and likes when she gets paid for art projects she's completed and sold at their storefront. Sharon gets along well with all her staff: Donna, Lisa, Jordan and Emily, because they make sure she is well taken-care of. Sharon recently started recycling cans and bottles for some extra money and it's turned out to be

very profitable. Sharon now has neighbors dropping by to give her cans.

A special thank you to Donna for thinking outside the box and helping Sharon with her new venture. In October Sharon participated in a haunted house where she delivered quite a scream! Above is a picture of Sharon in her favorite fur coat.

Community Resource Corner *by Lisa Barrows*

I am very pleased to announce that STEP is having its most "Glamorous" Glam Day ever for the S.T.E.P. Christmas Party on December 12, 2008 at 5:30 pm. The theme is "Classic Hollywood Glam" so we are asking everyone (staff included) to step it up a notch this year. We are going for a more Formal (no jeans or T-shirts) evening of celebration.

The Glam Day will be from 11am to 4pm. As always, we will need donations to pull this off and make it a success!

Donations Needed:

Dresses, gowns, mens' suits, dress shoes and accessories. Please make sure all are clean and in good condition. Hair products: hair spray, gel, mousse, brushes/combs, sanitizer and accessories.

Any other donations as always are greatly appreciated

If you are interested in volunteering please let me know

by December 1, 2008. There is limited space and we only need 3 more volunteers!!

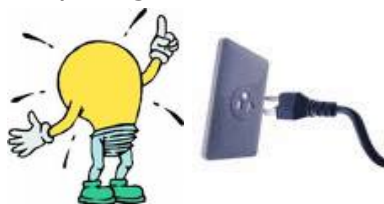
A HUGE thank you to Amanda Lee and to Avon for their gracious donation of makeup! Everyone, thanks once again for carrying on the Glam Day tradition and making it a success!

– Lisa Barrows

More Community Resource Information *by Sarah Nixon*

ENERGY STAR Lighting Program:

Did you know that SMUD has teamed with local retailers to provide energy saving light bulbs at discounted prices? This season purchase ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) for as low as 99 cents at the following locations: Dollar Tree, 99 Cent Store, Home Depot, Longs drugs, Walgreens and many others. See Sarah Nixon for a complete list of participating locations.



LOW-INCOME energy saving programs:

Don't forget to check your eligibility! SMUD's Energy Assistance rate, PG&E's CARE, FERA, Medical Baseline

Keeping Warm:

- Eat hot meals: Try porridges or oatmeal for breakfast, and then hearty soups or stews for lunch and dinner. Go for food that provides heat and burns slowly in the body. Drinking a cup of ginger tea warms you up and also helps your body fight the cold.

- Use Drapes and Blinds: In the morning, open drapes over south-facing windows to let in the light and warmth.

Get Into YOUR Community:

Save Gas ! Ride Regional Transit. RT tickets and passes are valid for rides on both buses and light rail trains. RT Single rate is only \$2.00 & the Seniors/ Disabled rate is only \$1.00, if not paid for by ALTA.

Free Community Events:

- Christmas in the Village Dec 6th, Old Fair Oaks
- Silent Sleigh Celebration Dec. 9th, Carmichael Park 5750 Grant Ave.
- Holiday Tree Lighting, Dec 11th, Carmichael Park 5750 Grant Ave.

STEP News is Going Electronic!

To make sure you don't miss one packed issue, send an e-mail with "E-mail Newsletter" in the subject line to jenj@stepagency.com and you will be added to the STEP News e-mail list. This will help cut printing and mailing costs, and save trees!

“Falling Leaves ... Turkey Dinners...Cozy Fireplaces”



Robert Rogers from our Yuba City office volunteers his time at the 2007 Toy & Food Drive

The ILS unit is happy to announce the 5th annual Toy & Food Drive, which began at the STEP office on November 3rd and continues through December 19th. Our Toy Drive currently benefits the children of our Parenting ILS clients, as well as children at the Sacramento Receiving Home (check out the “Dear Santa” letters posted at the STEP office).

Our Food Drive benefits many of our ILS and SLS clients who, due to financial hardship,



Kids from our program show off their new blankets made for them by our STEP office staff last year

greatly benefit from a little extra food over the holiday season. Thank you again in advance, for your generosity this holiday season. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

The Parenting Team would like to thank everyone who joined in on the fun of our Annual Trick or Treat Halloween Party! The kids had a wonderful time and received enough candy and goodies to last them into the new year! A very special thanks to all of the office support staff that so willingly helped to make this event such a success for our Parents and their children. Thank you!

Finally, our entire ILS Team would like to welcome Sorella Romera to our group as a full-time ILS Instructor, as well as Bonnie Fuchs, who recently took on a part-time ILS Instructor position with us. Welcome ladies!



Our entire Team would like to wish each of you a fun, memorable and safe holiday season!

– Michelle B. Armstrong
ILS Team Member

CAC Article

The CAC had its first peer training on 10/25/08 at STEP. About 30 people came and there was a lot of great sharing and discussion related to self-directing services. The acting crew included Meredith Blake, Chad Aurich, Libby Drake, Mario Zamudio and Laura Black with some assistance from Angela and Chuck. Carol Nolan was there to help out and get input from everyone there.

The group role played four scenarios on staff use of personal cell phone during work, choice making, borrowing money, and friends and family visitation policy. The role play set the scene and then everyone discussed what to do and the role play was done again with a focus on a proactive and respectful solution. Michael Long gave a small talk about independence and self-direction and why it is important. There was also a lot of good input from PA's that were there.

An interesting discussion took place around the disclosure of the wages made by entry level Personal Attendants and the accountability expected. We also discussed the concept of do-with rather than expecting someone to do-for. The people who attended expressed an

interest in different trainings in the future on the topics of directing staff, budgets, transportation and cooking. Thanks to everyone who made the time to come and especially to Carol Nolan for helping to facilitate.

Next meeting of the CAC will be Tuesday January 13, 2009 from 4:00pm to 5:30pm at the STEP office. See you all there!

– Melanie Bazile & Carol Nolan

Meet Atif Shabbir

Atif Shabbir is a 25 year old man living in North Highlands, in a house with a big yard. It's a great house for Atif since he likes to be outside a lot. He came to America from Pakistan with his family when he was a young boy.

Atif loves to go to the parks in his area and out for fast food. He's recently gone to a few restaurants near his home. He works doing some yard work at a neighbor's home and also does recycling. He does a lot of chores at home. Atif's favorite people are his family and the cool group of guys who help support him in his home and community. They are Brandon, Bruce, Luis, Jorge, Ed, Billy, and the new guy Jesse. He really enjoys visits from his family, who often come to see him and usually bring him nice things.

– Kelly McGurran



The Art of Melissa Drake

Melissa Drake is an artist with a capital "A". She has been painting and selling her works for more than a decade. Some words patrons use to describe her pieces: colorful, heroic, detailed, bold. You won't find any flowers or puppies in her catalog—unless you commission a piece just for you. You may remember that Melissa was a recipient of Sacramento Bee's Annual "Book of Dreams" for 2003. She was awarded a gift of professional art supplies valued at about a thousand dollars. Melissa did not squander that gift and has completed dozens of large gallery-quality works.

Presently, you can find Melissa Drake's Art hung in prominent business and medical offices in the Sacramento Area.

In 2009 she will be showing at New Visions Gallery located in Country Club Mall, and Sacramento Fine Arts Gallery in Carmichael. This semester Melissa has been studying figure drawing and has already been approached by the instructor to show a composition publicly.

Melissa participates in STEP's Vocational Program and is coached by Jacquie Staley. They are a formidable team of artists! I have known them both for over a decade and they are always enthusiastically

in the middle of a new creative project. I myself, like a lot of folks here at STEP, love to see each new painting Melissa displays for sale. If you like something you have to act fast—they often have "SOLD" signs posted within hours of hanging. STEP ILS and STEP Vocational have been members of Melissa Knight's circle of support since 1995.

– Lynn Frampton
Vocational Program Director



HOLLYWOOD HOLIDAY

Please dress up in your best Hollywood style

Friday, December 12th, 2008
5:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Scottish Rite Masonic Center
6151 H Street
Sacramento, CA 95819

Consumers & Employees:	Free
Additional family & friends:	\$10
Children under 5 years:	Free

Tickets must be purchased in advance!

No sales at the door



“Purties”

Made by STEP Vocational Program artists

Consider a holiday gift of these Colorful, fun, inexpensive pieces. Treat yourself or a loved one from Purties! Many items on display at STEP and local Eskaton Gift shops. Prices from \$3 - \$20.

Congratulations!

Congrats to our former ILS Instructor Jude De La Concepcion, who recently completed her Certified Flight Instructor certificate and started her new job, instructing at Sacramento Executive Airport!

– Michelle Armstrong

Also...

Mike Martin received an award in October for his television show Kid Corp News, which was presented by the Sacramento Board of Supervisors. His show appeared on Comcast "On Demand" and was broadcast live on October 29th. Congrats Mike!



**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR!**

"Let this coming year be better than all the others. Vow to do some of the things you've always wanted to do but couldn't find the time. Call up a forgotten friend. Drop an old grudge, and replace it with some pleasant memories. Vow not to make a promise you don't think you can keep. Walk tall, and smile more. You'll look ten years younger. Don't be afraid to say, 'I love you'. Say it again. They are the sweetest words in the world."

~ Ann Landers

Mike Martin and friends, on Kid Corp News



"Unless we make Christmas an occasion to share our blessings, all the snow in Alaska won't make it 'white'."

~ Bing Crosby (1904-1977)

"One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas day. Don't clean it up too quickly."

~ Andy Rooney

Holiday Reminders

The STEP office will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Christmas: Thursday, December 25th
- New Year's Day: Thursday, January 1st

Tasty Treats from Chef Willis!

Willis Abney is one of our clients. Let's hope he will offer us a new recipe with each issue of STEP News!

Easy Deviled Eggs

6 hard-cooked eggs, peeled and cut lengthwise
¼ cup Light Mayonnaise or Salad Dressing
½ teaspoon dry ground mustard
½ teaspoon white vinegar
1/8 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
Paprika for garnish

Put cooked egg yolks in a zip lock bag. Seal, and mash till they are all broken up. Add remainder of ingredients, reseal, keep mashing it up mixing thoroughly, cut the tip of the baggy, and squeeze mixture into egg. Sprinkle with Paprika

Just throw the bag away when done for easy clean up.

– *Chef Willis Abney*



Donald Sutton and
Annette Butler at,
uh... work

Jen's Holiday Word Search!

I	U	Y	V	C	M	R	A	T	N	C	L	Y	B	D	X	A	Z
F	A	Y	T	O	S	L	W	H	I	B	E	R	N	A	T	E	W
V	E	Y	P	W	S	M	I	T	I	R	A	H	O	E	B	S	N
E	C	Q	A	N	L	H	K	G	H	K	I	P	K	R	A	M	T
A	N	N	R	K	E	Z	A	S	H	O	S	I	S	B	G	C	C
A	M	E	V	Y	D	H	F	N	B	T	L	U	C	R	W	Z	X
Z	L	W	J	T	D	M	P	I	U	U	S	Y	F	E	E	C	I
N	E	Y	L	S	I	S	G	E	R	K	W	L	N	G	Z	A	S
A	D	E	C	N	N	C	I	N	G	E	K	A	O	N	R	S	X
W	I	A	H	O	G	A	W	A	S	V	P	A	H	I	Y	M	H
K	E	R	R	W	P	R	I	C	X	T	U	L	H	G	W	I	Q
G	R	Z	I	M	T	F	N	Y	U	H	O	X	A	E	Z	T	Y
U	D	M	S	A	S	S	T	D	Q	O	D	C	X	C	R	T	H
M	J	D	T	N	P	C	E	N	N	C	E	G	K	K	E	E	W
T	B	L	M	M	R	V	R	A	A	K	D	R	B	I	L	N	W
A	K	O	A	L	K	G	J	C	I	E	O	N	E	X	N	S	I
O	S	C	S	I	Q	M	S	I	Z	Y	X	G	S	U	I	G	P
J	E	H	I	X	E	O	L	Y	M	P	I	C	S	J	S	H	S

CANDY CANE
 HIBERNATE
 OLYMPICS
 CHRISTMAS
 HOCKEY
 SCARF
 COLD
 ICE
 SKI
 DREIDEL
 KWANZAA
 SLEDDING
 FIREPLACE
 LIGHTS
 SNOWMAN
 GINGERBREAD
 MITTENS
 STOCKINGS
 HANUKKAH
 NEW YEAR
 WINTER



S.T.E.P. Inc.
 5945 Palm Drive
 Carmichael, CA 95608
 916-679-1555
www.stepagency.com