

# 'I love it here'

RHD clients living independently in the community are thriving in Omaha

**Z**oey has guests coming to her house, so she is baking cookies. Zoey is a client at RHD Nebraska in Omaha, which provides residential supports to individuals with developmental disabilities. Zoey is 14 years old and lives in her own home, with a roommate, supported by RHD staff.

"I love it here," Zoey said. "My staff are so nice."

After serving oatmeal cookies to her guests, Zoey gets her fingernails painted by RHD direct service professional Jessie Taylor and readies for a day in the community. On a perfect afternoon in Omaha, she's going swimming.

See OMAHA / page 4



Kenneth Kauffman | photo

**Sweet ending:** Zoey lives in her own home in Omaha, supported by RHD staff. "I'm amazed at the transformation," said Zoey's mother. "She's happy. She laughs all the time." Zoey is just one of many RHD clients living in their own homes.



## THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NONPROFIT RESOURCES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

**WHO WE ARE:** Resources for Human Development is a national human-services nonprofit with more than 160 programs in 14 states serving those with developmental delays, mental illness, homelessness, and substance abuse and poverty issues. Established in Philadelphia in 1970, RHD is also a pioneer in the development of socially conscious, for-profit enterprises.

VISIT US AT: [www.rhd.org](http://www.rhd.org)



# A LIFE STILL IN PROGRESS



Kenneth Kauffman | photo

**Family portrait:** Iggy and Antjuan are the happy parents of four children in a safe and loving home with support from RHD.

**The story** of every great couple begins with the "meet cute," a charming anecdote that shows you two people are supposed to be together. Antjuan and Iggy met cute. They were friends as children, and then Iggy left to live with her family in South America. When she returned as a teenager, Antjuan saw her for the first time and ...

"I couldn't even talk," he said. "I turned and ran the other way."

The next afternoon, milling around a basketball court with their friends, Antjuan couldn't take his eyes off the girl with the dark hair at the other end of the gym.

"I was trying to get her attention," Antjuan said. "So I threw the basketball real hard off the backboard, so that it would bounce down to the end of the gym where she was standing. She picked it up and threw it back to me and said: Keep the ball on your side."

"And I was just: SHE TALKED TO ME."

This is the story of two people who met and fell in love, and wanted to be married and have children. This is the story of two people who saw their children taken away from them, and fought to get them back.

This is the story of Antjuan and Iggy, two people with intellectual disabilities who fought to get married, fought to stay together, fought to have a family — and who are

working hard to become good and stable parents in a safe and loving family home with support from RHD.

\*\*\*

One of their daughters developed a rash, and Antjuan and Iggy took her to the hospital. A clinician took note of the fact that the little girl's parents had intellectual disabilities, and notified a social worker, who examined their case and thought that four children might be too much for parents with Antjuan and Iggy's challenges.

During a period of assessment and review, the Department of Human Services took Antjuan and Iggy's children away.

As Antjuan and Iggy began working to get their children back, Community Behavioral Health (CBH), the group contracted by the City of Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) to provide mental health and substance abuse services, approached RHD about supporting Antjuan and

See ROBINSONS / page 3

# Check-up from the neck up

RHD's behavioral health system at QCare is first of its kind in the country

**R**H D's Family Practice and Counseling Network officially unveiled the first integrated behavioral health system with a convenient care clinic in the country, with the launch of "Wellness at Your Fingertips" Aug. 5 at FPCN's QCare in a Philadelphia Shoprite.

The automated kiosk provides the ability for an individual to take a screening test for multiple behavioral health issues such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, bipolar disorder, and ADHD. It was created through a partnership with Drexel School of Public Health, the Scattergood Foundation, and the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health.

"With this initiative, we hope to further the de-stigmatization of mental health issues in Philadelphia," said FPCN director Donna Torrisi. "We call it 'Get a check up from the neck up.' Our QCare staff has received extensive training on mental health first aid."

QCare customers can participate in an automated question and answer session that takes only a few minutes and is available in English and Spanish. While the kiosk does not take the place of a doctor, it is an education and awareness tool that provides signs and symptoms of treatable mental health conditions, and can make patients aware of treatment options — including care from QCare staff on site. The first person to use it on the day of its unveiling was Dr. Arthur Evans, Commissioner of the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services.

"We want to begin to de-stigmatize and normalize the act of seeking help for mental health issues," Dr. Evans said. "We need to be innovative about how we do things, so that we can reach more people."

FPCN is a network of health centers providing primary care, behavioral health education, prenatal care, family planning services, dental care, community outreach, and advocacy. It has become one of the largest nurse-managed health centers in the country, serving more than 90,000 patient visits each year.

# Going Home

## Worldwide search for homeless man's family pays off at RHD Fernwood



**RHD Fernwood:** Sam Foster, affectionately known as “Mr. Sam,” is being re-united with his estranged family thanks to support from RHD Case Manager Sheena High.

### Board of Directors

Bertram Wolfson, Esq., *President*  
 Sheldon Steinberg, V.M.D., *Vice President*  
 Anthony J. Parrotto, *Secretary/Treasurer*  
 Fred Bonaparte  
 Avrene L. Brandt, Ph.D.  
 Jo Ann E. Connelly, M.S.W., L.S.W.  
 Michael Denomme  
 Kevin Douglas, M.S.W.  
 Diane Menio, M.S.W.  
 Peter Neuschul  
 Caryn Reichlin Johnson, M.S., OTR/L, FAOTA  
 Barbara Shoulson-Kuhn  
 Tanya Stewart  
 Samantha Jones-Thomas, B.S.N.  
 Marvin Weisbord

*All directors are volunteers and, once elected, serve for an indefinite duration.*

### Contact Us

Phone: 215.951.0300 or 1.800.894.9925  
 Email: [info@rhd.org](mailto:info@rhd.org)  
 Web: [www.rhd.org](http://www.rhd.org)  
 Mail: 4700 Wissahickon Ave., Suite 126  
 Philadelphia PA 19144-4248

MyRHD is published quarterly, mailed to supporters, donors and government officials. It is meant to inform about RHD's activities, innovations and successes in the more than 160 human-services programs it operates throughout the country. If you wish to

## How you can help

More than 27,000 people each year gain the support and encouragement they need to build better lives for themselves, their families, and their communities through RHD's many human-services programs. Their milestones and successes, large and small, are made possible through the generosity of people like you.

Whether it's a child in need of a winter coat, a single mother trying to escape a life of abuse, or a man with autism whose life is about to change when he is given that first paintbrush, your contribution will help create a brighter future for these men, women, and children who just need a chance to develop their full potential.

Make this winter season a special one for those who are working toward better lives.

**Please use the enclosed envelope to send a check or visit us at [www.rhd.org](http://www.rhd.org) to donate online.**

Change lives, families and communities for the better. Help Resources for Human Development help people in need help themselves.

Mr. Sam is going home.

After 30 years estranged from his family, 82-year-old Sam Foster, known affectionately as “Mr. Sam,” is going to be reunited with them in England. His journey of homelessness and dedication to finding his family seemed stalled in a series of Philadelphia shelters and on the streets, until Mr. Sam came to RHD Fernwood, where a dedicated staff found his long-lost relatives and worked to get him home.

“To look them in their faces and to see what kind of men they have become after these past 30 some years, then I can die a happy man,” Mr. Sam said.

Fernwood provides emergency housing for single men in Philadelphia referred by Philadelphia's Office of Supportive Housing. Many men who previously resided at the Ridge Center, Philadelphia's largest men's homeless shelter, moved to Fernwood after the city closed Ridge in 2012. Mr. Sam had been at Ridge for four years before transferring to Fernwood. There, he met Sheena High, who became his case manager and began to work on finding his family.

“I am a believer that family is key in support, whether it's the one we are born with or the ones we create,” High said. “If we all have the opportunity to reconnect to it after whatever amount of time and after whatever reason that separated us we should do it while we're alive.

“I always want to help those who are willing to help themselves first and he is that type of man, so it made it easy for me to be an advocate on his behalf at every level of this journey with him.”

Mr. Sam is originally from England. After medical bills and a failed business left him homeless, he found out that his family had moved. He'd lost touch with them, so he could not simply return home. He would have to find them first.

High took special interest in his case. She tracked down one of Mr. Sam's sons in London. RHD Fernwood case manager Joyce Harris found a sister in Jamaica — and found that Mr. Sam is related to members of The Royal family of Reggae Morgan Heritage music

group. They'd been looking for him, and re-connected when the band fortuitously played a show in Philadelphia in August. Mr. Sam attended, sitting in the VIP section.

Since then, Mr. Sam has been able to reestablish a connection with his family and RHD is currently working to send him home. High and Harris found that he has access to a pension that will provide him some income. The next step is a passport, and then a flight to Jamaica and finally to London.

“Mr. Foster is a fighter — and on some days as he says that I am his sparring partner,” High said. “Our goal for all the men we support is to reconnect them to their families, because they can become so isolated even within the shelter system structure and have minimal supports in place. They deserve to be included back into the family to be restored.”

As Mr. Sam has aged, he's had numerous health problems — which is why he feels the reconnection with his sons is so important. As the time approaches for Mr. Sam to go home, he is becoming more and more anxious to see his family.

“RHD has helped me to get home,” Mr. Sam said. “I am looking forward to that.”

## RHD ARTISTS IN ST. LOUIS SHOW

The St. Louis Outsider Art Fair, co-sponsored by local RHD art studios Blank Canvas and Fine Line, has become the largest Outsider Art show in the Midwest in just its third year. The Art Fair featured work from RHD studios for artists with intellectual disabilities from around the country.

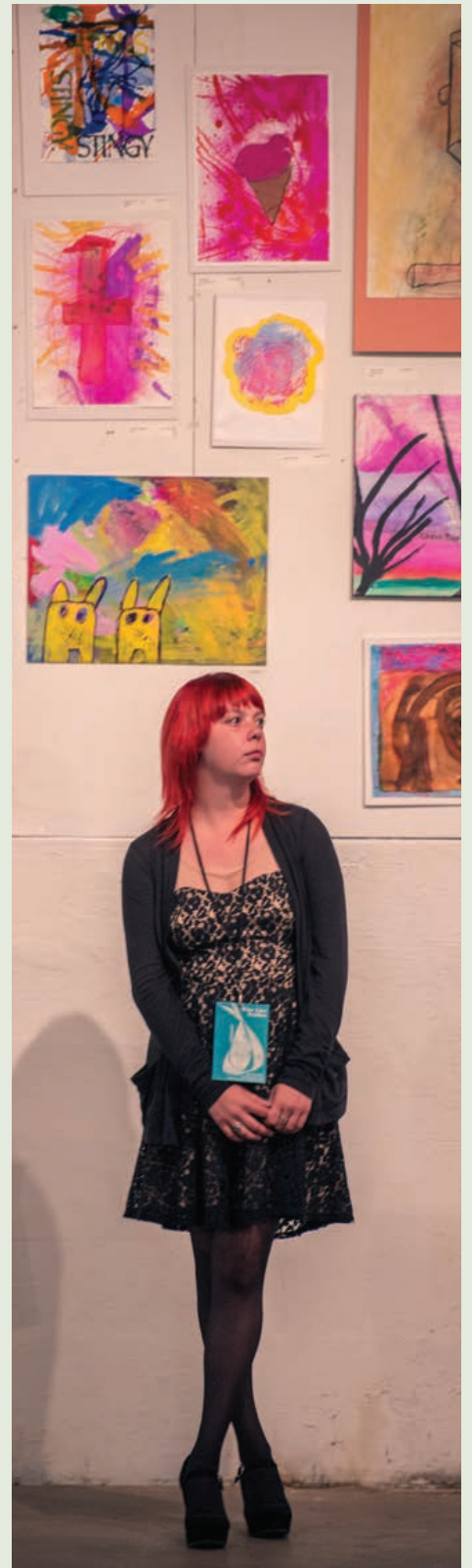
More than a thousand visitors attended the fair at the Koken Art Factory. The fair attracted media coverage in St. Louis Magazine and on KMOV-TV.

“To have people see my work, and buy something I did and take it home? That's cool,” said Erik, an artist from Blank Canvas Studios.

RHD currently supports arts programs in five states: Blank Canvas, Fine Line and Imagine That! studios in Missouri, Outside the Lines in Boston, Second Site in Rhode Island, the Center for Creative Works in Pennsylvania, and Live Yes! in Lincoln, Nebraska. In July RHD Nebraska opened a second studio in Omaha, and RHD Connecticut is set to open its own art studio this year.



Kenneth Kauffman | photos





Kenneth Kauffman | photos

## ROBINSONS

from front page

Iggy in a residential setting as they worked to achieve self-sufficiency and stability as parents. RHD stepped forward to coordinate with Department of Behavioral Health and the Department of Human Services, and everyone worked together to establish the proper level of support for Antjuan and Iggy.

The best fit for them was RHD's Mandela program, which specializes in community living arrangements for adults who have special mental health needs and provides supervised programs in daily living skills, behavior management, a range of clinical treatment interventions, personal care management, community integrated activities and vocational skills.

"Oh, I didn't know where to start," said Mandela Director Raquel Tilley. "We don't typically work with families. We went through a lot of work and discussion to create a well thought-out plan for what they'd need. This is a rare situation. But eventually we came to look at it like this is a family unit that needs support — and we knew we could provide support for them."

Antjuan and Iggy's situation has always been rare. When they first began their journey of courtship, marriage and a life together, their story was chronicled in the documentary *Antjuan and Iggy: A Life in Progress*. They often dealt with the stigma that they couldn't sustain a life together.

"We fought to get married," Antjuan said. "So many people didn't think it was possible, because we had a disability. I think everybody was scared. We knew it would be a struggle, but ..."

"We fell in love," Iggy said, finishing his sentence. "We wanted to be together. Why can't we?"

With support from their families, Antjuan and Iggy recently celebrated their 19th anniversary. They are regular speakers in the "Speaking for Ourselves" program, where they tell their personal story as motivational speakers.

"People wondered how society would look at us," Iggy said. "And we thought: We're fine. We didn't really care how the world would take it."

"I always tell him I want to clone him — he's the perfect husband," Tilley said. "He does everything for his wife and his kids. He's a very good husband; they love each other very much."

Having children was something else. They shared the news that Iggy was pregnant to their families over Thanksgiving. Their reaction was, well ...

"I learned maybe the holidays was not the best time to break news like that," Antjuan said, with a laugh.

Benjamin, now 10, was born soon after. Then came Donovan, 8; Faith, 6; and Hope, 3. Everyone shared the same concern: Four children are immensely challenging under the best of circumstances. How would Antjuan and Iggy manage it?

Today Antjuan is diplomatic when he discusses the loss of their children.

"We understood that people had questions," he said, slowly, measuring his words. "People have always questioned us. But we love our kids. We want to be good parents more than anything. We would do anything for our kids.

"And we would have done anything to get them back."

\*\*\*

When Antjuan and Iggy began the long and arduous journey of reuniting their family, they searched for a provider who would not only support them residentially, but support them as they worked to get their children back and support them as parents in their home.

"RHD worked with us so that me and my wife could support our family," Antjuan said. "They supported us when we needed it."

Antjuan and Iggy live in a home with 24/7 staff. RHD supported them as they went through the necessary steps to get their children back. They went to family school to take classes on parenting, and RHD staff worked to provide them with an environment that would empower them as they worked on their parenting skills.

RHD does not help Antjuan and Iggy directly in parenting the couple's children. But RHD does provide safe and stable residential support in which the family can flourish.

"Antjuan makes mistakes, but he's learning," Tilley said. "The biggest thing is that both of them want to spoil their children. I mean, of course they do. But we worked with them on setting boundaries and having discipline.

"You want to work on things, but in a way that supports them as people and as parents. That's RHD's philosophy — we do not treat people like they're 'less than.' They are on their journey, and they can do it with the right support."

The children stayed with Iggy's mother in a foster care arrangement. The

children could visit, but they always had to leave. And it broke Antjuan and Iggy's heart every time.

"Those kids never wanted to leave," said Margo Johnson, Mandela medical coordinator. "They wanted to be with their parents. And the grandparents were wonderful. They could not have been more supportive. Antjuan and Iggy understood this was something they had to go through, but it was hard to explain to the kids. None of them wanted to go. Antjuan would sit with them and talk and tell them what they had to do. But, oh, it was hard.

"Children are better off with their parents — as long as they are in a happy and safe environment. And Antjuan and Iggy make it a happy and safe environment for their kids."

Finally came the day Antjuan and Iggy stood up in court and petitioned to have their children come back home. Most of their RHD staff went with them. Antjuan remembers the judge reading the ruling, remembers his head swirling as he felt like it was going his way but refusing to be optimistic as he heard what felt like an avalanche of legalese ("big court words," as Antjuan put it) until the judge said: "Your children can come back home now."

"It was the best feeling in the world," Antjuan said. "To sit in that courtroom, and have the judge say you can get your kids back ... I didn't know what to do. I wanted to hug the judge."

It was Thanksgiving, toward the end of dinner, when for the past few months it was time to get the kids dressed and out the door to go back to their grandparents' house. On this day, they stayed. Antjuan tried to say something about how grateful he was that his children didn't have to leave, but he couldn't find the words. Iggy held his hand and they both wept.

"We had a bunch of staff there for Thanksgiving, and I mean when they started crying, everybody started crying," Johnson said. "None of the staff wanted to leave. We all wanted to spend the day with them. I went home and told my family: I just had the best Thanksgiving ever."

Ina Raysor is the project director at Mandela who today takes the lead on supporting Antjuan and Iggy in their home, with their children. She can see a day when they'll be independent, especially as their children get older. But for now, she's glad to be part of their family.

"I feel like we're helping make a family, helping make a home for Antjuan and Iggy and their children," Raysor said. "It's not always easy, but I think they know how much we care about them."

They do.

"We've had some struggles in our lifetime," Iggy said, as she gathered up Hope in her arms. "But we're doing good. The staff is on our side; they're with us. This is the best place we've ever been."



**Safe at home:** The Robinson family (top, left to right): Donovan, Faith, Iggy, Antjuan, Hope and Benjamin. Hope (middle) plays in the family's living room. Iggy and Antjuan play with Hope (bottom), surrounded by family photos.

# OMAHA

from front page

“In the five years before Zoey came to RHD, she was never a happy kid,” said Zoey’s mother, Linda. “She had sad eyes. She cried a lot. Since she got settled in with RHD, I’m amazed at the transformation. She’s happy. She laughs all the time. She participates in things in the community.”

“Zoey has a twinkle in her eye again. She is such a loving and spontaneous child, but she’s gone through an awful lot in her life. RHD has done such a fantastic job with her — when we first started talking about a group home, I just thought, oh, no, no, no. But the staff there is fantastic; she thinks being with them is the coolest thing. It’s been phenomenal. She loves being there.”

RHD launched services in Omaha last year, after the success of residential and day services at RHD Nebraska in nearby Lincoln. In Nebraska, and in programs across the country, RHD’s person-centered services assist individuals in facilitating meaningful and successful lives in their communities.

“I’m so happy with the way services in Omaha are growing,” said Courtney Moncrief, director of RHD Nebraska-Omaha. “In Omaha, people have a choice of a lot of providers. We’re happy to have the chance to show people that our services are truly based on the individual. That’s RHD’s Values — we’re open to creative ideas in thinking about how to support people as they work to manage their lives.”

“We make sure our clients’ needs are met, but also we do what we can to have their wants met, too.”

Zoey presented a number of challenges, given a past history of abuse. She had difficulty in social situations and displayed aggressive behavior. While her mom, Linda, had some reservations about living in a home with a roommate, Zoey has been very successful. She’s even begun sharing clothes with her roommate, Brooke.

“That was a big step for her,” said House Manager Stephanie Bonge.

“Zoey has got a huge personality,” Moncrief said. “She’s extroverted, she’s engaged. It took her a while to feel comfortable with us, but mostly it was just making her comfortable with the idea that it’s OK to be 14. We just had to get to a point where she felt safe in her environment, and felt she had a safe relationship with her staff.”

Zoey’s home is decorated to her tastes with the assistance of RHD’s Environmental Design team (she loves pink, and her walls are dotted with “Hello, Kitty” images).

Susan had been living in an institutional setting for years before transitioning to her own residence with support from RHD staff. She watches Rachel Ray’s cooking show, and when an idea for a new dish strikes her Susan gets into the kitchen and cooks. She needs minimal assistance; when she needs a pan on a shelf that’s too high for her to reach, direct service professional Wassila Ouedraogo gets it for her.

“It’s nice here,” Susan said. “I like that it’s mine.”

“Susan has really blossomed and found her place in the community,” Moncrief said. “The biggest challenge was helping her understand that it was OK to leave the house with her staff. It was hard for her to trust that she would be safe. She learned that she could have access to the things she needs. She can go out and get a soda, she can go on shopping trips, she can pick and choose what she wants to do.”

Susan loves animals (including regular trips to the local humane society, where she can pet the dogs), and when she notices the bird feeder in her front yard is out of food, she heads out to fill it. Susan calls for house manager Stacey Brown to help — but only because she needs someone to hold the top open for her.

With the support of RHD staff, Susan is taking steps toward attending Valiant Studios, a creative arts day program that provides opportunity for people of all ability levels to create and discover and explore various forms of creative expression.

Omaha is home to RHD’s newest art program, joining thriving studios across the country from Boston to Kansas City in an environment where people learn, engage, create and take ownership of their work and their place in the community while being celebrated for their own special style of outsider art.

“One of our staff put it in a very interesting way the other day — we’re here to help them, but we’re not here to do it for them,” studio director Jason Ackland said. “We’re here to support them as they learn how to help themselves.”

Richard was completely nonverbal when he arrived at RHD, and now “his vocabulary has increased 1,000 percent,” Ackland said. “On the days he comes to the studio, he just bolts in the door.”

Brian has developed quickly as a painter; a lifesize self-portrait adorns a wall near the kitchen.

“I love it here,” Brian said.

Billy is one of RHD Nebraska-Omaha’s clients who is supported both residentially and in day services at Valiant Studios. Billy is autistic and nonverbal, and he’s very sensory driven.

RHD staff walks with Billy when he wants to walk, sits when he wants to sit, and is there with a reassuring pat on the shoulder when he needs it. They introduce him to music classes, theater

class and painting to see where his interests might lie. When Billy walks around the studio, every staff member reaches out for a high five.

“At our studio, every 10 steps, it’s a different environment,” said studio director Jason Ackland. “He’s constantly changing his environment.”

Dianne and Bill, Billy’s parents, worked with a number of different providers before coming to RHD.

“We’re aware that Billy can be very challenging,” Bill said. “And we tried a lot of places and they weren’t interested in him because of his difficulties. We were about at the end of our rope. RHD really stepped up to the plate. RHD has rolled with the punches — and there have been many of those. The staff has been outstanding.”

Working to make sure Billy was secure and comfortable in his environment, the staff artists continued to engage him in the studio. Billy slowly began to work. His first piece was unveiled at the studio’s inaugural gallery show titled “Hello, my name is Valiant Studios.”

“We’ve just been very, very pleased,” Dianne said. “From the beginning, RHD staff has been so attentive and special. We’re aware you need the right kind of person to care for someone like Billy. And the staff has been so positive and so good — I can’t say enough nice things about them. We feel very blessed. We’re so thankful.”

“Billy isn’t verbal, but we can tell how he feels, and we can see that things are going well. We can tell that he likes being there.”

**Living it up:** (Clockwise from top) RHD staff artists Kealan Lindekugel (L) engages artist Arley during a music session at Valiant Studios, RHD Nebraska-Omaha’s creative arts day program; Brian is one of the studio’s most prolific artists; Zoey gets a manicure from RHD Nebraska direct service professional Jessie Taylor before heading out for a day in the community; Susan — one of several RHD clients who are living successfully in the community in their own residences with support from staff — fills the bird feeder in her front yard; artist Jalil (R) shows his work to RHD staff artist Danny Sullivan.





## A fresh start at RHD in Lincoln

Erik was searching for something new, something better, and he did his research. He was looking up services in Lincoln, Nebraska — where he has family, and where his girlfriend lived — and he came across a Youtube video about RHD.

"I wanted a fresh start in life," Erik said. "I wanted to move on, and move up in life. I wanted to try something different, learn music and all that. I researched it online. I got access to the Internet, and I felt like I had the whole world at my fingertips. I checked out RHD online.

"I was checking out Lincoln on Youtube. I saw a video about RHD and thought it was different. It looked like a better deal for me. It's nice to have more of a choice of what you want to do in life."

Erik is thriving at RHD Nebraska in Lincoln, where RHD first launched residential and day services in Nebraska. He attends Live Yes Studios, the arts-based day program, and holds a job. Erik works at Valentino's restaurant in the kitchen.

"It's busy," he said. "There's a lot to do; I don't ever refuse to do anything — I do what needs to be done. One of my co-workers was struggling with a trash can; she couldn't lift it, and I could step in and help.

"I like having income coming in. I like the independence of it, that I can be around other people and work with them. I like helping out. If the boss needs me to do something for him, I'll do that."

Erik is involved in the community in his new home, including singing in the church choir. Most importantly, he said, he can live in his own apartment.

"I love it," Erik said. "I'm pretty well organized there. Before, I was living in an extended family home. The one thing is, having a key to my own place, I walk in and it's mine. I like the peace and quiet. I can put on a record and listen to my music and not have anyone tell me to turn it down. It's mine."

RHD Nebraska provides residential supports to individuals with developmental disabilities, and specializes in providing person-centered services, assisting individuals as they work toward meaningful and successful lives in their communities. Erik is one of several clients who are living successfully in the community in their own residences with support from staff.

"I came and visited for a day, and decided this was for me. It's been a fun transition," Erik said. "You can choose what you want to do, and not be pushed into anything like I was before. I wanted to choose, I wanted to choose my life.

"I went through a lot of challenges trying to get up here, but through every road block I kept going."

For more stories about RHD clients living successfully in the community in Lincoln, please visit us online at [www.rhd.org/Nebraska](http://www.rhd.org/Nebraska)



**Erik at work:** Erik lives independently with support from staff and holds a job at a local restaurant.

# Celebrating the Lodge

RHD's Café the Lodge's mission of supporting hope, encouragement and opportunity for people in mental health recovery leads to "Tribute to the Arts" award



Dyann Roth, CEO of Resources for Human Development

RHD's Café the Lodge marked its two-year anniversary this summer, with a ceremony that celebrated all that the Lodge has become and also recognized what the Lodge lost.

Our dear friend Aaik Van Munster, the founding director of the Mental Health Recovery Lodge and the driving force behind Café the Lodge, passed away last year. The Lodge provides supported housing, educational and recreational programs, and vocational opportunities for adults with mental illness. The Lodge affirms self-determination and supports its residential members to establish independent and long-term living arrangements, a productive and meaningful existence, and a wholesome lifestyle. In that spirit, Aaik spearheaded the start of a full-service cafe, where clients work preparing and serving quality coffee, tea, pastries and wholesome breakfasts and lunches.

"We decided it should be a place that features awesome coffee and great food," said director Jackie Teitsworth. "That we knew nothing about either of those did not stop us."

Indeed, the Café has flourished in the community. All RHD programs emphasize community participation and being an asset to their neighborhoods, but The Lodge takes that to a new level.

Café the Lodge is a recipient of a 2014 "Tribute to the Arts Award" from the Bethlehem Fine Arts Commission, recognizing the Lodge's contributions to the arts. The "Tribute to the Arts Awards" were instituted in 1991 and continues on a yearly basis to honor individuals, organizations, educators, innovators or businesses that are engaged in making, supporting or encouraging artistic endeavors that enrich the community.

The mindfulness garden behind the café has beautiful murals that emphasize hope and recovery. During the week the members gather for arts classes. Friday nights include Writers and Poets Nights, Open Mic Nights and Live Performers. On Saturdays there is a drum circle and Open Mic afternoons for kids. The program includes not only RHD clients, but welcomes the whole community.

"It's wonderful to be recognized for our support of the arts, and it's a great honor to receive this award from the Bethlehem Fine Arts Commission," Teitsworth said. "So many people have contributed to the music and arts programming here, because the Lodge places such an emphasis on community. That is our mission when it comes to recovery — providing a holistic approach that truly nourishes the body, mind and spirit.

"The Lodge serves many people living fulfilled lives, supported by their community, sharing their stories of mental health recovery and extending a hand to help others. We're privileged to be able to provide a community where people's dreams can be supported, and where no dream is out of reach."

RHD supports thousands of people all across the country as they live successfully in the community in supportive housing. We work to empower people to build fulfilling lives. We often find that people want a job that makes them feel productive and part of the community. Many people have found that at Café the Lodge.

I had the blessing of working with Aaik for many years. He was a remarkable combination of gentleness and fierceness — pushing all of us to do better, dream more, to push out of our comfort zones and to be real with one another. Today the Lodge stands as an example of recovery and of the greatness of human potential. It's a place that inspires hope, creates opportunity and offers encouragement.

At the celebration we unveiled a portrait of Aaik, which will hang in the Café as a reminder of how he pioneered services on behalf of people with mental illness at RHD. We were reminded of Aaik's answering machine message, which was: "Hello, this is Aaik. How can I help you see how great you are?" Aaik's vision of Café the Lodge continues to do that, every day.



**Second Anniversary:** RHD CEO Dyann Roth and Lodge Director Jackie Teitsworth (top) with the portrait of Lodge Founding Director Aaik Van Munster at the second anniversary celebration. Café the Lodge is the recipient of a "Tribute to the Arts" award from the Bethlehem Fine Arts Commission for commitment to the arts.

## CHANGING LIVES, MAKING HEADLINES

For more on these stories and other news about RHD's innovative programs around the country serving people of all abilities, please visit the media center at [www.rhd.org](http://www.rhd.org).

### RHD presents "Working With Voices" with Ronald Coleman and Karen Taylor, pioneers of hearing voices movement

RHD presents "Working with Voices" featuring Ron Coleman and Karen Taylor, two of the world's pioneers of the Hearing Voices Movement, October 23 and 24 in Philadelphia. In a series of trainings and a public townhall-style meeting, Ron and Karen will share their work on a cutting-edge recovery model that helps people who hear voices, and their friends, families and caregivers, work through challenging situations to build better lives for themselves.

RHD has become a leader in developing hearing voices trainings.

### RHD remembers boxing champion Matthew Saad Muhammad, Philly legend and homelessness advocate

Matthew Saad Muhammad, former light heavyweight champion and member of the Boxing Hall of Fame who in later years worked with RHD to become an advocate for people experiencing homelessness, passed away in May. RHD's work with Matthew was noted in stories about his passing on ESPN, *The New York Times*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and *The L.A. Times*, among others.

The Philadelphia legend rose to become a world champion after he was abandoned on the Ben Franklin Parkway as a child. He was a spokesperson for RHD's *One Step Away*, Philadelphia's street newspaper, and hosted *One Step Away's* annual Knock Out Homelessness fundraiser.

"Matthew gave people hope," said Kevin Roberts, RHD communications manager and editor of *One Step Away*. "We were always honored that Matthew enjoyed working with *One Step Away*. He was a great gentleman, he carried himself with dignity, and he treated people with respect. He was a wonderful advocate because of the way he connected with people, through a simple message that in so many ways summed up his whole life: You might be down, but you can get back up."

### Veterans Charity Paintball Tournament helps RHD's Healing Ajax brings needed services to area Veterans

Local Marine Corps Veterans who served in Iraq are working to make sure veterans in their area have more support at home, spearheading the Veterans Charity Paintball tournament to help RHD's Healing Ajax bring much-needed services for Veterans in South Jersey and Delaware County.

Healing Ajax is a peer support program led by veterans, who help other veterans manage the emotional stress they've brought home. Responding to requests to bring services to other areas, Healing Ajax will be starting new support groups in Delaware County and South Jersey thanks to the paintball fundraiser.

### Evan Kaplan of RHD's Child & Family Connections the keynote speaker at 4th International Conference on Families with Parental Mental Health Challenges

Child and Family Connections Director Evan Kaplan, was honored to be a keynote speaker at the 4th International Conference on Families with Parental Mental Health Challenges in Berkeley, California April 25-27, 2014.

The conference brought together experts from around the globe, including researchers, educators, policy-makers, providers, and people with lived experience to share knowledge and experience, advancing the rights and highlighting the needs of families striving to live with parental mental health challenges. This was the first time the conference was held in the United States.

### Sylvia, a client at RHD's S.T.A.Y. in Memphis, presented with Mary Knox Lanier Award for outstanding personal achievement by Community Alliance for the Homeless

Sylvia, a resident with RHD's S.T.A.Y. (Supporting the Authentic You), is the 2014 Memphis/Shelby County Homeless Consortium Mary Knox Lanier Award winner for Personal Achievement. She was honored by the Community Alliance for the Homeless in Memphis.

For 12 years, Sylvia was homeless — sleeping on concrete or in the woods behind shopping centers. Mental illness caused her to become isolated and extremely vulnerable, but last year, Sylvia was referred to S.T.A.Y. for assistance in acquiring housing. S.T.A.Y. provides permanent supportive housing for individuals who have experienced chronic homelessness with severe disabilities. S.T.A.Y. focuses on maintaining housing, connecting participants to community services, and emphasizing harm reduction strategy.

Sylvia has made significant strides with the S.T.A.Y. support team, and has reconnected with her children.

# Nation Penn Gift Improves Educational Opportunities



**Stepping Stones:** Students in need of specialized education services at RHD's Stepping Stones will be using a new Interactive and Learning Technology Center thanks to a generous gift from National Penn. Stepping Stones is Philadelphia's only long-term partial hospitalization program serving children ages 6 to 11 who experience severe emotional and behavioral challenges.

Students attending Stepping Stones will be able to take a much-needed step forward in their education thanks to a new Interactive Learning and Technology Center. Stepping Stones specializes in education and health services for children ages 6 to 11 dealing with abuse, neglect and other traumatic experiences.

The Interactive Learning and Technology Center was made possible thanks to a generous gift from National Penn.

Stepping Stones is Philadelphia's only long-term partial hospitalization program serving children ages 6 to 11 who experience severe emotional and behavioral challenges.

Last year Stepping Stones was selected to participate in a study evaluating the impact of interactive technology. The students were able to access a wide range of subject content, and saw immediate benefits. Overall, student vocabulary and comprehension increased by 1.0 grade levels and math scores increase 0.8 grade levels. After the study ended, however, the computers were removed — leaving the school without a valuable resource.

National Penn stepped up to help, and not only restored the school's computer access but also helped Stepping Stones advance the educational opportunities for its students.

"National Penn is proud to support local education programs that help the youth of our communities continue their educational path," said Dana Brown, retail bank director of National Penn's Southern Region. "The life changing work Resources for Human Development does for families, and especially the students in need of support, is incredible and honorable. We could not be more pleased to make this contribution."

"Interactive learning technologies will have an immense impact in terms of more advanced learning opportunities for our students," said Debra Abrams, Director of RHD's Stepping Stones program. "The Center will offer an innovative research competition for students to develop their own subject matter, curriculum and presentations. The process begins with students identifying an academic challenge or question. The students work in groups to research their topic using on-line newspapers, magazines, journals, and websites. The students explore history, culture, science, math, English, arts, health and other disciplines associated with their topic."

"The process allows students to examine topics not found in elementary curriculum, to integrate advanced disciplines into their classroom experience, and to explore the relationships between multiple disciplines. In the past, students have created artwork, lectures, poems, and songs to present their subject matter."

Since 2004 Stepping Stones Children's Partial Program has been serving Philadelphia children ages 6 to 11 who experience severe emotional and behavioral challenges. The program's trauma-informed culture of healing and recovery uses a strength-based perspective to change lives. Stepping Stones provides specialized education services as well as individual, group and family therapy, runs according to the Philadelphia School District schedule and includes a six-week therapeutic summer program. At Stepping Stones, children receive the support needed to successfully reach their educational and behavioral goals.

Last year, 98 percent of the students at Stepping Stones returned to their local schools within 12 to 18 months, and 80 percent were promoted to the next grade level. In addition, 94 percent achieved their individualized goals and 100 percent achieved continuity of care in 14 months. No students graduated without the appropriate support services in place. While 50 percent of students were hospitalized prior to entering Stepping Stones, no students were hospitalized while attending the school.

Stepping Stones also received a \$1,500 grant from the Build-A-Bear Workshop Bear Hugs Foundation, helping Stepping Stones provide specialized education services to Philadelphia-area children. The Build-A-Bear Workshop Bear Hugs Foundation made the award to Stepping Stones through its Champ grant program.

"We're delighted to be able to provide therapeutic games and activities in an improved setting, thanks to the Build-A-Bear Workshop Bear Hugs Foundation," Abrams said. "The children we support are already benefiting from the added resources made possible by this grant."



4700 Wissahickon Ave., Suite 126  
Philadelphia PA 19144

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 299  
PRINCETON, NJ

RHD's Philly Youth Poetry Movement competed in the 2014 Brave New Voices Festival, the largest youth poetry festival in the world. The 2014 PYPM Team of Teiarha Mitchell, Shaneka Briggs, Imani Rothwell, Nayo Jones, Kevin Abbott, Ainye Clarke and Sabrina Slipchenko reached the semi-finals. Watch for PYPM this fall on HBO's coverage of the festival. The Philly Youth Poetry Movement gives young people their voice in an effort to promote social change, cultural and ethnic diversity and positive self-esteem. PYPM provides a safe haven for not only expression, but a chance to build connections with other youth, strengthening a community of free thinking young minds.



# Living their words



**1** With RHD's support, a family stays together

### About Resources for Human Development

A national human services nonprofit founded in 1970, Resources for Human Development serves tens of thousands of people of all abilities every year with caring, effective and innovative programs addressing intellectual and developmental disabilities, behavioral health, homelessness, addiction recovery and more. In partnership with local governments and those we serve, RHD builds better lives, families and communities.



**6** Celebrating an anniversary at RHD's Cafe the Lodge



**7** National Penn gift supports RHD's Stepping Stones

## Plus more . . .

**1** RHD clients are living fulfilling lives in the community at RHD Nebraska in Omaha

