Agency holds annual in-service

Nearly 110 Richland Newhope staff were on hand for the annual agency in-service on Sept. 7 at the Masonic Temple.

Superintendent Michele Giess, who assumed that position in January, kicked the morning off by sharing personal photos and favorite quotes as a way to help staff get to know her better.

Staff also heard from Dan Varn, executive director of United Way of Richland County, and Dawn Wisdom, executive director of Raemelton Therapeutic Equestrian Center, about the importance of contributing to this year's fundraising campaign.

Varn said United Way was able to increase funding to many agencies last year, and he urged staff to give what they could again this year.

“That impact is very, very real,” he added.

Also sharing her story was Mallory Westerheide, the parent of two children who have received
early intervention services through Richland Newhope. Her oldest son, Micah, also attended preschool at the Early Childhood Center.

“Newhope’s preschool is amazing,” said Westerheide. “At Newhope, I knew he was safe.”

The keynote speaker for the day was Kay Francis, a comedian and motivational speaker, who talked about ‘Taking the Road Less Stressed.’

Francis pointed out the importance of keeping a sense of humor and overall positive attitude, adding we can only control ourselves and how we react.

“We’ve got to let go of the little things,” Francis reminded staff. “Trying to control that which is uncontrollable is a key cause of stress and unhappiness.”

The agency in-service also included employee recognition, team-building exercises, and a scavenger hunt for employees who work at the Early Childhood Center and Service and Support Administration.
Richland Newhope honors staff

Richland Newhope's annual agency in-service on Sept. 7 provided an opportunity to recognize 38 employees for their years of service.

Honored for 35 years was Vehicle Operator Leo Prince while Fiscal Disbursement Coordinator Lin Moyer was recognized for 30 years at Newhope.

Three employees were saluted for 25 years of service: Food Service Worker Virginia Peyton, Registered Nurse Tara Rogers, and Therapy Program Assistant Chris Stransky.

Seven staff members were recognized for 20 years: Food Service Worker Kathy Church, Custodial Worker William Cox, Food Service Worker Amy Eaton, Mechanic Chris Jones, Physical Therapy Assistant Connie Lawrence, Mechanics Helper/Vehicle Operator Hobie Prince, and Individual Consultant Team Leader Michel Smith.

The following employees were also recognized:

15 Years - Moncia Bailey, Tamara Camp, Jeri Zeigler
10 Years - Tina Baker, Mike Bays, Brandy Groove, Ilona Johnson, Lori Looney, Amber Merrell, Kara Thompson, Chris White

5 Years - Geneva Amstutz, John Bradley, Joyce Briggs, Melissa Cole, Robin Diberadino, Kim Duncan, Doug Hamrick, Kristy Harris, Allison Hoffman, Christina Jamieson, Betty Kleri, Devon Ruiz, Jane Skaluba, Dawn Trosper, Paula Ward

Thank you to all of our honorees. They represent a combined 480 years of experience, commitment, and excellence!

New agency videos

Have you seen Richland Newhope’s new agency videos that debuted over the past few weeks? If not, you can find them on our YouTube channel.

One video highlights our transition services and how we assisted one young man, Jesse Shearer to find a job he loves. The other features two brothers with a rare genetic disorder, Micah and Maximus Westerheide, and highlights the importance of early intervention.

Both are inspiring stories about how Richland Newhope, families, and the community in general can work together to improve the lives of those with disabilities.

Sept. Employee of the Month

Name: Claudia Strong

Position: Individual Consultant (IC)

Employed since: Jan. 9, 2006

Nominators Comments: “Many times over the years that I have worked with her I have seen
her work tirelessly to make something good happen in a person’s life. She had helped an older couple on her caseload prepare for a bedbug extermination. She worked with them and their family supports to ensure that the couple had a positive experience and arranged for them to have a little vacation away from home while the extermination took place. Throughout she was concerned about maintaining their dignity and protecting their physical and emotional health."

**Employee of the Month Comments:** “It’s nice to be recognized, but I feel like I’m just doing my job. I try to put myself in the shoes of the individuals I work with and try to treat them the way I would want to be if I had a caseworker. What I like best about my job is that each day is different. I enjoy the challenge of figuring out new ways to do things and being creative to solve problems; also building relationships with the people I support, their families, and their support teams and working together to help people live their lives the way they want.”

**EMPLOYEE MILESTONES**

- 26 Years – Chris Stransky
- 22 Years – Ron Frasher
- 17 Years – Jeff Stacklin
- 16 Years – Tamara Camp
- 15 Years – Annette Cottrill
- 11 Years – Amber Merrell
Rainy race

Kudos to Brandi (and Sherry Minnig) for braving the rain on Sept. 8 and participating in the Spherion 13er's 5K race in downtown Mansfield. They were among the 300 people who took part in the event.

This year's race was especially meaningful for Brandi as she honored her sister who passed away in August. This was the third straight year Brandi and Sherry have competed in the 5K and marked the 31st race by the 'Team No Limits' running chair group from Richland Newhope's Residential Department in the past two-and-a-half years!

In Memoriam

Kyle Gangi - Sept. 1, 2018

Paula Fraley - Sept. 2, 2018