

In Touch

Cardinal Cushing Centers - A Newsletter for the Cardinal Cushing Community

2009 Graduation—CEO's address



On May 23rd and June 7th Cardinal Cushing Centers celebrated with parents, families and staff the graduation of our students from the Braintree St. Coletta Day School and Cardinal Cushing School. Jo Ann Simons addressed both graduations with the following speech;

Today is about Our graduates. But, today is also about another group that is also here with us. Families, friends and advocates. Without you there would have not been today, or any yesterdays and there would surely not be any tomorrows.

Because of your unstoppable advocacy, your constant support and your unwavering love, we have the opportunity to celebrate these young men and women. I am here to tell you that while today may be bittersweet, your children are leaving the warmth and devotion of the staff at Braintree St. Coletta Day School/Cardinal Cushing School the future will be ok. In fact, it will be more than ok.

Together, we have worked to prepare our students for the next chapter in their life. While that chapter is yet unwritten, I can tell you, as the voice of experience, that it will be fine. You will be fine, You will be fine, your children will be fine and in fact, I expect that you will all thrive. I have gone before you. My son, with Down syndrome and a long list of medical chal-

lenges, is now 30. I remember his graduation as a bittersweet day. I was overwhelmed with joy and overcome with some sadness. He had achieved more than anyone had expected. He had given us more reasons to celebrate than I thought possible. But, school and the teachers we had come to love and even consider as extensions of our family, would be left behind. The future seemed uncertain, funding unstable and the adult world so unfamiliar.

I have worked with hundreds if not thousands of families facing the transition from school to adult life and it is a good life ahead for you. But, in order to preserve a good life for your child, you must be ready to advocate for adequate funding. You can not leave the job of advocating to others. Just last month, 1500 people closed Beacon St. with their protests and our legislators heard their plea and restored funding for disability services. You must be willing to speak up and out in order to ensure a bright future for your child.

Graduation is only a concept. In real life every day you graduate. Graduation is a process that goes on until the last day of your life.

Today, is a celebration. A celebration for the courage and tenacity of our graduates who every day face challenges none of us can truly ever appreciate. With grace, humor, sometimes stubbornness and even occasional defiance, they have made our lives richer, more complete and allow us to be on this wonderful journey together.

We are filled with a deep sense of pride and affection for all of you. You have worked hard in your classes, competed well on the playing fields, offered friendship to your classmates, commitment to your teachers, love to your families and despite occasional challenges; you have so much to be proud of.

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2009 Graduation cont.

- * Wear gloves in winter.
- * Dress neatly.
- * Smile often.
- * Clean up after yourself.
- * Bathe everyday with no exceptions.
- * Wear clean clothes everyday.
- * Use deodorant.
- * Chew your food with your mouth closed.

- * Listen to the boss.
- * Love your friends and family.

In closing, I am borrowing some words from that wise man, Dr. Seuss: ***So, if your name is (students names) you are off to Great Places. Will you succeed? Yes! You will, indeed!***

Jo Ann Simons

News around our campuses



We are once again using the beloved name of our school in Braintree, which staff, students and families favor, **Braintree St. Coletta Day School** or just **St. Coletta's**. While the legal name of our corporation will remain, **Cardinal Cushing Centers, Inc.** our different programs have long enjoyed using names which more aptly describe them. Our school in Hanover will continue to be called **Cardinal Cushing School** and our employment program for adults will continue to be **South Shore Industries**. We have just received license to operate a day habilitation program for adults in our Braintree location and it is called, **Life Opportunities Unlimited**.

Life Opportunities Unlimited will provide an important alternative to individuals who may not be interested in employment or who want to both work and experience other elements that make up a meaningful day. Since funding comes from Medicaid, there will be nursing, occupational speech and physical therapy.

Employee Milestones



During the spring months Anne Matheson and Terri Keenan became certified as Water Safety Instructors. It was a very involved course lasting almost two months. This will be a great asset to the Recreation Program and the Young Athletes Program on Saturdays

High five to Ashley Molinari in her graduation from Bridgewater State

High Five to Cindy Ruszczyk in acquiring her Human Resources Certificate

Next time you are driving down Washington Street in Braintree, you will notice that the old sign, Braintree St. Coletta Day School hangs proudly again directing people to our school. Soon, there will be a new sign, for SSI and Life Opportunities Unlimited (LOU) on the building.

The Recreation Dept & APE Depts. will be working with two prior employees, Kathy Cleary and C.J. Patota offering a training on our Challenger Course with the staff from Hanover Park and Rec. summer staff. This will be the first time we have offered this to people outside of our program.

The Green Team named Environmental Eagles for May 2009! The Award recognizes heroes who soar above and beyond in conserving our environment. Criteria for this award is level of commitment to the environment, impact on the environment,, beneficial waste reduction, originality, and cost-effectiveness. The Team was awarded with 15 household product management wheels.

Program Staff Announcements



Adult Services welcomes Paul Mauro to our new Day Habilitation, Life Opportunities Unlimited. As the director of LOU Paul will work with Leslie Kelly from South Shore Industries to provide comprehensive day supports to over seventy individuals.



Let's welcome Paul to the Cardinal Cushing Family!



Please welcome our new staff who started July 6th. Starting from the left Rosina Bucchianeri — Teachers Assistant/Education, Catherine Martin — Human Development Specialist/Clinical Services, Alison Neipris — Mental Health Clinician/Clinical Services

and Jeanne Corkery — Overnight RN/Health Services

Did you know.....



The Potting Shed received an award?

Our very own Potting Shed located on our Hanover Campus, received the Bronze Award for the Potting Shed/Greenhouse category from the Community Newspapers Best on the South Shore Awards.

Thanks to all who voted and let's get our Bass Café recognized next year!!

Cardinal Cushing Centers is traveling around the World?

While we continue our outreach and relationship-building in the New England area by hosting open houses, attending local resource fairs and conferences such as the Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress and The Federation for Children with Special Needs, the organization is looking to diversify our referral sources. This spring has been a catalyst for our national and international marketing initiatives.

In April Michele Markowitz, Director of Admissions, represented the organization at the annual Schools 2 Know conference in Hamilton, Bermuda. The Schools 2 Know conference is coordinated by Independent Educational Consultant, Tory Dodge. Tory works with families and agencies on the island to find the most appropriate placement for children and young adults in need of services. During Michele's visit in Bermuda she had the opportunity to meet with social workers, educators and an administrator with the Department of Children and Families. She was able to meet with a parent who is searching for the right placement for her daughter. Bermuda's number one source of income is tourism so what better place as there to provide a foundation for that than Cardinal Cushing Center? Whether it is working at a hotel, resort, restaurant or retail shop, our rich vocational offerings will provide young adults with disabilities an opportunity to be part of their community.

Francisco. These groups of consultants work with families to find programs for their children. Our school took part in an information swap during the Therapeutic Boarding School's Session, which was attended by almost 300 consultants. This forum is not only a great way to exhibit our program, but also an opportunity to network with other programs, discuss admission and marketing trends, and learn about new ideas and partnerships.

Along with five programs across New England, we took part in the Independent Educational Consultant's Tour. This tour included consultants from Arizona, Bermuda, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Mexico and Wisconsin. The consultants spent five days traveling to Conn., NH, MA and VT. While in Hanover, they toured the campus and spent an evening at the Sisters' Inn and enjoyed the hospitality of the staff and students at Cushing. Michele continues to receive many thank you notes and hear great feedback about our programs. The visit was a huge success.

The outcomes of these initiatives include two active referrals from Bermuda and Mexico. Both families have been to Cushing for a visit and look forward to possible placements for their daughters. Thanks to the hard work of Deb Lunetta and Peg Collins, our SEVIS application has been submitted to Homeland Security. This document must be processed and approved before we can admit any international students. Our hope is to have this process completed within the next six months.

Michele would like to thank all of the staff and students who have been involved in our recent visits. Although she is the one providing tours and exhibiting at conferences, it is all of you who make Cardinal Cushing the place that it is!

Training Corner

Fish Experience - Human Resources



Leadership and Department Heads recently attended a training program focusing on an approach in moving towards changing our culture to one of trust, respect and feeling good about coming to work. It is called the “Fish Philosophy”. The fish philosophy focuses on 1). Choosing your attitude-we can choose the way we do our work, even if there is no choice about the work itself, what we give in attitude is usually what we get back and finding our smiles 2). Play-have fun while your work, we can be serious about work , we can be serious about work without being serious about ourselves 3). Be There-be fully engaged I your work, be there when individuals and team members need you the most 4). Make Their Day-your positive attitude and sense of play should bring a smile to your face and the faces of the people you interact with! This training is going to be rolled out throughout all management levels of the organization. A committee of staff is also going to be established to go through the training as well. The committee will assist in creating a recognition program using the “Fish Philosophy” and recommend how to roll it our across the Organization.

The real you



Jo Ann Simons — Is our CEO of almost one year. She was born in Lynn and currently resides in Swampscott. She is married to Chet and has two children, Jon age 30 and Emily age 26. In her spare time Jo Ann listens to books on tape alternating between serious to entertaining “trash”. Her favorite play is Rent. When she has time to watch Television her favorite shows are The Office, 30 Rock, and Entourage. Jo Ann’s hobbies include working out, writing and traveling. Her dream vacation involves spending time with family , with a book on the beach. Did you know she was such a sports enthusiast? Her favorite sports teams include any team from Boston, Cornell, Trinity and Wheaton. While attending Trinity College in Connecticut she earned a varsity letter swimming the 200 butterfly on the men’s team! Jo Ann is a graduate of Wheaton College and received her MSW from the University of Connecticut.



Marybeth Hasenfuss — Is our Vice President of Human Resources. She has been with the Cardinal Cushing Community for a year and seven months. Marybeth lives in Hanover with her husband David and their three children twins Matthew & Ainsley and Landon. To add to the family there are four dogs, one Great Dane, two American Bull Dogs, one Chesapeake Bay Retriever and a rescued wild rabbit. She is avid reader of espionage and period novels. Marybeth’s favorite play is Wicked and movie A Summer Place. Her favorite shows are Criminal Minds, CSI and Law & Order. Marybeth’s hobbies are running, sailing, canning and gardening. Marybeth’s favorite sports teams are the Bruins, Red Sox and of course the Patriots. Her favorite vacation sitting on a front poach or beach enjoying a good book or family (including the four legged members).

