

BREAKTHROUGH



improving the lives of adults with autism

SPRING 2014

UPDATE

Bunco was Back!

Ladies, if you didn't come to **Bunco for Breakthrough** on January 17, you missed another great evening! We held the **eighth annual** event at the St. George Greek Orthodox Church. Once again the night was filled with great food (thanks to **Terri Savage**), plenty of wine (thanks to **Chris Moats of Triple C Beverage**) and a fun raffle (thanks to many!!)... and oh yes, numerous rounds of Bunco!!! Everyone enjoyed the evening and we raised almost \$3,000 to provide services for adults with autism. Thank you all for your support... don't miss next year's event!



Take Home the Cellar

On March 8th, Breakthrough supporters returned to St. George Greek Orthodox Church for our **Take Home the Cellar** event. This evening was sponsored by the **Brewer family in memory of Don Brewer** who was a great supporter of Breakthrough and our mission. Close to 100 participants brought one bottle of wine to blind taste and one to contribute to the cellar for the winners of the event, making a "full cellar" of over 50 bottles!! Breakthrough's great friend and partner, **Lori Tucker of WATE-TV**, joined us as our guest MC. The room was transformed by and everyone enjoyed the excellent food prepared by the **Pellissippi State Community Culinary Class** with instructors **Holly Knolling** and **Chef Tyler**. Breakthrough's great friend, **Terri Savage**, again helped out with the ingredients for the special appetizers. Contributions of wine were thanks to **Bob's Liquor & Wine, Ashes Wine and Spirits** and **Triple C Distributing**. A silent auction was held with art work



and jewelry created by generous artists who donated a portion of their proceeds to Breakthrough...thank you **Michael Capps, Marty Hancock, Dawn Jones** and **Marianne Woodside**! Breakthrough also appreciates those who couldn't join us but invested in our evening by sending in donations: **Mary and Richard Antonucci, Lou and Joanne Arpino, John and Sandi Downing, John and Sherra Gillespie, Diana Gossett, Sharon and Dick Hammat, Mark and Laura Heinz, Janet and Charles Hill, Herb and Elise Jacobs, Richard and Mary Johnson, David and Sandy Martin, Tom and Suzanne Scott, Gina Tate, William Vines III** and **Pete and Lisa Xiques**. Breakthrough was able to raise close to **\$6000** thanks to you!

Upcoming Breakthrough Events:

- **Run/Walk for Autism – April 5th**

Update in our next newsletter!

- **Golf Tournament – Monday, September 15th, 2014**

Mark your calendars...if you would like to be a sponsor or participate, please contact John Thomas at 865-329-1230. AND a BIG "SO SORRY" for not thanking John Thomas in particular in our last newsletter for all his work last year and EVERY year to make this tournament such a success for us!!!

- **Parent/Conservator Support Group – Coming Soon!!**

Look for information on a new support group for parents and conservators of the people we serve. We'll be sending out information next month. If you would like to be on the distribution list, please send your contact information to Beth Ritchie at earitchie@breakthroughknoxville.com

Puzzle Pieces Back at Walgreens Stores!!!

We hope you have seen our puzzle pieces at your local Walgreens store! **April** is **Autism Awareness** month and in

recognition of this, Walgreens agreed once again to sell our paper puzzle pieces in

all **40 Walgreens** stores in the greater Knoxville area.

One hundred percent of the donations go to Breakthrough.

If you haven't already done so, please stop by your local Walgreens store and purchase a puzzle piece to help Breakthrough raise important funds and invest in our programming! Thank you for your support and **THANK YOU Walgreens** for all you do for adults with disabilities!!



Executive Director's Update

We need your voice.

I recently met Violet, a sweet and quiet young woman who has been diagnosed with an intellectual disability and autism. Violet is doing well in her new home, with lots of support from Breakthrough's amazing staff, however it is hard for her to make friends or to tolerate a roommate for long. Violet does not have any family that supports her, thus Breakthrough has become her only family. We are very lucky to have her in our lives, and we work hard every-day to serve her needs.

The other day, a staff member came into my office, and asked this heart breaking question:

Can we go to a food bank?

It seems as if Violet runs out of money every month due to the cost of her living in an apartment alone with just her Social Security check funding her living expenses. Breakthrough now has to help support her financially as well. You see, even though Violet qualifies for Waiver services through the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, these funds are used to pay for the staff support she receives from the dedicated direct support professionals we employ around the clock. Thus her food stamps and Social Security income is all she has to support her living needs. So since her money runs out by the middle of the month now due to her current situation, our staff are looking for ways to make up the difference.

Oftentimes adults with autism find it difficult to connect with people, and coupled with her

intellectual disability progress is slow in getting her skill level up to where it needs to be to sustain a roommate relationship. These are common issues to Breakthrough. The adults we serve have so many amazing attributes and talents they love to share, however we find it part of our duty to help these wonderful people increase their skills they struggle with. Their voices are often silent, but that does not mean they do not speak to us with their hearts and emotion.

We need your help as well.

Every dollar you give to Breakthrough supports each person we serve in many ways. Your support could go to helping make sure we have the nutrition we need, or it could go to helping pay electricity, or rent, or even sustain the level of direct support someone may need in their home or in the community when the state cuts their funding level. Every circumstance is different for the sweet people we serve, and we know your circumstance varies as well.

Would you please consider donating \$50, \$100, \$500, or \$1000 to help some of the people we serve like Violet? For 15 years Breakthrough has built a continuum of services to help those among us that need our support. We could not do this without your help. Thank you for your voice, thoughts, prayers, and support.

Marco Tomat
Executive Director

PLEASE remember to sign up to help Breakthrough by Shopping at Kroger!!!



WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP!!! Breakthrough is participating in Kroger's Community Rewards Program AND if you **enroll your Kroger Plus Card** in this program with Breakthrough as the benefiting agency, we can earn up to \$8,000 a quarter. **WE ARE NO WHERE NEAR TO THE MAXIMUM WE CAN RECEIVE!!** There is no cost to you, no impact on your purchases, no personal information traded by Kroger. . .just a wonderful opportunity for Breakthrough to earn much needed funds while you purchase your

groceries!!! **Please go to www.krogercommunityrewards.com** to enroll your Kroger Plus Card at Kroger's secure website (top right corner). All linked Kroger Plus Cards in the household will begin earning funds for Breakthrough. If you already have an account, just **log in and choose Breakthrough as the non-profit of your choice**. If you do not have an account, it will take you a few minutes to set one up. After doing so (by just inputting your name, address, rewards card number), you can then link your reward number to Breakthrough. Setting up an account also gives you the opportunity to attach online coupons automatically to your rewards number, schedule prescription refills and other user friendly Kroger activities IF you choose to do so. There is NO contact from Kroger once this information is submitted. It will take approximately 7-10 business days for the card to be activated. Please consider helping us earn funds when you shop. . .easy for you. . .so necessary for providing services to our clients!!! **If you would like help with this process, please contact Beth Ritchie at 247-0065 ext. 25 or earitchie@breakthroughknoxville.com and she will be happy to assist you!** Thank you as always for your support!!!

Speaking of shopping... do you shop on Amazon?

AmazonSmile is a program where Amazon donates .5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organizations selected by its customers. Please set this link up on your computers, iPad, cell phones etc. so that the next time you have an urge to shop, you can go directly to **smile.amazon.com** and invest in Breakthrough while you shop to your heart's content!! **<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/62-1834568>** . We thank you!!!

Chairman's Corner

With the arrival of spring, revitalization is in the air. This is especially true at Breakthrough. The changes we made at the beginning of the year are now providing some noticeable benefits. In the spirit of the season, Breakthrough is continuing to grow, as well as working hard to improve our programs for the benefit of the people we serve.

Our Executive Director, Marco Tomat, is making great strides in transitioning from a new director to being fully indoctrinated in the spirit of Breakthrough. While there are always new challenges in any transition, Marco and his team are putting new systems in place while evaluating our current programs. This fast transition would not be possible without his supportive management team, bolstered by the addition of Beth Ritchie, who provided the necessary link to the philosophy that created Breakthrough and her knowledge of the world of Autism. The entire team has done a great job.

With respect to our specific programs, I can proudly report that our direct service managers are using this transitional time to make improvements in their areas. On the residential front, Jason Riddle has restructured the supervisory staff to allow for better communication and oversight. This should result in improved programming for our residents. In Day Services, we have added a new manager, Arnetrise Tedder, who is quickly adjusting to the position. We continue to see positive steps towards better programming for the people we serve. In Supported Employment, our achievements are exceeding all expectations. While much has been written, let

me stress the appreciation of the board for all the efforts made by Cynthia Buback, the director of our employment program and the will and determination of Beth Ritchie, whose tireless effort helped see this dream to reality. Our R&R program continues to have new and exciting activities for our adults to help them enjoy Saturdays. Deana Rutherford does an excellent job of planning these activities. The board extends a special thanks to Angie Davidson, our Staff Development Director, who stepped in during the Day Services transition and kept everything working like clockwork. We appreciate the hard work of the administrative staff, welcome our new Quality Assurance Coordinator and Accounting Supervisor and applaud the daily work done by the direct support staff.

The board is continuing the update of the strategic plan for Breakthrough. Over the next three months, we will finalize our plan and put into motion the steps that will be required to achieve these goals. Over the last six months, we have made great progress in streamlining our operations. Now, we need to look at our facilities and bring them up to the standard of excellence that we expect for the adults we serve.

It continues to be an exciting time for Breakthrough. Our challenge is to take advantage of the hope and promise that spring puts in all of us and continue our quest to meet our fundamental goal, "To Improve the Lives of Adults with Autism." With everyone's help, we'll continue to make this a reality.

John Lawrence
Chairman of the Board

Breakthrough Board of Directors:

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Breakthrough Staff:

Marco Tomat
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Beth Ritchie
Assistant Executive Director

Cynthia Buback
Director of Supported Employment

Sarah Bufton
Accounting Supervisor

Angie Davidson
Director of Staff and Staff Development

Lola Norbury
Quality Assurance Coordinator

Jason Riddle
Residential Director

Deana Rutherford
Director of Personal Assistance Services and R&R

Emily Sturgeon
Executive Administrator

Arnetrise Tedder
Day Services Director

Breakthrough Phase III Construction

In the last newsletter, Breakthrough announced that we had broken ground for our Phase III HUD construction on our property on Thurman Lane. Well, the weather has been kind to construction (if not us!) and the buildings are up, have roofs and are ready for siding!! The contractor is estimating on time (if not early) completion, and we are beginning preparations for residents. If you are or know someone interested in one of the apartment units, please contact our office at 247-0065. You must be **low income** and be able to live with **limited staff support** to qualify. We're excited about the opportunity to provide this long requested service!!

P.S. This grant does not include as much funding as previous ones, so any **appliance or furniture stores** that could help with our needs would be greatly appreciated!!!



Thank you Randstad Staffing!!

Breakthrough would like to thank two locations of **Randstad Staffing** for their donation of desk and client chairs. We were fortunate to “hear” (thank you **Terri Drummey** and **Angie Smith!**) that Randstad was purchasing new chairs and was willing to donate their old chairs to a nonprofit. Breakthrough was quick to reply and happily became the owner of over two dozen chairs that fit our needs perfectly! Thanks to the **Cedar Bluff office** and **Branch Manager Lukas Donough** and the **Lovell Road office** and **Branch Manager Amanda Bowerman**. We appreciate your generosity... PLEASE partner with **Randstad** for any staffing needs you may have as an added thank you!

Project SEARCH at UTMHC begins!!!

As mentioned in previous newsletters, **Breakthrough**, in conjunction with **Knoxville Area Employment Consortium (KAEC)**, received a planning and implementation grant from the **Trinity Health Foundation** for a proposal to develop the **first adult model Project SEARCH sites in the state of Tennessee**. Project SEARCH was developed at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center to train young adults with disabilities to meet a need for reliable employees and has achieved an **80% employment** rate for its graduates

Breakthrough is proud to announce that on February 3rd our interns started their training at the **University of Tennessee Medical Center**. Excitement and enthusiasm has filled the air from everyone involved! Danny Matthews, instructor/coordinator, commented, “The team has been very impressed with the progress of all the interns, but an especially impressive performance has been seen so far from Jesse Smith. He has been learning food prep tasks in the hospital cafeteria kitchen. He has proven to be a quick study. His job coach has successfully



faded for up to 90 minutes after just a week of work. He will be taking on new and more complicated tasks over the next few weeks!” Many thanks to the hard work of our staff for making it happen (**Cynthia Buback, Danny Matthews, Kellie Helton, Sarah Collier and Nancy Johnson**), our liaison at the hospital, **Sandy Cunningham**, for her knowledge, coordination and patience, the **families** for working with us to ensure success in such a short timeframe and especially the **interns** for their dedication and excellent work ethic!! GREAT JOB everyone!

Thank you to our Donors!

We are extremely grateful to those who continue to invest in the future of Breakthrough and those we serve! In addition to those mentioned previously, Breakthrough has received donations from the following since our last newsletter:

The Brett Bagley Family	Ms. Helen Jernigan	UPS, Ken Haley and coworkers	Mr. James Jones <i>in honor of Kathy Flynn</i>
Mr. Gregory Baker	Mr. Ronald Koksall	Mrs. Diane Vieira	Lenior City Animal Clinic P.C. <i>in honor of Gale Montgomery</i>
Mr. Gordon Ball	Mr. and Mrs. William Long	Mr. Robert Watson	Ms. Sherron Long <i>a meaningful cause for Andrea White</i>
Bank of America United Way Campaign, Ann Brookshire	Mr. David Loven	Mr. and Mrs. Dan Whitson	Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Manuel <i>in honor of Rick and Emily Ann Norris</i>
The Matt Brewer Family	Mrs. Mary Macko	The Matt Whitson Family	Mrs. Gale Montgomery <i>in memory of Marjorie Council</i>
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Brizzolara	Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Mays	Mr. and Mrs. Joe Ben Wilson	Mrs. Gale Montgomery <i>in honor of Luke Koksall</i>
Ms. Judi Brookshire	Mr. and Mrs. Rick Norris		Mr. and Mrs. Allan Sbur <i>in honor of John and Timothy Ritchie</i>
Ms. Patty Carney	Mr. William Pflager	Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Aiken <i>in honor of John Ryan Lee</i>	Mrs. Francis Tucker <i>in honor of John Thomas</i>
The Clayton Family Foundation	Mr. and Mrs. Pete Rowlett	Ms. Kay Brookshire and Mr. Tom Beehan <i>in honor of Luke Koksall</i>	
Ms. Linda Davidson	Mr. and Mrs. Jim Russ	Ms. Lois Brookshire <i>in honor of Luke Koksall</i>	
Ms. JoAnne Doty	Ms. Becky Russ	Ms. Dianne Caldwell <i>in honor of John Butler and Ron Koksall</i>	
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Eskew	The Rob Russ Family	Ms. Lucille Griffio <i>in honor of Andrea White</i>	
Drs. Fred and Catherine Grello	Mr. and Mrs. John Sheridan	Mr. and Mrs. Mark Grisar <i>in honor of William Verplanck</i>	
The Randall Hampson Family	Mr. Duncan Smith	Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ince <i>in honor of John and Timothy Ritchie</i>	
Fidelity Charitable, Clay Dukes	Mr. and Mrs. Don Snidow		
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Mr. Gary Helton	Ms. Jean Stanish		
Mr. and Mrs. William Hood	Mr. John Thomas		
Houghton Mifflin Matching Gift Program, Jean Stanish	Mr. and Mrs. John Thomaston		
	Dr. Mark Turner		

In-Kind donations:

Mr. and Mrs. Sam Carnes
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