



Supporting People with Disabilities Since 1934

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Former Project SEARCH intern, Ben, is interviewed about his success story. Have you ever thought about how dreams of getting a job are met for young adults with disabilities once they age out of secondary education?

Internships Lead to Jobs

Chip Brewster, Roving Reporter for Fox6's Real Milwaukee, recently visited ProHealth Care Waukesha Memorial Hospital to learn more about our successful program, Project SEARCH. The hospital is one of Easter Seals three Project SEARCH sites in Southeastern Wisconsin and one of 300 sites worldwide. It is an exciting transition program for young adults with disabilities that offers internships within a business that immerses them in real work situations. Over nine months, interns work in three 10 week rotations with a combination of classroom instruction and career exploration to learn marketable transferable job skills.

Chip interviewed Project SEARCH graduate, Ben, who lives with Asperger's Syndrome, which can inhibit social interaction and verbal communication skills -- two things necessary in most workplaces.

"When I was with Project SEARCH, I worked in different positions and different departments of the hospital," explained Ben. "Anyone with a disability like mine...should have a program like this. It gives us a chance to help us to understand where we can go and what can we do."

Through his rotation in the distribution and central service receiving departments, Ben was offered full-time employment.

"Without it, I might still be living with my parents or living in a group home. Thanks to the employment I got at the Project SEARCH, I'm able to live on my own in an apartment. So it's really cool." - Ben

"We focus so intensely on a day to day basis, learning everything we need to be successful in a job," explains Collette Cottreau, Project SEARCH Instructor.

Chip also interviewed current Project SEARCH intern, Rachel, who lives with autism. She is the first intern to be placed in a wound care rotation, a responsibility and challenge she was eager to accept. "Just because you have a disability, doesn't mean you shouldn't get jobs. People should not treat you differently," said Rachel.

Other Easter Seals Project SEARCH sites include Children's Hospital of Wisconsin and Froedtert Hospital. Two more sites in southeast Wisconsin are also being considered.

Over 80% of our graduates have found community based employment in the last five years. Maybe we should start calling it Project SUCCESS!



Current Project SEARCH intern, Rachel, would like a job at the hospital or to be a reporter at Real Milwaukee when she graduates. Watch out, Chip!

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Easter Seals at its founding has been about the protecting and advancing the lives of children in our communities from diseases like polio to developmental delays to autism. We know the first five years of life are critical to a child's success. But what about the moments before a child is born? What about the impact of emotional, physical abuse and neglect? What trajectory will that put a child on for their future?

That's what I heard at a meeting last April convened by the Thriving Waukesha County Alliance with 20 colleagues who focus on the needs of children and families. Safe Babies Healthy Families was in the homes of children who were at high risk of being abused. They were in the homes of an expectant mother, helping her to understand how her health impacted her child's health. I heard that Safe Babies Healthy Families could not

continue on as they were currently. Parents seeking help were being turned away due to a lack of capacity. Babies born drug-addicted were not getting help. Families were falling through the cracks. The agency needed a partner.

So, we talked, we thought, we met and we envisioned. We connected Easter Seals long standing tradition of protecting and advancing the cause of children with Safe Babies Healthy Families' mission to end the cycle of violence in families. We embraced Easter Seals commitment to "Make the First Five Count." With Safe Babies Healthy Families as part of Easter Seals, we will not only Make the First Five Year Count, we will help Moms to make the first months of life count for better birth outcomes, healthy babies and healthy families.

So, on January 1, Safe Babies Healthy Families became part of Easter Seals. Any merger is not without risk, challenge and potential opportunities. I want to thank the board members of Easter Seals and Safe Babies Healthy Families for their work and willingness to embrace all children so they are safe and healthy. There are many children still at-risk. With your support and your help, we can serve more.

Bob Glowacki, CEO
Easter Seals Southeast Wisconsin

A Mother's Story

At 22, I was a senior at Michigan State University with a 3.8 GPA. I was a star student in sociology and a McNair scholar who was seemingly well on my way to an elite PhD program. So why was it that just five years later, I was a clinically depressed, unemployed, college dropout and soon-to-be single mother of twins? After a lifetime of experiencing more downs than ups, this was my lowest low. So I thought a lot about what brought me to that particular point in my life.

My childhood was filled with the devastation of abuse, neglect, bullying, poverty, divorce, and domestic violence. From a very early age, I found refuge from my home life at school. Not only was lunch my only decent meal of the day, but the classroom was the one place in my whole world where I felt confident—where I was happy. While my teachers probably knew my family was poor due to the condition of my clothes and inability to bring in the needed school supplies, I didn't show any of the normal signs of abuse or neglect. I never had a sudden drop in grades or multiple absences. I never acted out, and there wasn't a single detention or suspension on my record. As a young girl, I clung to the belief that education would be my ticket out of the life that I was born into. That was the one avenue available to me and I planned on using it.



"I know a person's past, especially events from childhood, can have lingering effects for decades afterward."

I fooled myself into believing that I had escaped my past. When I went to my first prenatal appointment and found out I would be having twins, I struggled to believe that anything positive could come out of it. I just felt like I had hit rock-bottom. I knew from a very young age that I wanted to have children and give them a childhood a thousand times better than my own. By becoming a single mother, I was not off to a very good start.

That is the number one reason why I sought help from Safe Babies Healthy Families, and that is the number one reason I am grateful for all that I have received from the program. My case manager has developed a very personal, yet professional relationship with both my children and me. She met the babies less than 24 hours after they were born. We have been meeting regularly since then. I refuse to allow my children to carry the burden of my mistakes, and I am determined to stop the cycle of poverty, abuse, neglect, and mental health issues that plagued so many members of my family. Every day the Safe Babies Healthy Families program brings me closer to being the one to change my children's would-be fate.



45% of abused children are under the age of five. Please consider a gift to help us make the first five years of a child's life safe and give ALL children the best start possible!

Your \$100 gift will provide one month of parenting support for a high risk family to break the cycle of abuse and neglect or one hour of autism therapy for a child to give them an opportunity to succeed alongside their peers.



Safe Babies Healthy Families and Make The First Five Count Ensure Our Community's Children Get the Best Start Possible!

Every year more than one million children will enter school with an undiagnosed developmental delay. As a leading provider of child developmental services, our Make The First Five Count program focuses on children's five key growth areas during the critical years before children start kindergarten. We want to partner with parents in raising a healthy and happy child and ensure that all children start school with the right skills to succeed alongside their peers. In combining forces with Easter Seals, the Safe Babies Healthy Families program will be able to reach even MORE at-risk children and families, providing them with the critical support and help they need.



Event Highlights

7th Annual THOUGHT LEADERS LUNCHEON

Keynote speaker
Robert Swan



“LEADERSHIP ON THE EDGE”

Robert Swan entertained, educated and shared valuable lessons on leadership and team building he learned firsthand through his experiences in some of the world's most hostile environments.

Presented by:



Schaus Family Fund



Business Partner Appreciation Breakfast Business Partners of the Year

Cream City Casseroles
Citizens Bank - Mukwonago
Elmbrook Schools District
Lakeland Supply, Inc.
Roundy's Supermarkets



In celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October, we welcomed many of our employment partners to our annual appreciation breakfast at our LilyWorks Conference & Catering Center in Waukesha. We couldn't do what we do without the time, energy and support of all of our business partners!



Breakfast with Santa Workforce Holiday Party

It was a pleasure to host our Birth to Three participants and their families at our annual holiday party! This fun-filled morning event gave more than 100 children and family members a special morning of breakfast, family photos, cookie decorating, crafts, games, and a visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Thank you to our generous sponsors **Harley-Davidson Retiree Club, iCare, CVS Health, Walmart West Allis and Meijer's Wauwatosa.**

There was plenty of holiday spirit at the Workforce Training Center when participants, staff and **United Way volunteers** gathered to celebrate the season! Participants were able to choose some new clothes donated by **NewThreads of Hope.** The festivities included a dance party with a DJ and a visit from Santa.



BATTLE OF THE BADGES: THE FIGHT FOR AUTISM

Now that's a big check! The Battle of The Badges: The Fight for Autism, an annual boxing fundraiser with police and fire personnel, raised \$66,385 for our Autism Program. This donation helps us support families who otherwise couldn't afford therapy. We are so grateful for this generous support of Mount Pleasant Police Officer James Kelley, his wife, Lisa, and the many first responders, volunteers and donors for their leadership and generosity.

Mark your calendar for October 8th for the next Fight for Autism!



Event Highlights

Safe Babies Healthy Families Sweetheart Fashion Show & Luncheon

Thank you to everyone who supported this amazing event! This perfect combination of fashion and compassion was enjoyed by more than 300 guests. \$71,000 was raised to provide at-risk babies, toddlers and their families the assistance they need to live a life free from abuse and neglect.



Honorary Event Chairs

Susan Kim and Ildiko Huppertz

Posh



GE Healthcare

Couture



John Bosbous

Designer

Onnie Leach Smith and Kim Preston



Christine Howard Associated Bank



Jean Schramka



Classic

BMO Harris Bank • Children's Community Health Plan • First Bank Financial Centre
Interstate Sealant & Concrete • M3 Insurance
Skiin • WaterStone Bank

Lead the Way

Bryant & Stratton College • Swick Technologies
MAFSI

Community Partners

Pro Healthcare • Kohl's Cares • United Way
Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County
Waukesha County Community Development
Block Grant

Fashion, Styling, Printing and Production

Faye's • Hal's Harley Davidson • Stan's Fit For Your Feet • Neroli Salon & Spa • Crossmark Graphics
Exciting Events



Family Fun for Everyone!
Saturday, April 2 at
BMO HARRIS BRADLEY CENTER!

BATTLE OF THE BADGES

Support our Local Heroes & Our Autism and Veteran Services!

2:30 pm: Battle of the Badges Game: Law Enforcement vs. Firefighters

7 pm: Milwaukee Admirals Hockey Game

Post-Game: Concert with Dennis DeYoung with the music of Styx

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Paula at
paulas@eastersealswise.com or (414) 963-5934
<http://es/easterseals.com/site/Calendar?id=49369&view=Detail>

*Interested in forming
a team for
Walk With Me?*

*Attend the Kick-Off
Breakfast to meet our
Ambassadors and learn
more about becoming a
Team Captain.*

**Easter Seals Southeast Wisconsin
Walk With Me Kick-Off Breakfast!**
Wednesday, April 28, 2016 - 7:30-9:00 am
(Check-in begins at 7:00 am)

ManpowerGroup, Inc.
100 Manpower Place
Milwaukee, WI 53212

RSUP by April 23, 2015 to Paula at:
414-963-5934 or paulas@eastersealswise.com

Fun in the Sun!



*Splashing in the
pool, singing silly
songs, making new
friends...*

**Summer
Respite Camp
time is almost
here!**

Camp Sunburst (ages 22-70) is a week long camp held at Wil-O-Way Grant, June 13-17.

Summer Respite Camps (ages 7-21) are offered at three locations:

Waukesha: Schuetze Rec Center – 1120 Baxter St.

South Milwaukee: Wil-O-Way Grant, 207 Lake Dr.

Wauwatosa: Wil-O-Way Underwood, 10602 Underwood Pkwy.

Reservations are based on a first come, first serve, basis! Go to www.easterseals.com/wi-se/our-programs/camping-recreation/ for more information.

CAMP YELLOW RIBBON

August 14-18, 2016



Military children ages 7-14 with a parent who has been, is currently or will be deployed are welcome to join us at this week long overnight summer camp. Go to www.easterseals.com/wi-se/our-programs/camping-recreation/camp-yellow-ribbon.html for more information.

Meet our Walk With Me Ambassadors!



JACQUIE MADDIE ROMAN TAMISHA VICTOR ZACH

Save the Date!

Wednesday, June 29th



**LET'S
FLAMINGLE**

...at our 10th annual Walk With Me!

Last year more than 500 people participated in our walk and helped raise more than \$94,000 to support our Easter Seals programs!

Walk With Me 2016 at the Milwaukee County Zoo!

www.walkwithme.org/milwaukee | 5 p.m. Registration

For more information, please contact Paula at (414) 963-5934 or paulas@eastersealswise.com.



Easter Seals Southeast Wisconsin
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Would you like to receive our quarterly newsletter electronically? Contact Kari Miller with your name, e-mail address and request at karim@eastersealswise.com today!



www.eastersealswise.com



Chris Can Be Your Next Great Employee!

Experience and Skilled in:

- Stocking
- Dishwashing
- Assembly/Packaging
- Cleaning
- Detail oriented and organized
- Quick learner/Focused worker

Employment Desires:

- Cleaning
- Dishwashing
- Quality control
- Animal caretaking
- Hosting

If you know a business that needs an employee like Chris, please call Henry at (262) 953-2240.



Last year, Easter Seals received more than \$130,000 in funding through the United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County to help support our Workforce Training Center.



Donate today and make a difference for the future!