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# Happy New Year

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# PDS Newsletter

Winter 2009/2010  
Dedicated to the fantastic staff of Pacific Diversified Services

## Blue Sky Thinking from Executive Director Lisa Giraldi



I just realized that this is our first newsletter in a year! We have been very busy at Pacific Diversified Services (PDS) - just working diligently to keep this ship afloat during these stormy financial times! However, no matter what the weather report says, we are practicing “blue sky thinking” here at PDS.

PDS has used the recession as an opportunity to be resourceful and proactive, and to come up with fresh ideas to reinvent our services. For the first time in 19 years we expanded to include more wonderful young men and women with developmental disabilities to experience all that life has to offer. Having these new clients in our program has invigorated our staff members and breathed life into our program.

Sallie, who is 34 years old, just got her first real job making above minimum wage at Woodland's Market. I can't tell you how rewarding it is to watch Sallie glow with pride as she dons her Woodland's t-shirt and confidently struts into the market, clocking in and greeting her co-workers as just one of the gang. In her spare time she is being supported by PDS to take dance and art classes at College of Marin and to make friends and have fun with them at restaurants and at the movies.



Sallie at work at Woodlands Market

Next, PDS has embarked on a campaign to make health a priority with our aging and overweight clients. We have decided to incorporate fitness and nutrition into all of our employment and community inclusion activities. We are working with a wonderful woman named LouAnn Schaffino Kaehler to run monthly weight loss support groups modeled after the television program “The Biggest Loser.” Wells Fargo Bank generously donated the meeting space, and our clients are excitedly putting LouAnn's tips and information into action to get healthy and lose weight!

Lastly, our services have become even more innovative and far reaching, because we are producing seminars and a documentary film, intended to educate and inspire people to look at individuals with developmental disabilities with a fresh perspective and to open their hearts and minds to new possibilities for this very deserving population.

Our motivational seminars and documentary film will highlight all of the activities and success of PDS, addressing the unique needs and enormous potential of people with development disabilities, challenging the public's perceptions and changing their preconceived, often outdated, ideas. Pacific Diversified Services will make a tangible difference in the lives of the 28 individuals we serve, while also influencing countless others.

Recently, Guy and Sallie partnered with the PDS administrators to do a 3-hour presentation to graduate students at San Francisco State University. Guy and Sallie touched the hearts of the audience, many of whom said their inspirational stories brought tears to their eyes.

We have much to be grateful for. It is our sincere hope that, with creativity and the collaborative relationships we have with those of you receiving this newsletter, we can all continue to make “blue skies” for the developmentally disabled a reality.

Happy New Year to all of you, and thank you for your support.

Lisa Giraldi - Co-founder and Executive Director, Pacific Diversified Services



Lisa, Shirley and Sallie out on the town

Pride  
Power  
Prestige  
Partnership  
Pay  
Diversity  
Diligence  
Dignity  
Dedication  
Determination  
Self-Sufficiency  
Strength  
Self-Determination  
Satisfaction  
Support



## PDS Client News

### Fundraising Update

Because the state of California has made massive cuts to services and funding for people with developmental disabilities, PDS has made concerted efforts to solicit contributions to make sure that the tightly knit web of support we have woven to help our clients maintain decent standards of life does not unravel.



It is extremely heartening to know that the people and organizations recognized in this newsletter value the contributions of developmentally disabled people, and chose to support them to be productive and welcomed citizens of our society.

Some may not be recognized in this newsletter as it may go to print before we can add your name. But thank you to everyone: those who have given and those who will give in the future. We need you and appreciate you now more than ever.

### To Donate:

By Telephone: 415.459.6510

Via PayPal on our website  
www.pdsmarin.org

Send a check to:  
911R Irwin Street  
San Rafael, California 94901



Erica Gori



Sallie Harrison



Mike Mauro

It has been very exciting for PDS to bring some new young blood into our program! We are thrilled that since holiday time last year we have introduced the following new people into PDS:

**Erica Gori** A friendly, responsible woman with a warm heart and artistic talent. Erica is working at Pasta Pomodoro and Doodlebug.

**Sallie Harrison** Sallie has been described as a "go-getter" by all who know her. She is very ambitious and a cooperative, enthusiastic person. Sallie is working at Woodland's Market.

**Mike Mauro** Mike is a charming man who is a sports enthusiast and an all around fun guy. Mike has great retail experience and is ready, willing and able to work as soon as possible.

**Anne Meeker** A kind, loving person with a passion for animals. Anne is exercising at Gold's Gym and wants to find a job working with animals.

**John Paul Sitzmann** John Paul is an athletic, capable young man. He is eager to work and willing to try almost anything. For now he is very interested in going to the city and on other "day trips" and working out at the YMCA.



Anne Meeker



John Paul Sitzmann



Please check out the PDS website. This newsletter and the PDS website were designed by Lisa Keene at quickandcleanwebsites.com

[www.pdsmarin.org](http://www.pdsmarin.org)



Ben Ashe



Corinne Amare



Darlan Cash



Gary Kaplan



Gerry O'Reilly



Justin Burke



Claire Marana



David Coe



Jarrod Allen



Megan Rincon



Scott Blood



Scott Brandeberry



Shirley Chao



Victoria Diego

Our team of staff members is the best we have ever had. They are incredibly compassionate and fun. I wish you could have seen them all dressed up and dancing with our clients to Michael Jackson tunes at our annual Halloween party. You could not tell who was a client and who was a staff person because we were all just friends having a great time and enjoying each other's company.

We particularly want to mention **Jarrod Allen** who has gone above and beyond the call of duty this year. We interviewed Jarrod in 2006 when he was just 18 years old. Client **Don Mangrubang** hit it off with Jarrod right away and hired him on the spot. What a score! Jarrod is a favorite of our clients for his patience, reliability and unflappable personality. He has taken almost everyone to their work parties and is always a friend that they can count on as a dance partner and someone to hang out with. Jarrod and **Guy** took an intensive lifeguard training course over two weekends at Marinwood Pool, that was more tiring for Jarrod than it was for Guy! Jarrod plans to teach Special Education and Physical Education. He is going to school at Laney College. He plays classical and jazz piano and is a superb athlete who competed in track and football and coaches basketball. We are fortunate to have such a kind and talented young man working for PDS.

We would also like to introduce **David Coe**. David became friends with several of our clients through the YMCA and called PDS to see if we would ever consider hiring him. We just happened to have a position open, and we were glad to employ someone who had such earnest and natural inclinations toward this profession. David loves to play basketball and has a girlfriend in the Philippines.

Meet **Claire Marana**. Claire studied neuroscience at Wellesley College. She is also a professional swim teacher. Claire adds a young, vibrant presence to PDS with an intelligent, professional approach.

All of the rest of the staff from last year's newsletter are still with PDS. We have become a great team, all working to uphold our high standards and stay true to the values of inclusion and dignity that drive PDS.



"Doctor" Jarrod with his faithful "nurses"

[www.pdsmarin.org](http://www.pdsmarin.org)

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