

THE JUNCTION

The Public Service Grant Newsletter

Fall Issue 2010

Volume II, Issue 2

City Government and Non-Profit Organizations Meeting the Needs of the Community

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Greetings from the Editor:



Welcome to the Fall issue of the Public Service Grant Newsletter. These past few months have been busy ones for the Grant Compliance Unit. Contracts for 2009-10 Fiscal Year were closed, with the receipt of final reports and issuance of final payments. The FY 2011 PSG contracts have been prepared and most have been distributed to the grant recipients for signature. Nancy Kirts provided orientations for the 2010-11 Fiscal Year on October 21 and October 28. Speakers included Roslyn Mixon Phillips, Mayor's Office Liaison and Director of the Recreation & Community Services Department and Lawsikia Hodges, Esq. from the Office of General Counsel.

This year \$2,452,217 in Public Service Grant dollars have been awarded among 46 non-profit organizations serving Duval County. Among those 46 organizations, 58 of their programs are aided through PSG contracts for services. New recipients for the year are the Downtown Ecumenical Services Council, The Family Nurturing Center, Project SOS, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Inc., and Vision Is Priceless. The contracts are administered by Human Services Planners, Sue Andrews, Sandy Arts and John Snyder, under the leadership of Nancy Kirts, Assistant Management Improvement Officer.

The Grant Compliance Unit will conduct a Focus Group on Wednesday, December 1, 2010, facilitated by Sandy Arts, on the subject of the FY 2011 PSG electronic application process. The meeting will be held at Pine Castle, 4911 Spring Park Road from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. We need your assistance and feedback in improving the electronic application process which was inaugurated in our last application cycle to develop the FY 2011 application documents.

This issue highlights two rising stars from the North Florida School of Special Education's Adult Student Transition Program. Since the article was written, one of the students has secured a paid job and the other is thriving at the University of North Florida. Linda Gilberto, a grant writer for the North Florida School of Special Education, submitted the stories. Thanks also to Nancy Chappell for her success story about the Independent Living for Adult Blind (ILAB) and how they utilize their Public Service Grant dollars to enhance the lives of their visually impaired program participants.

Please continue to send your articles and ideas for publication to The Junction. The goal is to publish the newsletter quarterly. You may keep up-to-date on news and events of the Public Service Grant Council and Public Service Grant Program by visiting our website.

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- Gwen Yates, Vice-Chairperson
- Juan Diaz
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- Ronald Mallett
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- Nancy Kirts, Assistant Management Improvement Officer
- Sue Andrews, Human Services Planner II
- Sandy Arts, Human Services Planner II
- John Snyder, Human Services Planner II



Dates to Remember:

November 2010

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|-----------------|---|
| November 8 | PSG Council Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – Noon, Ed Ball Bldg., 8thFloor |
| November 11 | Veteran's Day - City Hall Closed |
| November 15 | FY 2010 Annual Reports Are Due |
| November 15 | FY 2011 Monthly Financial Reports Due |
| November 25, 26 | Thanksgiving Holidays - City Hall Closed |

December 2010

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| December 1 | Focus Group - PSG Electronic Application,
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Pine Castle, 4911 Spring Park Road |
| December 15 | FY 2011 Monthly Financial Reports Due |
| December 21 | PSG Council Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – Noon, Ed Ball Building, 8thFloor |
| December 24, 27 | Christmas Holidays - City Hall Closed |
| December 31 | New Year's Holiday – City Hall Closed |

Please visit our web site at:

[http://www.coj.net/Departments/Recreation+and+Community+Services/Grant+Compliance+Office/
default.htm](http://www.coj.net/Departments/Recreation+and+Community+Services/Grant+Compliance+Office/default.htm)



I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestioned ability of a man to elevate his life by conscious endeavor. Henry David Thoreau

Two NFSSE Graduates Take the Road to Success

Helping students to live with independence and self-confidence is what the North Florida School of Special Education (NFSSE) is all about. Two of its 2010 graduates are great examples of how different routes can lead to that goal.



Rachel just started at NFSSE last year, referred by the ARC of Jacksonville. She needed the work experience required for admission to their On Campus Transition (OCT) program run at the University of North Florida. This year she successfully completed several internships at local businesses and honed her independent living skills. The result is that Rachel has been accepted into the OCT program starting this Fall. One of the job tasks she enjoyed the most while at NFSSE was assembling children's meals at Chick-fil-A, but she excelled at all her worksites.

Markus has been part of NFSSE's vocational program for 4 years. During his volunteer internships he has worked at a number of local businesses, but Publix allowed him to try several different roles. His character, hard work and friendly spirit were noticed by the store manager who offered him a paid part-time job as a Front Service Associate. That job started several months ago and he's already earned his first raise!



All of NFSSE's older students (ages 18-22) travel to supervised volunteer worksites 2 or 3 days per week, thanks to receptive local businesses like Oceanside Cleaners and Hobby Lobby. But students also learn to give back to the community by helping others in need. For instance, they assist with food preparation for the homeless at the Sulzbacher Center and help to stock shelves at the HabiJax ReStore. Back in the classroom their teachers reinforce workplace skills and independent living skills like shopping, cooking and money management.

NFSSE serves students ages 7 to 22 who have mild to moderate developmental disabilities. On its beautiful Arlington campus, the school provides a supportive but challenging environment where academic, social and vocational skills are nurtured. Aided by Speech, Occupational and Physical therapists, teachers create individualized approaches to the unique learning needs of each student. With the help of Public Service Grant funds, the school will continue to guide many more young people into successful futures.

Independent Living for Adult Blind

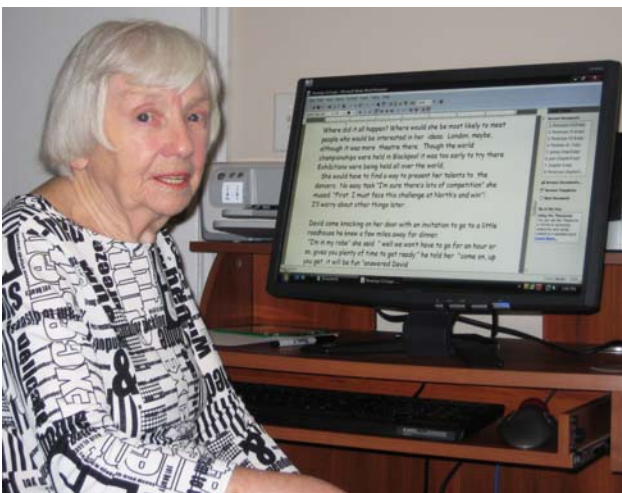
How Independent Living for Adult Blind Improves Lives of Visually Impaired Through the City of Jacksonville Public Service Grant

The City of Jacksonville Public Service Grant pays the salary for Independent Living for Adult Blind (ILAB)'s counselor, Elizabeth Fiorite, who with her never-ending wisdom and humor deftly guides ILAB clients through the fog of despair and disappointment at the onset of blindness or a low vision condition and into a new outlook on life. Having gone through the trauma of vision loss herself, she came to ILAB to study Braille and enhance her computer skills. "From my first days," Ms Fiorite writes, "I sensed I was in a friendly environment, a place where it was okay to talk about my fears and test my new skills." At the conclusion of her rehabilitation training at ILAB, she became the person whom others now turn to for adjustment-to-blindness counseling, encouragement and support. Elizabeth also is responsible for organizing the Women of Vision, a group of blind artists that meets monthly at the Cummer Art Museum and the Talking Books Book Club, a group of blind "readers" that meets at ILAB every month to discuss the latest audio book assignment.

Enormously popular with both the ILAB staff and her client following, Elizabeth has inspired many people. One of her former clients, Joyce, attributes the reality jolt she received to her time spent with Elizabeth. "The first thing that sticks in my mind," said Joyce, "is a group of us sitting at a table listening to Elizabeth's response to our constant question, 'Why me?' Her answer, 'Well, why not you? You wouldn't want it to happen to your friend would you? It has happened to you. You have to deal with it,' was not what I expected. But I sat up straight thinking how right she was."

A retired dressmaker, Joyce not only adjusted to macular-degeneration-caused blindness, but also went on to lead a very busy, interesting and productive life. She stays busy these days making greeting cards and letterheads, taking photographs and keeping in touch with friends.

For more information about vision rehabilitation programs at ILAB or to complete an application by phone, call 904-633-8220 or email bsimpson@fscj.edu.



Joyce uses the computer to write a story.



Elizabeth Fiorite, O.P. (center) counsels a group of ILAB clients.