

THE INTERMOUNTAIN VIEW

Winter 2007 Volume 6 Issue 1

Intermountain Helps Samson Find Success in the Desert

Three years ago, Samson left his home on the Navajo Reservation and came to live in Intermountain's Kiva Apartments. He didn't know what to expect of living in the desert but he was happy to come to his new home. Living with a serious mental illness all of his adult life, he was a victim of self-inflicted poverty and neglect. Even though he had many family members close by and a brilliant mind, he lived in isolation in an old abandoned building, in a remote area outside of Tuba City, with no heat or air or way to get away from the elements which crept into his shelter and made his life miserable.

When Samson arrived in Tucson, he joined other Navajo residents of the Kiva Program, and moved into his own apartment with a Navajo roommate. He is a remarkable addition to Kiva as he is a talented potter (tutored by his older brothers), an excellent housekeeper, and an affable but quiet neighbor. He cooks his own meals, loves to shop (especially at Miller's Outpost), and bowls on Friday nights with a Tucson Parks and Recreation league. Last year, he participated in the weekly Saturday Art Class and mastered every art form to which he was exposed...including the art of crochet! Since his first lesson, Samson has created dozens of crochet items for his 7 siblings and 19 nieces and nephews – items which he has designed himself and stitched in the most tightly woven needlework imaginable. His creations include multicolored berets, book bags, backpacks, briefcases, ponchos, and even a pair of pants!

Meeting success in all other phases of his life at Kiva, Samson recently took a job with the Beacon Foundation, acquired under the direction of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. His supervisor is so pleased with the job he is doing in aircraft production that Samson has been invited to prepare a resume and apply for a more demanding position! He purchased clothing for his interview and is looking forward to riding the bus to a new job. Samson has developed a real taste for Tucson and Intermountain's Kiva Apartments. He likes the city traffic noise and loves having a lot of people around, especially the very helpful staff that guided him to a successful life in the desert. He is shopping for yarn and camping gear with his earnings and looks forward to having a car someday, so he can go camping whenever his work schedule permits...and crochet around the campfire. Congratulations, Samson!

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Inside:



- **Intermountain's Holiday Heroes Return the Thanks**
- **Bev and Sharon Work Wonders Together**
- **Success Stories at Zia Apartments**
- **Independent Living**
- **Intermountain Moves to New Offices**
- **Donor Recognition & More**

Betty Hart and Betsy Duren worked together to create SOPHIA, Intermountain's new database.



SOPHIA is Born!

On July 1, 2007, SOPHIA was introduced to the Intermountain family of staff by Betsy Duren, Intermountain IT Programmer. Betsy has been sculpting the newest member of our communication team, SOPHIA (Secure Online Protected Health Information Analysis), since April of 2004, creating the ultimate client database and electronic storage of all client documents in response to Intermountain's critical need for such a program! Betty Hart, longtime Intermountain Board member and management information systems patron, was intellectually and philanthropically involved in the creation of SOPHIA, advocating for her design for many years. SOPHIA, formulated in Visual Basic software and more faceted than originally conceived, is currently being fed the case notes of our Tucson In-Home Therapists which will result in direct billing and an increase in the timeliness of the billing. Forty staff members have already received training in the data entry of their client's notes by Art Comeau, Quality Assurance and Data Reporting Manager. Tom Stevens is verifying and auditing each therapists' electronic entries on a weekly basis, while Deanna Scharlemann, Sarah Warnstedt and Sarah Campos of Medical Records are working diligently to ensure that all clinical paperwork is entered into the database.

SOPHIA will wear many hats but her major role at Intermountain will be:

- To ease the verification of encounters,
- To track significant forms and medical records,
- To track the requirements of the Arizona Vision for Children,
- To generate client reports,
- To accelerate the productivity of the direct care staff,
- To produce Quality Management reports, and
- To create outcome measure reports and functional assessments.

We are thrilled to have SOPHIA join our staff communications team...welcome to our world!

Intermountain Administrative Offices Move to New Location

On September 8, the long awaited and much anticipated move of Intermountain Centers' Administrative Offices occurred, landing about 75 staff in a beautiful new building at 994 S. Harrison Road in Tucson. Under the tutelage of Brandt Hazen, two years of planning and programming for the two story building produced a spiffy, spacious home for many of our administrators, and the dozens of staff members in accounting and payroll, human resources and training, quality management, data information and management systems and development, in addition to the supervisors of our residential programs for children and adults (group homes and foster care.) Built to specification by Steve Hazen and his construction team, the new office includes massive training and conference rooms, in addition to a small kitchen for staff use. Some early snafus with the telephone system left us plenty of time to unpack!



Shortly after the move, all of the in-home service program staff re-occupied the offices at 7820 E. Broadway in Suite 100, which were remodeled to accommodate the 100+ supervisors, therapists, and support staff for the Child and Family Teams, Independent Living Program, Tucson Home-based Therapy Program and Parent Reunification Programs. The Tohono O'odham Home-based and Three Points Home-based Programs frequent both offices, as needed. The dual moves and provision of adequate furnishings for both buildings were big challenges for our business management team. Sandy and Paul Hazen were most generous in providing for a major part of the new conference rooms' tables and chairs, lobby furniture, training room furnishings, cubicles, and business machines for both office complexes.

An Open House is planned at both sites for Thursday, January 24 2008, during our Annual Conference/Board Meetings. In the meantime, don't hesitate to stop by if you're in our neighborhood. We'd love to show around both of the new facilities! We're proud of our new offices and have the Hazen Family to thank for making them both just perfect!

Holiday Heroes

Return the Thanks

During the Winter holiday season of 2006, Intermountain found many generous Santas in the communities we serve, individuals and businesses who adopted children, adults and families with which we work for the holidays. Thankfully, each of the children and adults living in our group homes received at least one nice gift of their choice – a basketball, new school shoes, a cd player, or a warm jacket! In addition to that, all of our home-based families that requested help received assistance in providing for their families in the form of a Target or Walmart gift certificate and/or a Fry's gift certificate for their holiday meal. Our Angels, Alice and Paul Baker, provided funds to purchase 100 gift cards for the teenagers in our Independent Living Program. Over 500 children's gifts were distributed and 52 families received a helping hand from their Holiday Heroes, friends and neighbors in our community who stepped forward to make the holiday brighter for our at-risk clients. We would like to share the thanks accepted in return from one of our Heroes, Sheila Blackburn at the UA College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, who assumed responsibility for a single mom with eight children receiving in-home services from Intermountain staff:

"I wanted to let you all know about our visit to deliver the gifts to the family that the College adopted for the holidays. When we arrived and checked in at their front door, the two boys came out and helped us carry in all the gifts. We got a truly deserving family. Their beds were mattresses on the living room floor, with no sheets or pillows. They had a kitchen table but no chairs. The

Each of the children and adults living in our group homes received at least one nice gift of their choice – a basketball, new school shoes, a cd player, or a warm jacket!



The Draper-Lopez family was one of many Tohono O'odham families that received a visit from Intermountain's Santa.

mattresses seemed to double as couches and trampolines for five excited little girls. The mother seemed very nice and the little girls were so excited. They were very affectionate and friendly, and were quite taken with the ladies delivering their presents.

We totally filled the top of their kitchen table and completely underneath it. Thanks to all of the College staff and faculty's generosity and spirit of giving, we were able to purchase gifts for each member of the family and get a generous gift card to a grocery store. It

was a very special, unforgettable Christmas for this family. A big thank you to Karen Young, Director of Development for Intermountain Centers, and their staff for finding us such a deserving family to be able to adopt. Thanks to you all!"

If you would like to share holiday cheer and provide funding for an individual or family's holiday gifts or meal this upcoming season, please contact Karen at Extension 239. We welcome your donations of cash, gift certificates or new toys! We revere our Holiday Heroes! Please consider joining them!

Bev and Sharon Work Wonders Together

In April of 2003, Sharon came to Intermountain's Program for individuals diagnosed with Developmental Disabilities which serves clients in Prescott, Chino Valley, and Prescott Valley. Intermountain's Regional Director Marlene Rankin and Bev, a Direct Care worker, drove to Flagstaff to pick up Sharon, who was 15 years old. The two of them escorted her to a group home in Prescott where Bev was working at the time. Sharon entered high school in Prescott, but her grades were below average when she first enrolled. With Bev and the Direct Care staff's help, she turned them around; Sharon became a straight A student! In addition, Sharon worked part time in an assisted living facility across the street from her school. She continued to excel in school, while in the same group home for a little over two years.



During that time, Bev decided that she would like to open up her home for Sharon to live with her. Bev became a licensed Adult Developmental Home provider and Sharon moved to Bev's home two years ago. In May of 2007, Sharon graduated from high school in Prescott with all A's. Sharon completed an application to work in the Intermountain Day Program, where Bev now works, and was hired for a part time position. Sharon completed Intermountain's core trainings, passing all of the exams with flying colors. She does an excellent job of assisting the Day Program staff and working with several of the nearly 20 individuals that attend the program. Both Bev and Sharon are real assets to the Intermountain Programs for Developmentally Disabled in Chino Valley. As you can see, Bev and Sharon work wonders together!

Independent Living Programs in Arizona and New Mexico

Each year in Pima County, hundreds of at-risk teens leave the care of Child Protective Services and move into the community to live independently. They face tremendous challenges on their own and must be well prepared to cope with the obstacles to success that they face. One fourth of these adolescents will become homeless; only 60% will graduate from high school. The same scenario plays out across New Mexico where dozens of Native American teens return to Native communities throughout the State upon their 18th birthday and emancipation from the Child Welfare system.

Intermountain has developed two Independent Living Programs (ILPs) for teens that have been raised in foster and group homes – one which serves Pima County, Arizona, and one that serves the Native communities of New Mexico. The ILPs, a rich mixture of case management,

life skills training and hands-on training, currently serve about 100 teenagers who live in the Tucson area and 40 adolescent Native Americans in New Mexico. In Tucson, each youth enrolled is in constant contact with their therapist and attends evening classes to learn everything from banking and budgeting to transportation and wellness. In New Mexico, the therapists travel to each individual's pueblo or community of residence to deliver the 17 Skill Curriculum and assist in the settling each youth in their home.

Intermountain has learned that all of the assistance provided a child during their formative years can be lost when the child sets out into our communities at age 18, if they are not sufficiently prepared to care for themselves. The Independent Living Programs were born out of necessity to ensure the success of our most vulnerable neighbors – at-risk youth.



Foothills Optimist Club members Cathy Nichols and Adele Smith collect donations and make Emergency Toiletry and Starter Kits for the adolescents served by the ILP.



NAMISA Walk Raises Mental Illness Awareness

Intermountain Centers was a proud sponsor of the First Annual NAMISA Walk on Saturday, March 31, 2007. The walk, organized by the Southern Arizona Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, was a very brisk turn around Sam Lena Park in the Kino Veterans Center. Fifty Intermountain staff and clients and their families joined together to enjoy an opportunity to exercise together and raise awareness of the issues that affect members of our community that have been diagnosed with mental illness. We look forward to expanding our team and our sponsorship for next year's NAMISA Walk, scheduled for March 29, 2008, at Sam Lena Park. If you'd like to join or sponsor our team, please contact Karen at 721-1887, extension 5239. We need you!

Volunteers Decorate Pima House

Thanks to the Kiwanis of Rincon and Cienega High School Key Club members who gathered holiday decorations for Pima House, and added much cheer to the holiday by decorating the house beautifully last December. Milan Kriho made dozens of ornaments, the Key Club painted them and made decorations for each child's room.

Ken and Pat Sutton organized the entire event, and even talked Dodie Kriho into baking cookies, too! These elves will be working the same holiday magic at Sunrise Ranch, Intermountain's Level II group home, this year!



Zia Apartments Brews a Recipe for Success

As a result of an intensive staffing pattern and modifications to the Zia Apartments for teens, success stories are brewing constantly this fall. A live-in staffing pattern has served up trust and stronger ties and relationships. Several adolescents who came to Zia during the summer have made success the norm:

S. L. is a 17-year-old young lady who has been in the custody of Child Protective Services for three years. Before coming to Zia in August, she had several brushes with the law and resided in a residential treatment center. In three short months, S. L. has earned her GED, commenced study at Tucson Medical Institute and maintained steady employment. She has earned "Contract Level", the highest status a Zia resident can achieve, and has completed all of her Independent Living Program courses. She's on the fast track to success and credits her time as a volunteer working with Hurricane Katrina victims as her "ah hah" moment in life.

Y. C. is a 16-year-old girl who was removed from her family by CPS at age 6. She has had no contact with her family for 10 years. She formerly lived in foster care but her disruptive behaviors interrupted her placement. Now at Zia since June, she has become a model resident, earning the right to live in the only single apartment in the complex. She volunteered at a local museum until she found a job recently. She is also at "Contract Level" status, and is pursuing her interest in photography now that she has constructive leisure time.

In three short months, S. L. has earned her GED, commenced study at Tucson Medical Institute and maintained steady employment.

The services provided teenagers at Zia Apartments are creating new recipes for success. Youngsters who are approaching the age of emancipation, their 18th birthday, reside in an educational milieu which simmers with opportunities to perfect their recipe for a healthy lifestyle and bright future.

Gordon Gilbert, Valued Board Member

Intermountain Centers was privileged to have Gordon Gilbert serve on our Board of Directors for over 30 years! Gordon, who received his Masters degree and PhD in Physics from MIT, served on the faculty of the UA's Steward Observatory in the 1970's. He left Tucson in 1980 and founded the department of physics at Mesa State College in Colorado, where he eventually served as Chair of the Physics and Chemistry Department. Gordon's passions were music, nature, poetry, physics and Intermountain. Diagnosed with cancer 15 years ago, he continued his support of Intermountain until his death on March 16, 2007. He wished to leave behind a message of the power of love and will be remembered by all of his friends at Intermountain for the love he shared with us all.



Intermountain Friends Gather at New Mexico Governor's Mansion

New Mexico Congressman Tom Udall and his wife, Jill, hosted a reception in the New Mexico Governor's Mansion on August 2, 2007, to highlight Intermountain's 35th year in service to the State's at-risk Native American youth. Governor and Mrs. Richardson opened their home to community members who have an interest in the work of the agency, and Intermountain's dedication to providing community-based services that are innovative and compatible with the cultures of the children that they serve. Mark Bahti, Intermountain Foundation Board member, and Dee O'Neill, Intermountain Board and Foundation Board member, were integral in the planning and production of a lovely evening set in the Richardson's warm and welcoming home.

A Toast to Vicki and Brandt Hazen

Vicki and Brandt Hazen hosted their Third Annual Reception to benefit Intermountain's programs for at-risk children and adults, this past April 28, in their delightful home. Leonard Nehrmeier of Tucson Electric Power accepted the First Annual Silver Bear award which recognized the many hours of service provided the children residing in our group homes by Leonard's Financial Services Department at TEP, the major projects that TEP employees have initiated to enhance Navajo House, and the philanthropic support that TEP has provided to Intermountain's residential program for children in Tucson. We are thankful to all our friends and benefactors that joined us to learn more about Intermountain and enjoy the Hazens' amazing hospitality!

Intermountain donors create bright futures!

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**The mission of Intermountain Centers
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Mustang Bullitt Raffle Benefits Intermountain – Big Time!

Intermountain Centers is raffling a brand new 2008 MUSTANG BULLITT! Jim Click has gifted the Mustang to the charitable organizations that serve Tucson. Raffle tickets require a contribution of \$25 each or 5 for \$100 - and Intermountain gets to keep the proceeds from all of the raffle tickets we sell! The drawing will be held on February 18, 2008; all entries must be received by February 11, 2008! Karen Young has 200 tickets for the Mustang; call her to obtain your raffle tickets at (520) 721-1887, extension 5239, or send her an email at kareny@ichd.net. Thanks to Jim Click for his perpetual support and incredible generosity!



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