

Single Parent STAR

Winter 2010

Letter from a PS-S Graduate

Too often we lose touch with our graduates once they leave the program and begin the next chapter in their lives. It's always such a treat when we receive a phone call, letter, or e-mail like the one below letting us know that they are happy and thriving, and all the hard work, both theirs and ours has paid off!

Dear Nicole:

I just wanted to drop you a quick line to say hi. I was thinking about you recently and wanted to let you know how much I really appreciated the guidance and support you and PS-S provided me and my son Sam, during my time at Willow Place. I graduated from PS-S in 2000 after receiving my BA in Psychology. I moved to Denver shortly after and married my dear love in 2001. Today is our 9th wedding anniversary and a day of reflection for me.

Sam is turning 18 next month and is hoping to graduate from high school in May (he has some work to do to get all his requirements done). He has also been attending Warren Tech part time and will have completed 15 college credits towards his AAS in

TV and Video editing. He is quite talented in video editing and won an award last year for one of his short videos through the Denver Academy of Film. He is contemplating joining



the Navy upon graduation. He wants to serve his country, earn money for college and travel. Of course, I have tried to tell him there are so many other ways to go about those things, but he insists that this is what he wants. ...sigh... Raising kids ain't for wimps-LOL.

I am doing great. I am working for a non profit job readiness program here in Denver called the Center for Work Education and Employment (CWEE). I love my job. I am the Employment Services Supervisor. I have held two other positions there (Case Manager and Instructor), and have been in my current position for almost a year. I assist low income single parents find employment-LOL-sound familiar...I draw on my experiences as a single mom to help me connect and truly help those that I work with. I am also graduating from the University of Phoenix next month with my Masters degree in Education. I will start teaching as an adjunct professor this summer at a local community college. I want to teach developmental English.

(Continued on page 7...)

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Community Breakfast Tuesday, March 23rd, 7:30am Drake Centre
- McAlister's Harmony fundraiser for PS-S, Wednesday, March 24th 5-9pm
- PS-S/Kappa Kappa Gamma Flower Sale pickup day, Thursday, May 6th
- MOMS Club Fashion Show and Silent Auction, Saturday, May 22nd, 11am-1pm, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church

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Winter Graduates

PS-S celebrated many academic graduations in May and now would like to share news about five more participants who completed programs in December.

Jami is a recent graduate who shares these thoughts, "Project Self-Sufficiency has helped me become a responsible, self-reliant woman, and because of their unconditional support and love, I have been able to graduate from the University of Northern Colorado. They have taught me that life had no barriers and that success is about determination and the willingness to reach for your dreams. I have been given the tools to be a success as a future teacher and PS-S has given my two boys opportunities to succeed as well. I am so grateful to PS-S for giving me a second chance to pursue my dreams and for caring and loving me in spite of myself." Jami is waiting for her substitute license and alternative teaching license to be granted. She is applying for para positions at the school districts but will also be starting work at Measured Progress next week as a test scorer.



Ramona completed her Bachelor of Social Work degree at Colorado State University and is currently seeking employment as a social worker. She is particularly interested in working with seniors or as an employee of the Larimer County Department of

Human Services. Ramona's advisor, Michele, describes Ramona as "warm, caring, and gracious" and believes that Ramona will make an excellent social worker. Ramona gained valuable work experience as an intern with Catholic Charities Northern.



Sally earned her associates degree at Front Range Community College and has transferred to Colorado State University where she is preparing for a Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology. Sally has a long term career goal to become a physician's assistant.



Jessica completed her Dental Assisting degree at Front Range Community College and is studying for her certification exam. She is also taking additional classes in Expanded Dental Functions and volunteering at the Loveland Community Health Center's Dental Clinic while she searches for a paid position.



Amberlyn earned her R.N. at Laramie Community College and is taking her board exams soon. She is seeking employment as a registered nurse.



Amberlyn's perseverance has paid off after years of commuting to Cheyenne for nursing classes.

PS-S Participants Honored by Soroptomists

Cassie and Heather were awarded scholarships during the 60th anniversary celebration of the Fort Collins Chapter of Soroptomist International.

Cassie was presented with the Women's Opportunity Award and is a competitor for a regional award.



Heather received the Living Her Dream award.

Both women are preparing for careers in business.

Alpine Cabinet Shows the True Spirit of Giving

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If you happened to watch the CBS Evening News on December 22, you may have seen a heart-warming story about the wonderful folks at Alpine Cabinet Company in Timnath who created 16 beautifully hand-crafted dollhouses for PS-S families. The company donated many more dollhouses to other organizations.

Alpine Cabinet's Dollhouse Project was initiated by company owners and longtime PS-S supporters Dick and Ellie Chinn who wanted to give back to children in need while also keeping their workforce busy during the economic downturn.

"I thought it would be a great morale boost for our people and lots of kids who need help," said Bill Chinn, vice-president of production. Alpine cabinet makers built and painted the five-room dollhouses while other employees built tiny furniture and appliances, and some even sewed curtains and quilts for the miniature homes. Alpine's suppliers donated paint and lumber, and an employee's wife provided dolls.

In mid-December Dick Chinn and his sons Bill and Scott presented the dollhouses to PS-S participants and their young daughters at our Fort Collins office. Many of the moms

were just as thrilled as their daughters since this was their first dollhouse as well. To add to the excitement, the presentation was taped by a crew from the CBS Evening News on one day and by Denver's Channel 9 News the following day. The Alpine project was also featured in the Fort Collins Coloradoan.

We applaud Alpine Cabinet Company for their amazing generosity not only to PS-S families and others in need but also to their own employees whom they kept busy and working despite the downturn. We all got our "15 minutes of fame" in the process!



This is a picture of the thank you card Val's daughter Makayla created to express her appreciation to Alpine.

Holiday Thanks

Each year at the holidays we are overwhelmed by the generosity from our community on behalf of our single-parent families, but even more so in 2009 with the state of the economy. 100 families received “under the tree” gifts, 10 received fresh Christmas trees, 51 received food boxes, along with countless books, games and hats for the annual holiday party attended by 85 families with 177 children. And there were the bikes and dollhouses mentioned on the previous page. WOW! There are simply so many individuals and companies to thank for so many wonderful gifts that we have chosen to utilize the space by sharing pictures of our holiday events rather than singling out donors by name.



Nick Bettis and his “elves” from Deltek delivered 87 games and books for Santa to pass out to the kids at our annual Holiday Family Party, as well as 19 food boxes for our Loveland families.



Gordan Thibedeau of the Foot-hills Rotary Club carrying some of the contents of the 32 food boxes that they supplied for our Fort Collins families.



Ryan Behm of Peace with Christ Lutheran Church helping a family string the lights on their newly delivered Christmas tree. For the past several years Ryan, along with a number of local Boy Scouts, has provided freshly cut Christmas trees and decorations to our families.

Christmas on Wheels

Christmas on Wheels was started about 25 years ago by “Happy” Harv Nesbitt and Joe Ryk, realtors with The Group, Inc. They wanted to do something during Christmas time for kids and liked the idea of giving brand new bikes. In 1990 Jim Dunlap got involved because of his desire to help and his relationship with the biking community and Trek.

Since its inception all the money has been raised by The Group, Inc. and the Fort Collins Sertoma Club. Lee’s Cyclery gives their time to build and adjust the bikes, and in recent years

Trek has donated some of the bikes. Affiliated Moving Systems provides the transportation of the bikes, a huge undertaking. Each year there is a breakfast to award the bikes to children featuring signature cinnamon



rolls donated by The Silver Grill Cafe. Since Harv’s passing in 2000, his son Matt has taken over his role and continues in his honor.

When it started, 5 to 7 bikes were given away. Now the numbers have reached anywhere from 30 to 50 bikes, depending on the economy. Matt says it has grown each year with more people wanting to either donate, volunteer or both. Our kids will attest to the fact that a new bicycle, including a helmet and lock is about the best Christmas gift you can get!

Holiday Family Party 2009



Tandi and kids dine on the delicious meal courtesy of the National Charity League and the Stonehouse Grille.



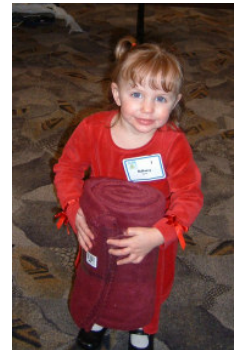
This wonderful array of homebaked goods was provided by the Quota Club of Fort Collins.



Debi and Mitzi from Quota help the kids wrap the gifts they've chosen for their moms.



Gloria from Quota helps Annabelle surprise her mom with a gift.



Bethany shows the perfect gift that she picked out for Mom.



Author Barbara Murray signs one of the books she donated for Jayden.



Madison and Marissa compare their new books AND their new hats, knitted and donated by Kathy Wolfe.



Volunteer Judith helps Elijah pick out the ornament that he'd like to make with the help of the National Charity League members.



Lilly's sons show us you're never too old to sit on Santa's lap!



The kids enjoy seeing Santa to get their presents.....



....well, not everyone!!

Meet our Board of Directors



Janene Dellenbach, President
Community Volunteer



David Besch
Vice-President/President Elect
Vice President Home State Bank



Jane Ray, Secretary
Retired Teacher



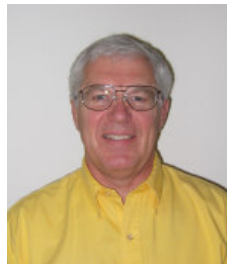
Noreen Flood, Fiscal Officer
Owner, Daily Money Manager



Cindy Bragdon,
Past President
Asst. Vice President,
First Western Trust



Linda Clark
President,
Horsetooth Sertoma



Charlie Cuypers
Attorney at Law
Van Ackern & Cuypers



Laurie Hansen
HR Manager
Intel Corporation



Paula Hawe
Realtor,
The Group, Inc..



Diane Knight
Management Coach
& Consultant



Corkie Odell
Odell Brewing Co.



Stacy Plemmons
DU College of
Business



Gary Premer
Owner,
CO Financial Mgmt.



Tom Tonoli
Retired Teacher &
Curriculum Dir., PSD

Many Thanks...

- To **Tortilla Marissa's, Noodles on Laurel, Olive Garden and Rocky Mountain Bagel Works** for providing meals for our recent Self-Esteem Workshops to our attending participants and their children.
- To **VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) volunteers** for providing tax assistance to our participants. Between our Fort Collins and Loveland offices they processed over \$105,000 in tax returns.
- To the **CSU Educational Opportunity Center** for helping our participants to complete their Free Application for Student Aid forms.
- To the **Loveland's Lutheran Church of Hope Women's Group** for hosting a rummage sale in November to benefit PS-S families.
- To **Carol Ann Kates** for donating a portion of her cookbook proceeds to PS-S.



Please join Project Self-Sufficiency at our 4th annual

CELEBRATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Tuesday, March 23rd, 2010 from 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

The Drake Center

802 W. Drake Road, Fort Collins

Project Self-Sufficiency helps build stronger families, a stronger workforce, a stronger community and a stronger economy. We would love for you to join us in learning more about the organization, our comprehensive programs, and our future vision for continuing to serve low-income single parent families in Larimer County.

Seating is limited. Please RSVP by calling 970.635.5912.

(Letter from a Graduate....

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It will be one class in the evenings or weekends each semester. Not much money, but it will allow me to grow my skills and pursue my love for teaching. I love my day job and I am growing so much as a professional there, however, knowing myself as well as I do, I must also feed my other passion for teaching!!

I really have to thank you and PS-S for giving me the opportunity to pursue my education. Without the subsidized housing at Willow Place, there is no way I would have finished my degree as quickly as I did. Also, it was a place of healing for me. I fondly look back at my time there, the women I met, the experiences I had.

So, thank you and I hope to hear back from you sometime. Take care and please extend my gratitude to everyone there at PS-S. You guys do amazing work and I am living, breathing proof of that!!

Take care and lots of love,
Amy

Upcoming Events Benefitting PS-S



A portion of proceeds at Harmony location on Wednesday, March 24th, 5-9pm will be donated to PS-S.



A portion of sales throughout the month of April will be donated to PS-S.



Saturday, May 22, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Children's Fashion Show and Silent Auction
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Fort Collins
Sponsored by the MOMS Club of Fort Collins

For additional information, go to www.ps-s.org

INDICIAS

Think Spring!
It's time to start thinking about the annual
Kappa Kappa Gamma Alumnae Flower Sale
which benefits the PS-S scholarship program.  **Project Self-Sufficiency**
Strength now. Change forever.

Choose from a variety of high quality bedding plants, pots & hanging baskets furnished by Guley's Greenhouse.
Gift cards available!
Orders due with prepayment: Monday, April 5th.
Pickup date: Thursday, May 6th.

To order, go to www.ps-s.org

For additional information:
contact Susan at 407-0305, ext. 5 or susan@ps-s.org

INDICIAS

INSIDE STORIES OF PS-S SUCCESS



Return Service Requested

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