



**KNOWLES CENTRE INC.**

Helping Individuals Find Their Path: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

# INSIGHTS

Volume 18 • Number 3 • Fall 2010

An inside look at the programs and services of Knowles Centre Inc.

## Something new is cooking at Knowles Centre



For four students in the new Culinary Arts program, preparing a great meal means they are also preparing for a great future.

The students are the first ever in a new program run as a partnership between Knowles Centre and John G. Stewart School, of the River East Transcona School Division. The program is led by teacher and experienced chef Jeff.

Rather than a traditional classroom, the students spend their school day in the Knowles Centre's kitchen. Here they learn the theory and hands-on application of culinary arts by preparing lunch and dinner meals. The result of their work is tested every day by the students' peers and staff, so far to rave reviews!

Over the one to two school years the students will take to complete the program, they can earn up to 12 credits toward high school graduation. In addition to culinary skills, the students also learn WHMIS and health and safety regulations. But the academics are not forgotten; subjects like math and language arts are threaded through the work and put to practical application.

"Developing transferable skills like communications, teamwork and organization will give students a head start in any career," says Jeff. Of course, he hopes to inspire many to follow a career in culinary arts.

"Any student who completes the program could easily begin as a cook in a good family restaurant, and, with experience, move up to become

a chef in a high-end restaurant," he says. "The possibilities are endless."

For one 15-year old student, the program has renewed her excitement for learning. "I was bored in a regular classroom," she says. "This program has made me full of energy to learn new things."

Even more, the program is helping her to look ahead. "Before I didn't know what I might be doing, but I have found what I want to be," she says.

*For more information on the Culinary Arts program, contact Jeff at (204) 339-1951.*

### Let us thank you again...

Donors are important. Your support means clients can enjoy camp, recreation activities and more. In past years, donor support helped us to refurbish client bedrooms and to help more kids. We could not do this without you.

We want to thank our donors again in the next newsletter. If you have given in 2010, your name will be included in this list with other supporters.

Gift amounts will not be published. Nor will we share or sell your information to other agencies or companies. If you would prefer to remain an anonymous donor, please call us at 339-1951 before Nov. 30.

## A Message from our Chief Executive Officer



With summer behind us, our clients are well into a new school year and Knowles Centre is moving forward on its latest developments. As usual, space allows me to provide only a partial update. I encourage you to read the other articles in this issue for more information.

Knowles Centre continues to serve more young people, especially within our two newest programs: Treatment Foster Care and Independent Living (SAIL). With this growth comes new opportunities for new and existing staff to join our committed team.

We are grateful to our many friends who have supported this growth through donations. Many of the contributions we have received are being

directed toward a capital project that helped us to create much-needed office space for these new programs.

Another new program got underway in September. Culinary Arts, offered in partnership with the River East Transcona School Division, uses the Knowles Centre kitchen as a classroom. At present, four students are preparing to work in the food industry under the direction of professional chef and instructor Jeff. To date, feedback from staff and clients has been very positive.

The future holds more growth as well. In response to a need within the larger child welfare system in Manitoba, our Group Care Program will also expand over the next few years.

All this growth comes as a result of careful planning. To this end, we were proud to distribute our first annual strategic plan report to staff and

board members in the last month. It highlights our accomplishments toward achieving identified agency and departmental goals.

Later this fall we will present our first annual Performance Quality Improvement (PQI) report to staff and board members. PQI is intended to measure Knowles Centre's effectiveness in treatment and efficiency in resource management. Our agency is monitoring a number of key variables, including client files, client incident reports, client outcome measures, stakeholder survey results, and financial performance.

I look forward to sharing these and other highlights in an upcoming newsletter.

Michael Burdz, Ph. D., C. Psych.

## Pucks to drop again at Knowles Centre thanks to HOME DEPOT

At one time, you could easily hear happy cheers from kids playing ice hockey, ball hockey, and sponge hockey behind the buildings of Knowles Centre each winter. Sadly, the rink became nothing but a memory with the start of construction of the new John G. Stewart School in 1997.

Now, thanks to the help of Home Depot's "Month of Service" program, a new ice rink is only awaiting the cold days of winter.

A team of almost 20 Home Depot volunteers descended upon Knowles Centre on Sept. 21 with all the materials, tools and expertise to construct a new rink. Special thanks to Knowles Centre's hard-working staff of Unit 2 and the maintenance department for their efforts, too.

For the kids, this is a huge step towards being active all winter. They can now play Canada's favorite sport in their own backyard during the day as part of the school's Phys. Ed. program and evenings and weekends with the Knowles Centre staff.

Having a rink will help our kids to keep busy, fit, and, best of all, safe in Knowles Centre's care all winter.



When Winnipeggers think of winter in Winnipeg, they think hockey! Now, so can all the kids of Knowles Centre, too.

*Contributed by Dave Purpur,  
Director, Group Care Treatment  
Program*

*Photos courtesy Ian Swan*

## Croquet Tournament Supports Knowles Centre



Michael Burdz (*pictured left*) happily received the contribution from Greg Thompson at the event.

The funds will help Knowles Centre develop the resources needed to help more young people through our Treatment Foster Care and Supported Advancement to Independent Living programs.

More than 60 players took part in the fun afternoon at Fort Gibraltar in Winnipeg, including two enthusiastic teams from Knowles Centre. Following the tournament, staff from Knowles Centre made a presentation on the programs' successes.

Knowles Centre once again was the proud recipient of proceeds from the **Thompson Wealth Management Solutions Charity Croquet Classic** held on August 24. The 3rd annual tournament raised \$7,250.

Greg Thompson along with associates Kim Stephanchew and Sonia Cantafio plan the annual event as a way to make a difference "in the back yard" of the community they serve.

## SAIL Clients Enjoy Beach Day

Back in the warmth of July, seven clients in the SAIL program, along with all the SAIL staff, enjoyed a Beach Day at Birds Hill Park. It was a great opportunity for clients to meet each other and to bond with the staff. It was also a chance for Gary Grosvenor, SAIL's new case manager with the program, to get to know the clients.

Most of the day was spent enjoying the weather by swimming, splashing or playing tag in the water. And all enjoyed a tasty lunch of hamburgers and hotdogs barbecued onsite!

Everyone had such a great time there



are already requests for another group get-together in the near future. Certainly the SAIL staff hopes to make Beach Day an annual event, too.

*Contributed by Mandi Gray, SAIL Program*

## Supporting Future Social Service Professionals

Knowles Centre welcomes two University of Manitoba students who are completing field placements in our programs.



**Melissa Santos**, a Bachelor of Social Work student, will be working with the Treatment Foster Care program under the supervision of Clinical Case Manager

Tiffany Krueger. Melissa currently holds a B.A. in Sociology and a B.A. (hons) in Gender Studies. In the future, she hopes to work in the community with children and youth and foster families. Melissa will be with Knowles Centre until April 2011.



**Connie Spence** is in her final year in the B.S.W. program at the U of M's Inner City Social Work Program. She will be doing her field placement

in the Group Care Treatment Program under the supervision of Raul Dimaculangan until April 2011. As a student, she also shadowed a social worker with Inter Tribal CFS where she gained experience working with families and at-risk youth. She chose her career path from a desire to help individuals and believes her time at Knowles Centre will help her gain the experience needed for a future career in child welfare.

## Staff training assures client safety

**Dave Purpur**, Director of Group Care, and **Marshall Gardner**, Supervisor, journeyed to Minneapolis in September for re-certification in Advanced Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi) for instructors. Both train other Knowles Centre staff in NVCi as well as groups in the community. The latest training provided skills in Life Space Intervention which will be incorporated into the NVCi training.

Often, clients at Knowles Centre struggle with anger issues, and may

react impulsively to difficult situations. Through NVCi training, staff learns to recognize early signs that a client is building toward a crisis and then to work to restore calm. Alternatively, if a client escalates, staff can effectively deal with the situation, to ensure the safety of all clients and staff alike.

*For information on arranging NVCi training through Knowles Centre, contact Dave Purpur at 339-1951 (ext. 120).*

## Staff News

The SAIL program welcomed **Anne Underwood**, **Kristin Johnson**, and **Heather Poll**. The three new staff members will work directly with teen clients who are preparing to leave care and live on their own in the community.



Knowles Centre welcomed **Sandie Wagner** to the role of Human Resources/Payroll Administrator in Sept. Sandie brings 25 years experience in payroll administration and other human resource management functions to the position. Currently she is working towards certification in the Human Resource Management program.

In this new position, Sandie will be responsible for bringing together various HR functions that had been divided between several other staff in past, including staffing, recruitment, selection, appraisals, compensation, training and development, labour relations, and workplace safety and health issues. As well, she is committed to being a confidential and approachable resource for staff to discuss personal concerns.



**Wahlea Croxen** joined Knowles Centre in August as a Clinical Therapist for a one-year term. She will be working directly with clients from the Day Treatment Program, as well in the Group Care Treatment Program (Units 1 and 2 and Respect House) and as a consultant to the Clyde Road treatment unit.

Wahlea brings over 10 years' experience to the position in both clinical and administrative capacities. In the past, she has worked with various CFS agencies, community and government organizations, and with people from all walks of life. Originally from Québec, Wahlea is of Mi'kmaq ancestry and has specific experience working with Aboriginal communities, including participating ceremonies and following traditional teachings. Wahlea holds a degree in Applied Social Science and is completing her Master of Social Work degree at the University of Manitoba.

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