



**KNOWLES CENTRE INC.**

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

# INSIGHTS

Volume 22 • Number 1 • Spring 2014

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

## Knowles Centre says goodbye to Marshall Gardner



Poet Thomas Campbell wrote “To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.” And so it is with long-time Knowles Centre employee Marshall Gardner who was lost to us on December 5, 2013 following a courageous battle with cancer. Even in his absence, Marshall remains a respected and beloved presence to his co-workers and the youth he worked with during his 34-year career. He touched the lives of others in a unique way, and his impact will stay with them forever.

Marshall joined Knowles Centre as a youth care worker in 1979. At the time, the starting wage was \$4.40 an hour. Perhaps to Marshall, also a talented musician, a more important milestone of the times were the hit songs on the radio: “My Sharona” by

The Knack, “Do you think I’m Sexy” by Rod Stewart, and “YMCA” by the Village People.

Over the next six years, Marshall set himself apart with his caring but effective manner, and was promoted to supervisor in 1985. He was well liked by both youth and the staff for his clear expectations and the fairness in which he ran the unit. Staff enjoyed coming to work, and together they created a positive place for youth.

In 1995, Marshall was the natural choice to lead Knowles Centre’s first group care unit located in the community, which represented a major step for new treatment options for the agency. Many of his staff were eager to follow him to the new site. While community members voiced some ini-

tial concerns, over time Marshall and the staff and youth earned the trust and respect of the neighbors. In his special way, Marshall created a home for the youth who came under his care.

Friends and coworkers also remember Marshall for his sense of humor. “I think this is one of the reasons he had so much success working with kids in care; he made them laugh,” recalls Dave Purpur, Director of Group Care. “He could never solve all their problems, but he made them feel good about themselves by the way he treated them. Nobody will remember his exact words and the long talks he had with both kids and staff members, but they ALL remember how Marshall made you feel, and that was happy.”

Marshall faced challenges, as well. Dave recalls one particularly angry child who threw every element of verbal abuse at Marshall, including racial slurs. “Marshall just kept sweeping the floor and softly reminded this young person that when he could speak respectfully, that Marshall would be happy to help him,” Dave explains. “The verbal barrage continued for about a half hour at the end of which Marshall went over and asked the boy if he wanted to throw a ball together. He did.” Asked why he let the child verbally attack him, Marshall replied, “He was just checking me out. He has lots to be angry about and he was just seeing if I was safe or if I was like most other adults that he had experi-

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## Tribute to Marshall Gardner



enced. I knew I just had to wait it out and then he'd trust me,' Dave recalls.

He may be most remembered for the way he shared his passion for music with others. Marshall could always be depended on to bring his guitar to camp or other gatherings and play and sing until others happily joined in. In the unit, Marshall played or sang to wake the kids up for school every morning, which they loved even if they claimed otherwise. Many kids were eager to learn guitar themselves, and proudly played for Marshall. Of course, he encouraged their drive to improve their talent, and more importantly he witnessed the change in their

self-esteem.

"Hundreds of kids out there have had the opportunity to meet Marshall and the privilege to work with him to improve their lives," Dave adds. "I know they are grateful for their time spent with him – whether it was learning a new chord, having his morning singing wake up call, or having a strong positive role model to help answer their questions about right and wrong, beliefs and values, and which path to follow. Their lives will be touched forever."

Marshall's commitment never wavered. He regularly called into work to inquire about the kids, the unit, and to provide updates of his illness says Dave. That was his style, and one we all could learn from. He was dedicated to the very end. He will be missed by all.

*Knowles Centre is honoring Marshall's commitment to the agency by dedicating the unit he ran for almost 20 years in his name. A ceremony will be held in spring. As well, a scholarship to help youth to pursue music lessons is being established. Donations are gratefully accepted at [www.knowlescentre.org](http://www.knowlescentre.org) or (204) 339-1951.*

## Knowles Centre seeking applicants to join our Board of Directors

Knowles Centre is currently seeking applicants to join our dynamic Board of Directors.

We strive to maintain a board that represents both our community and the young people and the families that we serve. Currently we are seeking professionals with experience in human resources, finance, social services, and mental health care. Persons of Aboriginal heritage as well as other diverse cultures and backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

For more information on this rewarding, volunteer opportunity, please contact us at [info@knowlescentre.org](mailto:info@knowlescentre.org).

## Maté conference successful



Knowles Centre hosted its second, successful professional development conference in January featuring Dr. Gabor Maté.

Over 300 people attended for each of the two, sold-out sessions, entitled *Compassion Fatigue* and the *Myth of Normal*.

Dr. Maté went beyond the commonly accepted view of medical models and suggested most disease states affecting us today are connected to stresses in our past and present that we do not effectively address. Further, he spoke about how those who have been most unable to address past trauma, often from childhood, turn to addictions to soothe unhealed emotional wounds.

From this point of view, he stressed the importance of self-care for caregivers and professionals. Further, he encouraged investigating and addressing the cause of emotional hurt, and not just the symptoms that may appear long after the hurt child has grown up.

Although the discussion was emotionally charged at times, the overall response to the conference was overwhelmingly positive.

## Staff Profile

# Tiffany Rios: Helping youth find their strengths

Within the realm of social services, and in particular the role of support worker, passion and a positive attitude are two of the most valued qualifications.

Tiffany Rios has shared her gifts for working with youth as a senior support worker in the Supported Advancement to Independent Living (SAIL) for over two years. Here she uses her skills and experience to help oversee building maintenance, assist the case managers, provide guidance to other staff, and, of course, work one-on-one with youth as they prepare to leave care and establish themselves in the community as independent young adults.

The basics of her job involve supporting a young person as he or she learns to cook, care for a home, budget, use community resources, and much more. Perhaps most importantly, Tiffany is there to listen, support, and remind the youth that he or she can do it.

The young people she works with face challenges, Tiffany acknowledges, but

they also have strengths within that they often do not always see themselves.

When a client knows that you believe in him, and you provide encouragement and positive reinforcement, his strengths really begin to shine through, she says.

Youth living in care often feel someone else makes choices for them; it can be difficult for them to take responsibility for their own lives. Tiffany recalls one girl who regularly misspent her monthly budget. We tried to mete out the money on a weekly basis, but it did not change the girl's spending, she explains. Finally, we let her face the consequences of her choices. The youth spent a difficult few weeks, but the budgeting lessons finally started to have an effect.

It is never easy to see clients struggle, she admits. However, she also understands that this is how many clients build their confidence to make it on their own.

Witnessing this change gives Tiffany the greatest satisfaction. She sees her clients become more independent, mature, believe in themselves, and excited



about the possibilities open to them in the future.

After watching a youth achieve so much, it can be difficult to say goodbye when it is time for him or her to move on, Tiffany says. In parting, Tiffany writes a short letter to each departing client reminding him or her of all that is good about them and her sincere belief that he or she has the potential to achieve the goals they set for themselves.

## Professional Development Conference

# Trauma Recovery: When Love is Not Enough



Knowles Centre is hosting Dr. Kenneth Hardy November 6 and 7, 2014 for a two-day conference on trauma recovery.

Dr. Hardy is an internationally recognized clinician, author, educator, and consultant specializing in family therapy with oppressed and traumatized populations. At present, he is Professor of Family Therapy at Drexel University in Philadelphia and Director of the Eikenberg Institute for Relationships in New York City.

Dr. Hardy will focus on trauma recovery in foster and adoptive families as well as the clinical demands for therapists and other human service

professionals working with the children and parents in these settings.

He will further cover innovative interventions for working with distressed and traumatized youth. He recognizes that much of the stress, distress and trauma faced by young people is connected to untimely experiences with a loss. He takes a fresh look at ways of working with affected youth, and exploring new strategies that work.

Both sessions also explore issues concerning the relevant self of the therapist, as well.

For more information, contact us at [www.knowlescentre.org](http://www.knowlescentre.org) or call (204) 339-1951.

# Put the FUN back in fundraising!

## Knowles Centre Charity Croquet Classic



Knowles Centre is proud to host the 2014 Charity Croquet Classic. This year's fun and family-friendly fundraiser takes place Tuesday, August 19 at the historic and beautiful Fort Gibraltar. The first round opens at 3 p.m.

Faster, more fun, and easier than a golf tournament, the Charity Croquet Classic is a great opportunity to give back to our community while having a great time, networking and avoiding those sticky wickets!

Registration is only \$125 per person, or \$350 per team. Everyone receives a first-class dinner and a great thank-you gift. Plus, tax-deductible receipts will be issued for a portion of the fee.

Proceeds from this fundraising event will help to ensure that Knowles Centre can continue to provide a safe and caring environment to our clients as they work towards healing and creating a better life.

**SPACE IS LIMITED! REGISTER NOW TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT!**

For more information, contact Craig at [cebbers@knowlescentre.org](mailto:cebbers@knowlescentre.org) or 204-339-1951.

The Board of Directors  
of



Invites you to attend the

**ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING**

**Wednesday, June 18, 2014  
at 12:00 noon**

**Richard Gooch Gymnasium  
(John G. Stewart School)  
2069 Henderson Highway**

**Special presentation by students**

**All guests are invited to stay  
for a lunch prepared by the  
Culinary Arts students  
following the meeting at  
Knowles Centre**

**RSVP by June 13th  
(204) 339-1591**

or

**[info@knowlescentre.org](mailto:info@knowlescentre.org)**

## Staff News

Knowles Centre welcomed back **Joy Kozcka**, MSW, to the Clinical Services team in January. Joy previously was with the agency for a one-year term over the 2012/13 year. Joy is working with young people in the Group Care and Day Treatment programs.

**Heather O'Neale**, MSW, joined the Treatment Foster Care programs in February. Heather previously worked with children and families from a variety of backgrounds in both private practice and community organizations.

We welcome **Kimberly Mills**, **Chelsea Welch**, and **Lindsay Cloutier** to positions in our Group Care Program.

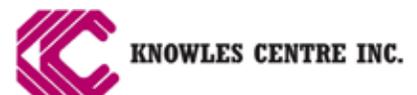
**Karen Cinq-Mars** left the Treatment

Foster Care program in December. Karen had been with the TFC program for more than six years, and was instrumental in the growth of the new program. We all wish Karen well as she pursues other opportunities in the social work field.

Knowles Centre also wishes the best to SAIL staff members who are moving on in their careers, including **Mylene Inocenio**, **Kayla Shuster**, **Stephanie Davidson**, **Stephen Hryniuk**, and **Peter Nawrot**.

The Group Care Treatment program has seen recent staff changes. **Lesley Gosse-lin**, former Unit 1 supervisor, has moved to the boys' Clyde Road community based unit. **Karin Henry**, an experienced youth care worker, takes over as supervisor for Unit 1.

*Insights* is published by:



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Comments, suggestions and inquiries are welcome.