



KNOWLES CENTRE INC.

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

INSIGHTS

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

Culinary Arts students contribute to Hillary Rodham Clinton luncheon

Culinary Arts students got a behind-the-scenes taste of one of the highest-profile gatherings likely to take place in Winnipeg this year.

On January 21, two students, along with Culinary Arts instructor Chef Paul and Kitchen Coordinator Kelly Yashuk, joined a crew of dozens of professional chefs and sous chefs at the RBC Convention Centre. As part of the team, they helped to prepare meals for Hillary Rodham Clinton and the 2,000-plus guests there to hear Ms. Rodham Clinton speak.

From the time they arrived at 9:30 a.m., the crew were busy helping to prepare for the meal. Later, each member of the John G. Stewart School/ Knowles Centre team was assigned to one of six plating stations, readying lunch to be served to the guests.



By all accounts, guests enjoyed the meal of chicken breast in chasseur sauce, steamed broccoli with cheese, honey-glazed carrots and garlic mashed potatoes, plus a tri-colored brownie with fire-grilled peaches for dessert.

Chef Paul said it was a great learning opportunity for the students. They saw the importance of planning, coordination, and teamwork to creating a memorable dining experience. But, it was also great exposure for the Culinary Arts program, and for employers to see the capability of our students.



Group Care Treatment & Supported Advancement to Independent Living Programs

Finding her place along the way

Sometimes it is the journey that teaches you a lot about your destination. Brooke*, soon to graduate from Knowles Centre's SAIL program, has discovered along the way that her own strengths and efforts can take her where she wants to go.

Before age 10, Brooke was headed down a bad path. She was hanging out with girls years older than herself and was negatively influenced to use drugs and alcohol, skip school, and have little regard for authority. Despite their love, her parents were overwhelmed by the choices that Brooke was making. This led Brooke into a system that bounced her between her parents' homes, dif-

ferent foster homes, group homes, and shelters, and even a short stay at the Manitoba Youth Centre. Looking back, she was struggling to belong, even if it meant risking her own well-being.

Brooke was placed at Knowles Centre at age 14. Within the Group Care Treatment Program, she was given the structure that had been missing in her life – a difficult transition for a strong-willed girl like Brooke. At first, she responded by escalating her negative coping skills and running away often. But the Knowles Centre staff persisted. They saw the potential in Brooke and worked hard to help her see her own strengths. Over time, Brooke addressed



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Finding her place along the way

her substance use issues and started looking toward the future.

She understood that the SAIL program could set her on the path to independence that she thought she was ready for. However, it came with a condition: she had to show she was mature enough to enter the program. With this goal, Brooke worked hard to abide by the rules and stop running from Knowles Centre. She began the SAIL program in Spring 2013.



For Brooke (and countless other teens), one of the first lessons learned was she didn't know as much about living on her own as she thought she did. Brooke came to appreciate that the SAIL support workers were there for her when she needed them. With their support and guidance, Brooke worked through the life skills learning modules (although, like many, she continues to work on her budgeting and apartment cleaning skills).

However, Brooke still struggled with attending school. Without a Grade 12 diploma or job experience, there were few employment options for her. That posed an extra problem for her as she approached her 18th birthday. Despite her personal stability and success in the SAIL program, if she did not either attend school or work, the CFS system could cease its funding and she would be left on her own and vulnerable.

But the Fort Garry Rotary Club believed there needed to be another, better option. Members

of the service club created an opportunity for Brooke and another Knowles Centre client to gain experience as customer service representatives for a regional airline.

Without hesitation, Brooke says she "Loves it!" She quickly caught on to the job responsibilities and enjoys interacting with the customers. While she is only scheduled to work 10 hours per week, she takes on extra shifts whenever possible and consistently gets great feedback from her colleagues. Most of all, Brooke feels like she belongs to the employee family.

With her reinvigorated confidence and motivation, Brooke has since moved from her SAIL apartment and into the community, but continues to receive support from Knowles Centre.

Brooke's journey is not over, perhaps it has barely begun. Yet the beginning has been packed with many lessons. It has put her on a path to success.

* Name has been changed.

Gabor Maté returns for Knowles Centre ADD/ADHD conference

Knowles Centre is pleased to bring back Dr. Gabor Maté for a one-day conference on Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD) on Thurs., May 14, 2015 at the Canad Inn Club Regent Casino Hotel.

Dr. Maté is highly sought after for his expertise on a range of topics from addiction and attention deficit disorder to mind-body wellness, adolescent mental health, and parenting. A renowned thinker and public speaker, he addresses audiences all over North America. As a writer and speaker, he is widely known for the power, insight, clarity, candour, compassion, humor, and warmth of his presentations.

The diagnosis of ADD/ADHD is burgeoning. It is estimated that between three and five percent of young people are diagnosed, many who will continue to experience symptoms into adulthood. Whether at home, school, work or elsewhere, ADD/ADHD can have profound

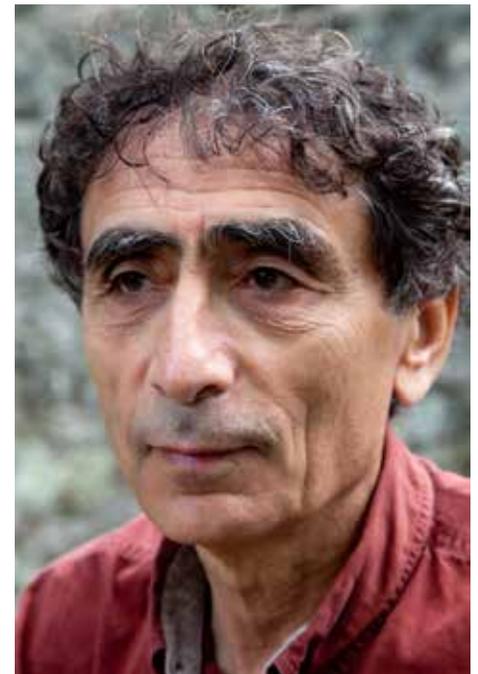
effects on the individual as well as those around him or her.

Dr. Maté will explore the prevailing medical model of ADD/ADHD which views it as an inheritable illness, along with his own views on the significant influences of the environment on the development of the human brain.

The conference is sure to appeal to: individuals with ADD/ADHD, parents, teachers, caregivers, therapists, doctors, and social service professionals

This is Knowles Centre's second conference featuring Dr. Maté. The sold-out January 2014 event on "The Myth of Normal" was well-received by all who attended.

For more information on the conference, or to register, please visit us at www.knowlescentre.org or contact Craig Ebberts at (204) 471-7438.



Dr. Gabor Maté will address ADD/ADHD on Thur., May 14 in Winnipeg.

Stewart Halper retiring after almost 34 years at Knowles Centre

After almost 34 years as a Clinical Therapist at Knowles Centre, Stewart Halper is retiring. Currently the longest-serving employee, Stewart is often the go-to man for institutional history, and can always be counted on to be a vocal champion for the kids, and the agency itself.

Stewart says he feels blessed; he leaves with a sense of accomplishment and a fulfilled sense of purpose. Still, he says his greatest regret is that he doesn't have an album of pictures capturing the expressions of young people as they caught their first fish at camp.

Over the years, Stewart has helped over 300 young people through some of the most challenging times in their lives, but seeing the excitement on their faces as they reeled in their first catch, and being there to share the utter joy in their hearts, reminds him things can always get better. "It never gets old," he says.

Of course, camp has been a favourite since the 1960s, before Stewart joined Knowles Centre. In his early years, Stewart was among those who took up to 30 kids at once, or stayed for up to two weeks at a time. "It was exhausting for everyone," he says. "But the incredible sense of teamwork – from both the staff and kids – was tremendous."

Then and today, staff leaned on each other, he says. These times have formed indelible memories, such as volunteering to do dishes with Marshall Gardner, past group care supervisor. While it gave the kids and other staff a break, Stewart admits that he cherishes those times

talking and laughing with Marshall. Sitting around the fire listening to Marshall play guitar is also a favorite memory.

Stewart also salutes Art Shaw, Day Treatment Support Worker, for selflessly being the guy who helped to net the fish that everyone else caught. In the evening, Art led games of cribbage, which doubled as a perfect time for the kids to share their stories. "Art is one of those special guys," says Stewart. "It is a blessing to work with him."

Whether kids attended camp for a few days or a few weeks, most remember it as one of the best times in their lives. Often those who reconnect with Stewart years after leaving Knowles Centre want to reminisce about fishing, or canoeing, or just having fun.

It is the connections like these with Stewart, and other staff, that help make a difference in the lives of the young people.

"Certainly, the complexity of issues faced by kids has grown," he says. "We see the impact of the residential school system firsthand. Kids come to Knowles Centre with more issues, yet they have less family resources to lean on."

Still, Stewart sees that the love parents have for their children has remained constant. "Parents want the best for their children, but sometimes their own personal problems get in the way," he says. "Even the kids that seem to be annoying or behaving badly



want to do better. Sometimes they don't know how or are dealing with past trauma that gets in the way of getting along better."

But that is what Knowles Centre is about, and what we do well, says Stewart. In the end, seeing kids and their families begin to work out the challenges they face, and can reunite successfully has been the greatest achievement of his career.

After almost 34 years on the job as a therapist, one might think Stewart Halper would be more than ready to retire. Yet, his leaving is somewhat bittersweet he says. "I'm not retiring because I don't love my job. Instead, I want to travel, enjoy the cottage, and spend more time with my family. I wish there was a way to do it all."

Everyone at Knowles Centre wishes Stewart the best as he begins this new and exciting part of his life, and good luck with all the adventures that await him!



Database keeps Knowles Centre on top of training

Knowles Centre gratefully recognizes Spark and Catherine Parnetta-Olsen for helping us to establish a database to track our employee training.

Spark, a service of the Canadian CED Network, is a not-for profit organization that matches groups like Knowles Centre with volunteers in the community who wish to share their professional skills.



Knowles Centre was very fortunate to be partnered with Catherine, a database design professional. Catherine put in hours and hours understanding Knowles Centre's needs, and developing and fine

tuning a database that would be right for us. The end product has proven wonderfully valuable.

Knowles Centre has over 100 regular and casual employees. Depending on the job, each staff member requires different training, from CPR/First Aid and non-violent crisis intervention to mental health first aid and recognizing and working with youth affected by sexual abuse. This list of mandatory and optional training, whether one-time or recurring, can be overwhelming to track. Yet, ensuring relevant and timely staff training is one of the most important investments we can make in the well-being of our clients.

Knowles Centre board member Stacey Soldier receives award for pro bono work



Photo by Phil Hossack / Winnipeg Free Press
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Knowles Centre is pleased to recognize Board member **Stacey Soldier** for being a part of the *Families First Pro Bono Team*. Stacey was one of eight lawyers who received the 2015 Pro Bono Award from The Manitoba Bar Association for their work done preparing a report that engaged with families and developed a framework to address the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Stacey has been a member of the Knowles Centre Board of Directors since 2013. She brings valuable insights on the issues facing at-risk youth and indigenous populations.

Staff News

Kate Bloy, BRMCD, MFT, MED (candidate), joined the Treatment Foster Care program as a Clinical Case Manager in October for a one-year term. Kate has worked extensively with families, as well as teaches at the post-secondary level.

Max Setosta joined the Maintenance team in October. Max brings extensive experience working on electrical projects as well as general facility repair work.

James Jeon, BComm, Bus. Admin, joined the Administrative team in November as an accountant. James brings experience in a full-service accounting firm, and looks forward to working with Knowles Centre staff.

Welcome to **David Ajuwon** and **Johnson Knansah** who have recently joined the SAIL program as overnight staff. Both men have experience working with youth.

Joel Garside left the Group Care Treatment Program in November. Joel had worked in the program since 2009, first as youth care worker and later a

recreation programmer. Joel will be missed by the clients and staff alike, but all wish him well as he moves forward in his career.

Darryl Woloshyn left Knowles Centre in September 2014 after five years of service as the Night Grounds Person. All wish him the best as he pursues other opportunities.

Congratulations to **Alix Richards**, BA, MA (Recreation) (candidate) who has been selected as Recreation Supervisor for the Group Care program. Alix will work with youth care staff to plan and run recreation and camp programs. Healthy recreation opportunities are integral to overall wellness for Knowles Centre clients.

Best wishes to Knowles Centre staff who added to their own families earlier this year:

Melissa Santos (TFC) and Graham welcomed son Callan on July 6, 2014.

Marijana Dumbovic (TFC) and **Cletus Joseph** (Group Care) welcomed daughter Maliyah on September 4, 2014.

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Comments, suggestions and inquiries are welcome.