



Employee Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2018

Employee of the Month

CELIA BAKER – THIRD AVENUE

C is for caring. When Celia Baker started at Third Avenue a little over a year ago, she was working the 6 AM to 8 AM shift and had a full time job working at a gas station. She was graduating with a degree in Social Services and wanted more experience in the field. I think she got it! Every morning, she was bright eyed and working 1:1 with an individual who had late stages of Alzheimer's and needed total care and support. She also helped with the other individuals in the house with breakfast, personal cares, and getting them on the bus on time and off to a happy start to their day. Celia fit right in!

E is for enthusiasm! Even though Celia tends to be quiet and reflective, she can get the ladies dancing and full of smiles. Getting these 'Golden Girls' ready for the day can sometimes be a challenging task, yet she handles it with effective ease! She seems excited about doing a variety of engaging activities with the ladies; I am not sure who has more fun – each of them or her? Bowling, baking cookies, and working on art projects seem to be the favorites. This initiative and creativity combined with an interest in making their days engaged and fun make Celia stand out and results in smiles, relaxation, and laughter.

L is for loyal. When the individual that she had been doing the 1:1 care with passed away, Celia was there to say goodbye. She ensured the other ladies were taken care of and continued to work her morning shift supporting them, despite that it must have been incredibly challenging. When Celia got a full time job offer at another company, she remained on-call. Fast forward and now this loyal lady works every other weekend and helps out whenever she is able!

I is for independent. A lot of shifts Celia works tend to be single staffed. Yet she handles documentation, cooking, showers, and medications with great independence and accuracy, and she still finds time to initiate meaningful recreation. Her training is completed on time and she checks in with the Program Manager for open shifts that she is able to work in a timely manner. Very much appreciated!

Inside this issue:

Employee of the Month	1-2
Rookie of the Month	2-3
14th Ave 30th Anniversary	3
2017 Strategic Plan Summ.	4-5
Black History Facts	6-7
Safety Corner	7
Game 1 & 2	8

Upcoming Events

No Upcoming Events
Currently

New Babies



Dwyer James "DJ" Smith

Born January 29, 2018

8 lbs 6 oz

Parents:

Christine Smith (LTC Case Management Hennepin County) and Mike Smith

New Babies



Adley Kay Baker

Born September 20, 2017

6 lbs 8 oz

20.5 inches long

Family:

Laura Baker
(DD Case Management);
husband, Stetson; and
big brother

Employee of the Month cont.

A is for amazing! When an individual wanted to go to Disney World for Halloween but needed 1:1 staff to take her, Celia stepped right up and said, "I will take her!" The amazing photos they brought back are testimony to a memorable vacation. Her traveling companion to Disney chose to be a cow and Celia transformed herself into a farmer so they were a well matched pair at the Disney Halloween party. They both stated they had a lot of fun and can't wait to do another trip!

We are grateful for you, Celia, and for everything you bring to Thomas Allen and Third Avenue! Thank you for being an integral part of our team!

Submitted by: Jodi Beuch, Program Manager

Rookie of the Month

CAILEN MCMAHON – SOUTH ST PAUL

As an on-call at South St. Paul for going on eight years now, I have seen many staff come and go. This is the first time I have felt the need to nominate a co-worker for Rookie of the Month. I would like to share a little about how much Cailen has made a difference for the ladies at South St. Paul. Not to mention the staff, former manager, and director, who would be in a pickle without her ability to see things that need doing and get them done.

Cailen filled in as primary at SSP when she started. Everyone was aware that she would have to adjust hours to weekend staff in the fall once college started. When the manager left, Cailen's short time in that position has made her invaluable to the ladies. Only Cailen and a couple long term on-calls remained as staff. In SSP, we have some dynamic situations going on, each lady has her own needs, some quite overwhelming. Cailen has been a steady presence and detailed documenter, keeping everyone else aware of what needed attention or had been handled. Technically, she is a weekend staff now, the entertainment director position, as I called it when I had that position. She not only ensures all medications are picked up, all bills are paid, and banking gets done (if Friday didn't go well), but she also manages to go and find activities within the limitations of current health situations of some of the residents. This is not an easy task.

I have heard from each of the ladies over the last few months how much Cailen has helped them accomplish. She is so aware of medical needs and fluctuations, and she helps the ladies put together their healthy menus, getting new recipes to actually happen and not just be talked about. Did I mention that she is also still doing most of

Rookie of the Month cont.

our grocery shopping too? I do not know how she gets it all in, except that I have caught her there past her shifts finishing up impeccable documentation and communications to staff.

Cailen is well rounded, patient, kind, and generous. She takes time to be with each of the SSP ladies, individually as well as when in a group. She has helped out with extra shifts and spoken to many doctors and pharmacists to ensure everyone is being treated correctly. We are very lucky to have Cailen on our team, and I hope she stays around for a very long time. The ladies and the staff appreciate everything she does.

Thank you, Cailen, for all that you do!

Submitted by: Erin Ipsen-Borgersen

Happy 30th Anniversary, 14th Avenue!

This month we're celebrating 14th Avenue's 30th year anniversary. Thomas Allen is truly lucky to have a great team of staff who support 4 awesome individuals living in the home. Each individual has a number of interests and enjoys a variety of activities.

SC has been a part of 14th since day one—30 years ago! He enjoys going on vacations, having a cup of coffee, and riding his exercise bike. He's really looking forward to an upcoming vacation to Florida.

JR loves to go to the YMCA to run to maintain his physical fitness. He has participated in 2 different 5K races since he moved to 14th Avenue in August 2017. He also enjoys playing his keyboard, and visiting with family and friends.

JM moved in in 2015. He is a thespian, enjoys reading, playing video games, and music. He and his fellow thespians just finished 3 weeks of over 25 performances of "*Feast of Fools*" for the community.

GR moved to the upstairs apartment in 2011. He likes relaxing to music, going on vacations with his friend, and going for walks. GR is a pretty good bowler as well.

2017 saw lots of staffing changes in this home—all while providing respite to a new individual, then as a permanent resident of the home. A lot of flexibility was asked of the staff. But, 14th avenue staff have been all-stars and are dedicated, hard at work, and adapt very well. Facing occasional adversity and challenge with positive attitudes and a commitment to getting the job done, these all-stars are: Carol Greenhaw, Cyril Agboh, Kara Martin, Valentino Delacruz, Jeanette Fordyce, Jennifer Medema, James Crook, Linda Ferguson, Sao Yang and Beth Abkes-Moore. Availability and communication amongst staff has really made this home a calm and enjoyable place to work. And, the four men at 14th Avenue make this home a fun place to be. There are always lots of laughs shared in the home. Thank you to all who have been a part of 14th Avenue over the past 30 years!

Sincerely, Joseph Russell, Program Manager

2017 Strategic Plan Accomplishment Summary

Congratulations are in order!!! In early 2017, Thomas Allen's Operational Team developed a strategic plan for our company. This included goals and priority areas to address company-wide needs for the year. In follow up, each director and his/her team of staff developed their division's specific strategic plan, complete with specific goals and priorities.

It is with great pride that I am able to report that many of our goals and priorities were met! Achievement of these goals took concerted effort to achieve from each of you. All of the goals developed and implemented directly impacted the service provided. We focused on:

- Remaining abreast of legislative changes and responding to legislative initiatives proactively
- Honoring our employees
- Strengthening our leaders and potential leaders
- Recruitment and retention of employees
- Building supportive relationships among employees
- Increasing interconnectedness within the agency
- Implemented actions to increase the quality of life for the individuals we serve

I'd like to take this time to note some of our 2017 accomplishments.

One of the first main priority areas focused on **advocating for the persons we serve through legislative initiatives**. Many of you attended ARRM's day at the capital, bringing with you the people you serve and their family. In addition, you either individually or through encouraging others, wrote or spoke to your District representatives. It is through these efforts that great change can be made.

Another area of focus was **honoring our employees through the building of supportive relationships among employees and increasing interconnectedness within the agency**. This included:

- History Day, including development of a video introducing Thomas Allen to new TA team members
- Twins game
- Providing a Wellness Series and a one-time 'Art and Science of Wellness' training; the former will celebrate with a 5K at the end of the session
- Pictorial posters were developed and distributed to remind persons of the need for positive and respectful treatment towards all
- News from HR is regularly provided to all employees through the TA Times Newsletter

Strengthening our leadership and potential leaders was another focus point for 2017. This included the following activities:

- Job descriptions were rewritten to include person first language along with reflecting what each employee currently is responsible for. These job descriptions reflect what you actually do and will be used to more accurately evaluate each employee's performance.
- Utilized College of Direct Support training for the completion of the required Annual Person Centered training
- Worked in conjunction with IT, Finance and various divisions to develop and implement a daily billing system.
- Implemented a 6-month professional development/goal setting for employees

2017 Strategic Plan Accomplishment Summary

- Training was provided to leaders on Applicant Pro and Care Profiler
- Basic Information Technology training was provided
- Admission procedures were revised within policy to provide greater ease in implementation

A number of initiatives were also directed towards the **recruitment and retention of employees**. Actions included:

- Increased the referral bonus received for employees
- Added care profiler features for better onboarding of Program Managers
- Assessed, modified and implemented a new unit training system
- Management of stress training was added to session II orientation for case managers
- New hire packets were updated

Lastly, there were many priorities focused on **enhancing the quality of life for the individuals we serve**. As a brief summary this included:

- Reviews / Audits from outside entities resulted in very favorable outcomes; changes were implemented to increase the successful outcome of these reviews
- A Team hosted a picnic and celebrated collaborative successes with varied clubs and other friendship development, leisure skill and community enrichment opportunities.
- Continual review and updating of audit tools to ensure we are providing the level and quality of services each person has a right to receive along with ensuring compliance with DHS requirements

All of these initiatives have laid the foundation for personalization of services that will lead to positive opportunities that are valued by the people we serve.

As a **TEAM** we accomplished all this and more. Each of you are truly amazing! When many individuals with varying talents and extraordinary abilities come together stunning things do happen! Congratulations on a very successful 2017!

Black History Facts

Black History Month: The celebration of Black History Month began as “Negro History Week,” which was created in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson, a noted African American historian, scholar, educator, and publisher. It became a month-long celebration in 1976. The month of February was chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

NAACP: On February 12, 2009, the NAACP marked its 100th anniversary. Spurred by growing racial violence in the early twentieth century, and particularly by 1908 race riots in Springfield, Illinois, a group of African-American leaders joined together to form a new permanent civil rights organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). February 12, 1909, was chosen because it was the centennial anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

Heavyweight Champ: Jack Johnson became the first African-American man to hold the World Heavyweight Champion boxing title in 1908. He held onto the belt until 1915.

First Lawyer: John Mercer Langston was the first black man to become a lawyer when he passed the bar in Ohio in 1854. When he was elected to the post of Town Clerk for Brownhelm, Ohio, in 1855 Langston became one of the first African Americans ever elected to public office in America. John Mercer Langston was also the great-uncle of Langston Hughes, famed poet of the Harlem Renaissance.

Supreme Court Justice: Thurgood Marshall was the first African American ever appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. He was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson, and served on the court from 1967 to 1991.

Eminent Scientist: George Washington Carver developed 300 derivative products from peanuts among them cheese, milk, coffee, flour, ink, dyes, plastics, wood stains, soap, linoleum, medicinal oils and cosmetics.

First Senator: Hiram Rhodes Revels was the first African American ever elected to the U.S. Senate. He represented the state of Mississippi from February 1870 to March 1871.

First Woman Representative: Shirley Chisholm was the first African American woman elected to the House of Representatives. She was elected in 1968 and represented the state of New York. She broke ground again four years later in 1972 when she was the first major party African-American candidate and the first female candidate for president of the United States.

Self-Made Millionaire: Madam C.J. Walker was born on a cotton plantation in Louisiana and became wealthy after inventing a line of African-American hair care products. She established Madame C.J. Walker Laboratories and was also known for her philanthropy.

Population Growth: The black population of the United States in 1870 was 4.8 million; in 2007, the number of black residents of the United States, including those of more than one race, was 40.7 million.

Oscar Winner: In 1940, Hattie McDaniel was the first African-American performer to win an Academy Award—the film industry’s highest honor—for her portrayal of a loyal slave governess in *Gone With the Wind*.

Black History Facts cont.

Into Space: In 1992, Dr. Mae Jemison became the first African American woman to go into space aboard the space shuttle Endeavor. During her eight-day mission, she worked with U.S. and Japanese researchers, and was a co-investigator on a bone cell experiment.

White House: In 2009, Barack Obama became the first African-American president in U.S. history. He occupied the White House for two consecutive terms, serving from 2009 to 2017.

URL: <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-history-facts>

Safety Corner

Proper Lifting/ Transferring Tips

General considerations to think about before lifting/transferring:

- Know the weight of the person you are lifting/transferring
- Know your own limitations and be realistic. If you cannot safely move the person on your own, get help.
- Have a plan of action. Whether you're working alone or with a partner, know how you plan on transferring the person. Practice during training so you are comfortable.
- Communicate with the individual served. When everyone is on the same page, injuries are minimized and all efforts are more efficient. Use verbal cues, and know when to stop and how to use the emergency stop button on the mechanism or lift
- Keep transfers short – avoid moving a lift from room to room and crossing room divider strips which can cause swinging, utilize wheelchairs if available.

Proper body technique for transferring/ Lifting

- Consider your alignment. By keeping your head and neck aligned with your spine you minimize the risk for sprains and strains.
- Bend and lift with the knees, not at the waist. Bending at the waist puts unnecessary stress on your lower spine.
- Avoid twisting your body, especially while bending, for the same reasons as above.
- Hold the person close to your body while lifting and transferring them. The closer you hold them the easier it is to maintain your natural center of gravity and remain steady on your feet. By extending your arms, you engage weaker muscles and increase the risk of slips, falls, and possibly dropping your patient.
- Maintain a stance that is shoulder-width apart whenever possible, thus helping to maintain your balance and distribute your patient's weight evenly.
- Raise the bed to waist height for better spinal alignment to reduce the risk of injury.

Submitted by the Safety Committee

Health and Wellness

News You Can Use

Health literacy: Understanding the complex language of healthcare

Have you left a doctor's office wondering what you were told about your health, or what exactly you were supposed to be doing to get better or prevent problems getting worse? If you are a typical patient, it's not uncommon to get to the car or bus and have already forgotten some of the information your doctor just discussed with you.

Understanding what health information means, following the recommended instructions from a healthcare provider and knowing how to find health information when you need it is known as "health literacy." Low health literacy affects all patients at one point or another. You're often being asked to process and retain complicated health terms like diseases or how to take prescriptions correctly.

Patients with low health literacy may end up not following their doctor's orders, which can be very risky for their health and result in additional care and expenses. There are thousands of unnecessary patient hospitalizations and deaths each year related to low health literacy.

We all know if you don't understand what prescriptions to have filled, how to properly take your medication, that a follow-up visit is needed or that a lifestyle change is required, you're going to struggle to maintain or improve your health. However, with so much information being thrown at you — how do you keep it all straight?



Tips for understanding and following your doctor's orders

The following tips will help you understand doctor's orders and take a proactive role in your health:

- Gather basic information from your doctor about any conditions you suffer from and the potential treatment options. The more you know, the better.
- Seek clarification right away for anything that you do not understand. If the doctor says something you do not understand, ask that it be repeated in an easier-to-understand way.

Continued >>

 **Associated**
Benefits and Risk Consulting
AssociatedBRC.com

- New information can take multiple times of hearing it before you really understand. If you are given a new set of instructions, repeat them back to the doctor to confirm your understanding. If you are given a new device or equipment to use, ask the doctor or nurse to show you how to use and then show them what you learned. Take time to make sure you are doing everything correctly.
- If you have questions after you leave, don't hesitate to call the doctor's office. In most cases, a nurse or physician's assistant can answer your question or will have your doctor return your call.
- Take notes or take along a friend or family member who can take notes for you. If possible, and with your doctors permission, record the conversation with a smartphone or voice recorder to replay it at home for you and your family or another doctor.
- Ask family and friends to assist you in following the orders that your doctor has outlined for you.
- Talk with your doctor about potential barriers that prevent you from following his or her orders, and come up with solutions to overcome those barriers.
- Tailor your medical routine to your daily routine and lifestyle. Create reminders for yourself to avoid forgetting to take medication, to get your daily exercise in or to check your insulin levels.



- Ask your pharmacist to send refill reminders via email, text or telephone.

You are already helping to improve your health literacy by reading this newsletter, and you are doing far better than average. Only 12% of adults have "proficient" health literacy according to the National Assessment of Adult

Literacy. In other words, nearly nine out of ten adults may lack the knowledge needed to manage their health and prevent disease. You're not alone. By ensuring you understand your doctor's order and personal health plan, you can improve your health and reduce unnecessary treatments and costs.

Recipe

Cauliflower popcorn

Ingredients

- 1 large head cauliflower, broken into small florets
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).
2. Whisk olive oil and garlic salt together in a large bowl; add cauliflower and toss to coat completely. Spread cauliflower out onto a baking sheet.
3. Bake in the preheated oven until golden and tender, 15 to 18 minutes.

Source: Allrecipes.com

Game

BrainBashers Sports Day

During the recent BrainBashers school sports day, four girls were competing in the 400 meters hurdles. Official figures mysteriously went missing just after the event, however, various spectators could remember the following information. Josie was never suspected though!

1. Jane won and wore red.
2. The girl wearing number 1 came third.
3. Julie beat the girl in yellow, but wasn't wearing number 2.
4. Only one girl finished in the same position as the number she wore, but she didn't wear red.
5. Jackie beat the girl wearing number 3 and Josie wore yellow.
6. The girl in green wore number 2.
7. A spectator remembered one girl wore blue, but couldn't remember anything else about her.

Can you determine the positions the girls finished in, along with the numbers and colors they wore?

[Ref: ZOKL] © **Kevin Stone**

Game 2

Below are five book titles. Each title has had the spaces removed, and then extra letters added. The location and number of extra letters added depends on the length of the previous word. Punctuation has then been added.

For example:

BOOK TITLE >> BOOK1234TITLE12345 >> BOOKnightTITLEaptup >> BOO, KNIGHT. IT LEAPT UP!

Can you find the titles?

- #1) ROME OR OSLO? ANDREW, JULIE, TO VISIT.
- #2) WARM TOO FEW, THE SUBWORLD SNEEZES
- #3) AN I MALE? MYSELF, ARM, AND I?
- #4) GO NEXT, GO! WITHOUT OTHER I DWINDLE. GO!
- #5) WATER. SHIP, BOAT. STORM! DOWN SINK!
- #6) BRAVERY IN A NEW AGE, WORLD'S HOPE.

[Ref: ZZEC] © **Kevin Stone**

Our Mission

Thomas Allen is committed to providing a positive quality of life experience while affirming each person's right to choose and realize their individual goals including where and how they learn, live, work and socialize.

Thomas Allen believes in meeting the changing needs of the client and the service industry.