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Needing more 'butter', less guns
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THE PROVIDER

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Call is out to be 'All In' for 42nd Annual Convention

The Providers' Council's 42nd Annual Convention & Expo: *We're All In* will reflect all of what the Massachusetts human services workforce represents: diversity, inclusion, opportunity, independence, equality and access.

Helping to reinforce the sector's commitment to these values will be Keynote Speaker Steve Pemberton, for whom equality, access and opportunity are the pillars of his professional and personal life.

Pemberton serves as Vice President, Diversity and Inclusion and Global Chief Diversity Officer at Walgreens Boots Alliance, the first global pharmacy-led health and wellbeing enterprise in the world. But he is perhaps better known as the author of the best-selling memoir, *A Chance in the World*, which tells his story of overcoming abuse and neglect as an orphan in foster care to become a trailblazing corporate executive, a leader for diversity and inclusion and passionate youth advocate. A movie based on the book is slated to be released later this year.


Steve Pemberton

His highly motivational messages – Believe in your dreams, rise above obstacles, create opportunities for others and most of all, persevere – reflect not only what human services professionals want for themselves, but what they are committed to doing for their clients and consumers each day.

Pemberton serves on several boards of organizations serving disadvantaged youth, including The Home for Little Wanderers and UCAN. He has also received national recognition, including the Trumpet Award, the Steve & Marjorie Harvey Foundation Helping Hand Award and the Horizon Award from the U.S. Congress for his efforts in expanding opportunities for all Americans.

The 42nd Annual Convention & Expo: *We're All In* takes place Monday, Sept. 25 at the Marriott Copley Place Hotel in Boston.

The event is the largest of its kind in the Northeast – bringing more than 1,000 stakeholders in the Massachusetts human services industry to Boston – and will feature 34 professional development workshops; the annual Awards of Excellence and Peer Provider Awards for outstanding contributions and innovation in the Massachusetts human services sector; and myriad networking opportunities.

Additionally nearly 80 exhibitors will be on hand to showcase their latest products, services and programs for the community-based provider industry.

In short, the Council is going all out for *We're All In*. Mark your calendar to attend on September 25th. Convention registration will open in July. Please note:

• **Awards of Excellence nominations are being accepted through mid-**

CONVENTION, see page 6

FY '18 budget differences go to conference

The next step in crafting the Fiscal Year 2018 state budget is underway this month as a Conference Committee comprising appointees from the Senate and House work to hammer out differences between their spending plans.

The Senate approved its $40.4 billion FY '18 budget proposal shortly before Memorial Day, adding $30 million in earmarks. In April, the House had passed a similar sized budget proposal, but there are notable differences between them that will have to be resolved by a Conference Committee.

The top item the Council is watching is an amendment from Sen. Jamie Eldridge (D-Middlesex and Worcester District) mandating that 75 percent of any new money an organization receives under Chapter 257 must be spent improving low-paid workers' salaries until all staff are making $15 per hour.

"The Providers' Council and our members are tireless advocates in ensuring human services professionals in the Commonwealth earn a fair wage," said Providers' Council President and CEO Michael Weekes. "Before Chapter 257, rates paid to providers had not changed in 20 years. The increases that providers receive now go to direct care

BUDGET, see page 6

Coming at workforce crisis from all sides

Panel discusses working with colleges to find next employees

Providers who are interested in strengthening ties with area colleges and universities as a way of reaching potential employees should start now, according to panelists at the Providers' Council's recent University Roundtable event.

"Get to us in the summer," said Joanna Lazarek, Associate Director of Internships and Alumni Career Engagement at Suffolk, noting that it is quieter on campuses and faculty are just starting the planning stages for when school starts in the fall. "We can start the ball rolling during the time we have the time," she said.

Offering to be a guest speaker during a class, leading a training, having a table at a job fair or sitting on a panel that discusses different career paths within an industry are a few ways that providers can start introducing their organizations to students, as well as to higher education staff who facilitate current and future placements. Lisa Worsh, Senior Cooperative Education Faculty Coordinator at Northeastern University, said some organizations have


Panelists from five local colleges discussed programs and resources available to members who want to reach students.

started clubs on campus that organize volunteer opportunities at their agencies and in the community.

Lazarek and Worsh, along with Susan Coleman, Assistant Dean for Field Education at Boston College School of Social Work; Hugh Ferguson, Senior Instructor and Program Chair at Cambridge College; and Cuf Ferguson, As-

COLLEGES, see page 7

Council launches new jobs board, unveils new ad campaign

The Providers' Council has launched a new jobs board and is preparing to unveil a marketing campaign, both aiming to bring more people into the human services workforce.

The efforts are two more steps the Council is taking to help members with their challenges in recruiting and retaining employees in an industry facing a workforce crisis. The Council's *Pro-workforce Legislative Agenda* and a number of its training and educational opportunities are also centered on meeting the need for more workers in the sector – as many as 24,000 to 25,000 in the next seven years, according to the 2017 report *Who Will Care? The Workforce Crisis in Human Services*.

The new Jobs With Heart job site officially launched on May 1, featuring "responsive design" technology that allows job seekers to browse and apply for positions right from their phones, tablets or other devices. Other features include upgrading listings, allowing employers to create their own branded pages, receiving text alerts when new jobs are posted and a resume bank. There will also be advertising options in the future.

More than 200 jobs were posted in the first month, and they received **more than 750 job views and 52,000**

CAMPAIGN, see page 7

PROVIDERS' COUNCIL

Massachusetts Council of Human Service Providers, Inc.
88 Broad Street • Boston, MA 02110

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Providers' News and Notes

Lyttle honored for passion, commitment to children

Key Program President and CEO Bill Lyttle will receive the prestigious *Embracing the Legacy Award* from the **Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps** on June 9.

The award honors those whose extraordinary actions have reflected the social values and hopes of the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy by raising awareness and fighting against societal injustice and inequality that affect children and families.



Bill Lyttle

Lyttle, a child welfare advocate for 45 years, was selected for his extraordinary commitment to assisting troubled youth and their families by developing positive life skills and experiences so that they may pursue productive and rewarding lives; his passion to help young people; and dedication to make sure each child thrives and can reach their full potential.

The Key Program operates 22 community-based residential programs, two mental health clinics and a variety of home-based service models throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island.



Action for Boston Community Development President and CEO John J. Drew was presented with Suffolk University's Moakley Public Service Award. The award serves to recognize an individual who exemplifies Congressman Moakley's commitment to outstanding performance in the public service sector. Drew is also a Suffolk University alumnus. Sandy Matava, right, Director of the Moakley Center for Public Management, presented the award to Drew, noting his strong commitment to ABCD staff development, notably through the Providers' Council's Certificate in Nonprofit Human Services Management program in partnership with Suffolk.

Employment Options' Wolf tapped to lead MRC

Congratulations to Toni A. Wolf, who has been named commissioner of **Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission** (MRC) effective mid-July. MRC assists individuals with disabilities to live and work independently and is also responsible for handling disability claims on behalf of the Social Security Administration.



Toni Wolf

"Toni Wolf is a strong and impactful leader with deep experience creating innovative workforce development programs particularly for individuals with mental illness," said Marylou Sudders, Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services. "Her leadership will enable MRC to advance their mission of providing comprehensive services to all people with disabilities. Her experience as a successful executive will bring new knowledge and business acumen in promoting economic self-sufficiency and opening greater doors of opportunity in the community."

Wolf has served as executive director of Employment Options, Inc., a Marlborough- based organization that empowers individuals and families in mental health recovery to thrive in their communities, since 1986. Wolf has collaborated with renowned national and international research partners in addressing a service gap for families living with parental mental illness.

Wolf takes over for Kasper Goshgarian who has served as acting commissioner since February following the retirement of former MRC Commissioner Nicky Osborne earlier this year.

Ayers selected to succeed Robinson at UWPV

James Ayers, Executive Director of United Way of Hampshire County, has been selected to lead **United Way of Pioneer Valley** in Springfield as its next president and chief executive officer, effective this month.

Ayers will take over from Dora Robinson, who is retiring following a career of more than 40 years of nonprofit leadership in the greater Springfield area. Robinson was also a longtime Providers' Council board member and officer.



James Ayers

During his tenure at United Way of Hampshire County (UWHC), Ayres expanded the donor base and increased funding diversity and overall revenue at a time when many United Ways nationally experienced shrinkage. Prior to joining UWHC, Ayres served for 12 years as the executive director of the Center for New Americans, an education and resource center for immigrants, refugees and other limited-English speakers in western Mass.

Recovery beds recovered



State Rep. Liz Malia speaks at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Victory Programs' New Joelyn's Home in Roxbury in May. The opening of the 24-bed home for women marked the reclamation of all the beds that were lost when the city unexpectedly closed the Long Island bridge two and a half years prior. Both VPI and Bay Cove Human Services lost several programs at that time, all of which have now been reestablished.

Healey receives social justice award at Safe Homes gala

The Bridge of Central Massachusetts presented its Social Justice Advocacy and Action Award to Attorney General Maura Healey at the annual Safe Homes Gala in May.

Since taking office as the Attorney General in January 2015, Healey has tackled issues touching the lives of residents across Massachusetts, advocating for marriage equality and in support of legislation to fight discrimination against transgender people. Also honored at the event were Dale LePage, Michelle Baronas, Aliana Roman and The Hanover Foundation for their ongoing support of the LGBTQ community.



Maura Healey

Safe Homes is a program of Worcester-based The Bridge of Central Massachusetts. It is one of 52 programs operated by The Bridge and is the only program in the area which provides specialized services to LGBTQ youth between the ages of 14-23.

JRI promotes George to budget director position

JRI, a provider of trauma-informed care to children and families in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, has named Matt George to the position of Director of Residential Budgets and Fiscal Reporting. In this new role, George will be responsible for JRI's external reporting as well as budget support for residential programs operated by the agency. George joined the JRI team more than 10 years ago.

WMTC names Grubbs to management team

Western Mass. Training Consortium recently announced that Randi Grubbs has been selected as its Home & Community Connections Director.

Grubbs has worked in human services for more than 20 years, and her professional experience includes working for the Institute of Professional Practice in Fitchburg where she was a Vocational Day Program Director, serving 109 individuals with developmental disabilities; and Community Resources for Justice where she started as a program manager and eventually became the residential director.

Grubbs also worked for the Department of Developmental Services in central Mass.

Wayside's Landaverde receives Bill Taylor Award

The 2017 MetroWest Outstanding Human Service Professional Award was presented Oscar Landaverde of **Wayside Youth & Family Support Network**'s Tempo Young Adult Resource Center during the MetroWest Human Services Advocacy Legislative Breakfast.

The annual award is presented in memory of late Advocates CEO Bill Taylor. Landaverde, who joined Advocates in 2007 after previously working as a corrections officer, has worked with and made positive impacts in the lives of hundreds of young adults facing some of life's greatest challenges.

Changing Lives Fund intended to break new ground



A $1 million gift to Northeast Arc from Steven Rosenthal, pictured here with CEO Jo Ann Simons, establishes the Changing Lives Fund to expand services in innovative ways.

In deciding to make an unprecedented $1 million gift to Northeast Arc, Steven P. Rosenthal wanted to ensure it would have maximum impact.

"I wanted to do something different, innovative, even disruptive, in a positive sense," he said. "The idea was to find a way to literally change lives one at a time."

The result is the establishment of the Changing Lives Fund, which will provide a new vehicle for **Northeast Arc** to expand services in creative and innovative ways that traditional funding has not allowed.

Rosenthal, a Marblehead resident, is founder and chairman of West Shore LLC, a Boston-based real estate private equity company. He said he wants his gift to enable Northeast Arc to break new ground in the work it does providing lifelong support for people with disabilities.

"This is a real game-changer for us," said Jo Ann Simons, CEO of Northeast Arc. "Not only is Steve's gift significant in the level of his generosity, it will allow us to greatly expand our reach in supporting individuals and test other new ideas and innovations."

Rosenthal said he is confident in Northeast Arc's ability to effectively use the gift as intended.

"They can figure out what will be innovative, what will be impactful, what will be different," he said. "Jo Ann is an innovative, aggressive thinker. Northeast Arc is on the front line of helping people on the most basic level, in their day-to-day individual lives."

The Changing Lives Fund can be used to develop a service model that is not currently funded by a state or federal agency; provide seed money to start a new initiative that will become self-sustaining; and develop initiatives that simultaneously support the Northeast Arc's mission and the needs of the community.

The fund also allows Northeast Arc to provide financial support to new ideas of other individuals and organizations that support people with disabilities and are consistent with Arc's mission.

Provider Profiles

Centerboard

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About the Agency

Centerboard is a community-based organization that supports families and young people through housing, access to employment, education and financial empowerment. The organization works with parents and teens to achieve independence by providing trauma-informed care and case management. In addition, Centerboard works with local residents, businesses and elected officials to increase economic opportunity in the community.

The organization's mission is to revitalize communities by investing in their people and places. In the 25-plus years since its inception, Centerboard has grown into a $15 million organization, serving over 1,500 people annually through a range of services that support family stability. To accomplish its mission, the agency focuses on creating strong, sustainable catalysts for change and development. Centerboard believes in Lynn as a vibrant, urban center that supports the entire region through a vital creative economy, safe and stable housing, jobs and schooling for all residents. Centerboard brings community attention and resources to our most vulnerable residents: low-income families and youth/young adults.

Centerboard has many goals through their variety of programs, and the organization provides culturally-relevant, family-centered and trauma-informed services to their clients. In addition, the organization supports families to strengthen their bonds, connect to others and encourages positive engagement within their community. The organization establishes permanent, safe housing for families and helps clients foster independence and financial self-sufficiency.

Diverse programs at the heart of a city

Centerboard provides carefully constructed programs and resources to the young families and children they serve. Whether it is parenting programs, home-based stabilization, clinical case management or therapy to young children, Centerboard prides itself in helping others in a judgment-free, proactive environment and provides clients with a sense of hope and security in a time of need.

The **Family Forward Resource Center** (FRC) is part of a statewide network of community-based providers offering multi-cultural resources to families whose children range in age from birth to 18 years. Services within the FRC include parenting skills workshops, self-help groups, grandparents groups, financial workshops, stress management workshops, educational programs, family events & activities as well as resource and referral services. Success stories from our resource center are endless and the Lynn FRC was recently recognized at a statewide FRC training as one of the leading Resource Centers in Massachusetts.

Centerboard's **Housing Services** work to end homelessness among families throughout the North Shore by offering home based stabilization services with intensive case management. This program builds on residents' strengths by offering classes, workshops, clinical support and by providing a compassionate recognition of family challenges. Offerings within the Housing Services include, credit check and repair, payment of arrearages, job readiness and employment support, ESOL classes, financial stability classes, assistance with resolving legal issues and permanent housing searches.

The organization's **Youth Programs** serve young people from ages 12-22, with a range of services to foster independent



VisionSpace Gallery hosts a life event for residents and others in Lynn.

living and financial self-sufficiency throughout their seven residential programs in the Greater Lynn area. Each program provides trauma-informed care, a compassionate, accurate understanding of kids' behavioral and developmental challenges. A majority of these clients are young adults who are aging out of foster care or recovering from abuse and neglect. Centerboard offers assessment and treatment planning, clinical case management, family therapy, group therapy, and therapeutic recreation.

Centerboard also supports the growth of arts and culture movement in Lynn by spearheading public art projects, supporting the Downtown Lynn Cultural District and operating the nonprofit art gallery **Visionspace**. They help beautify areas of downtown while simultaneously creating conversation pieces and instilling pride among both passersby and neighbors. Visionspace Gallery offers a variety of events from free monthly art openings, along with music, dance and craft workshops that provide both area residents and the families and youth they work with the opportunity to tap into their creative sides while participating in cultural events.

Chief Executive Officer

Mark DeJoie has led Centerboard for more than 18 years and has expanded the organization exponentially reaching more families in need each year. In his time at Centerboard, the organization has gone from a 25-employee, modestly budgeted $2 million dollar nonprofit, to a $15 million dollar budget, with more than 125 employees and counting. Centerboard offers countless resources and programs on site at their 16 City Hall location in downtown Lynn, and houses 271 families in need across the city. The dedicated staff works with families to support young people and their families and has continued to rapidly grow in the area of providing services to teen moms.



Mark DeJoie

In his time, DeJoie has overseen tremendous growth including the increase of Housing Services and the creation of a Youth Services and Community Program, all of which have become mainstays for Centerboard. DeJoie has created a distinct staff culture that allows his employees to grow both professionally and personally while utilizing their individual strengths and talents to help more people in need.

His unique vision for Centerboard encourages creative and collaborative processing, allowing for a collective approach to serving families, youth and the community. Over the past 28 years, Centerboard has realized important milestones in the organization and subsequently in their ability to help Greater Lynn's families.

Saluting The Caring Force

Fichera's joie de vivre is contagious

Pat Fichera's got spunk, all agree. She's hopping around her program room while the rain pounds at the windows, exclaiming, "Oh, no, what I am going to do? The hurricane is coming, the hurricane is coming!"

Every adult in her program room has eyes on her, and thinking "she's gone off the deep end" is clearly written on their faces.

"It's all right, Pat!" says one. "Don't stress about it!" says another.

She stops suddenly, flinging her arms wide. "That's right, isn't it!" she tells them. "I don't have to stress about this, do I? Everything is going to be just fine."

It's all part of Fichera's repertoire of engagement, one she has been developing since 2001 at **CLASS** in Lawrence when she joined the direct-care staff.

"If you present ideas to them the right way, the information sticks," she says. "But you need to act with humor. We need to be actors, to engage everyone in the room. Low key doesn't make an impression on this group; loud, interesting and expressive does."

Pat was voted CLASS's Employee of the Year in 2016, nominated by Alicia Mordach, R.N., Health Care Supervisor for the agency.

"Pat is fantastic," she says simply. "She actively engages every individual and on their level so they learn really important life skills. She picks up on the silent nuances of their health and gives a heads-up to the nursing staff when necessary. She has a real good sense."

With more than 140 people attending



Pat Fichera has a knack for engaging clients/consumers in a most positive way.

Day Hab, it takes commitment to learn everyone's interests and challenges.

"It takes a wealth of knowledge and time to learn each individual's protocols and needs," Mordach says. "Ask her a question about anybody and she knows the answer. And she has absolute patience when a lot of drama is going on her room. Her only goal is to turn every individual's day around."

Fichera's first career was in fashion and merchandising, then she switched gears to join her new husband in running his entrepreneurial business.

"I adapt and manage change very well," she said. "I take time to understand how things work, and the steps everyone needs to achieve their goals, their little miracles along the way."

Want to set, reach goals? Ask Alexa

Alexa O'Neil has a knack for setting and reaching goals. O'Neil joined **NuPath** in 2014 as a case manager and was recently promoted as an Internal Rehabilitation Systems Coordinator at the Woburn-based organization, which has served individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for nearly 50 years.

Some of her duties consist of developing and updating individual service plan (ISP) goals for men and women under her care and assisting direct care staff successfully attain those goals.

O'Neil is keenly focused on raising expectations and increasing opportunities for the men and women in NuPath's programs by working tirelessly to ensure the health, happiness and fulfillment in the lives of people living with disabilities – the true essence of NuPath's mission.

"I enjoy my work," she said. "I like to be an active part in getting the men and women we support the support they need to live, work and grow in their communities."

John, one of the clients who knows O'Neil well, says "she is a great staff, is always available and willing to help me attain my goals to be a better person!"

O'Neil has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, along with CPR, First Aid and Prevent certifications.

Her optimistic personality, cheery



NuPath's Alexa O'Neil helps clients determine what they want to accomplish as an Internal Rehabilitation Systems Coordinator for the organization.

vibes and the "ability to make the best of a difficult situation", according to Day Habilitation Manager Amy Hackney, make her a valuable member of the NuPath team of more than 500 professionals.

"Alexa works hard and always has a smile on her face," added Hackney. "She's truly a delight to have as one of the leaders of our program and it's a pleasure to work with her every day."

EDITORIAL



Michael Weekes
President / Publisher

More 'butter,' less guns

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, *"A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom."*

These prophetic words apply contemporaneously to the Trump Administration's obsession with the proverbial guns-versus-butter values choices. His first budget proposal – and we hope it is *dead on arrival* – slashes over $1.7 trillion in social, health, education, research and non-military spending that is, quite simply, frightening.

This so-called "Taxpayers First" budget is certainly not putting our children first with cuts in education programs like Head Start, child care and public school programs, along with cuts to Medicaid, Social Security benefits, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) among many others that help form the safety net.

This "butter" will be subordinate to the guns as a 10 percent increase in military spending – $54 billion – is proposed. Thereby, this Administration has with unabashed fervor chosen to spend more on guns and the military than to protect those with basic needs such as food, health care, clothing, etc.

Governor Charlie Baker's office released a statement that sums it up succinctly, saying this budget is "bad for Massachusetts." And I would add bad for every other state as well. This is bad news all around.

It is true that our military is fighting the longest war in our history and continues in what some refer to as the world's cop role. *I'm not advancing an argument for a non-interventionist strategy*, but we need to ask "At what cost does this purported safety come?"

Leadership in this democracy requires investments to have a reasonable balance of social, health, education, research and arts; with essential investments in basic social needs, not on a nonessential military expansion wish list prioritized over those basic needs.

Why "nonessential"? I have yet to hear a sound and convincing argument that America's safety and protection is directly correlated to the amount of our military spending. America today spends more on its military than the next seven nations (China, Saudi Arabia, Russia, United Kingdom, India, France and Japan) combined! We are currently spending at a rate of $57 million an hour, so by the time you wake up from your eight-hour sleep, we've blown through $456 million and counting with every passing night.

This Administration's $4.1 trillion proposed budget – released while Trump was overseas – includes not only more military spending, but also an additional $2.6 billion for border security and another $1.6 billion to begin building his wall: A wall that will not provide food to those who are poor, our elders needing "Meals on Wheels" or those with a disability.

Since Trump has a fascination with military brass, perhaps he would heed the words of Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a highly decorated military general, who said in 1953, *"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children."*

The cruel irony of this budget is the rhetoric used by the Trump Administration to defend the seemingly indefensible attack on our children and our nation's most vulnerable. His budget chief, Mick Mulvaney, proudly boasted, *"We're not going to measure our success by how much we spend, but by how many people we actually help."* Yes, in their estimation, slashing SNAP (the food stamps budget) by 25 percent ($193 billion) will actually help them. Help them to do what? Starve?

Closer to home, I asked our Department of Transitional Assistance Commissioner Jeff McCue how he would handle a 25 percent cut in SNAP if it passed. McCue is not only worried about feeding those in need, but also helping those with special situations learn and earn wages to become more independent without losing their safety net. He couldn't begin to fathom how to cut a benefit that is roughly $212 per month from our children, people with a disability and a growing number of seniors – roughly 40 percent of SNAP recipients – in this high-cost-of-living state. Interestingly enough, the so-called Rust Belt states like Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, and some southern states will get hit even harder with these cuts to SNAP.

Perhaps someone will inform the President and the Congress, if they're inclined to support him, that rejecting guns over butter is not a tough choice from a moral frame, but a just one. And perhaps someone will also inform him that more than 23,000 active duty service members that Trump has professed to support also depend upon SNAP, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In fact, last year $67 million in food stamps was spent at military commissaries, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

By now you get the picture: Trash this senseless budget proposal and choose butter over guns to avoid Dr. King's "spiritual doom" and, more importantly, life or death situations for millions of children and adults with food insecurity.



Different budgeting priorities



42nd Annual Convention & Expo
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Revising pooled trust guidelines would leave hole in safety net

By Kenneth W. Singer and David H. Jones

In 1993, Congress passed a law designed to help charities and Medicaid agencies work together to help the disabled. As president & CEO of Berkshire County Arc, I am proud to say that our agency (and others in Massachusetts) rose to the challenge and created the Berkshire County Arc Special Needs Pooled Trust to enable us to serve the disabled in a new way. Over the past 15 years, our trust has helped our agency help countless vulnerable people with disabilities.

It is of great concern that, MassHealth, the state's Medicaid agency, is now considering a change to its regulations that would make the benefits of the pooled trust unavailable to persons ages 65 or older. We urge social service agencies across Massachusetts to come together and oppose this unwise, restrictive change in the law, which would only make it harder for us to help vulnerable, disabled elders.

The 1993 legislation amended the federal Medicaid statute to authorize the use of pooled special needs trusts. The law provided that a person with a permanent disability would be permitted to place his or her money in a pooled special needs trust, where it would not interfere with Medicaid eligibility, if, but only if, the trust met certain strict conditions.

The first condition is that the trust must be administered by a charity. The law therefore offered social-service charities – which are the institutions fighting on the front lines of assisting the disabled – a new tool to help their clients. The second is that the law limited the use of such trusts to persons with a permanent and total disability who are unable to work and support themselves. Only the truly needy can enjoy the legal benefits of a pooled trust.

To further protect the interests of the taxpayers, the third requirement is that after a trust beneficiary's death, the Medicaid program would have the right to be repaid from any remaining trust balance to cover what was paid out to the beneficiary during his or her life. The charity administering the trust is also permitted to retain a portion of remaining funds for use toward its charitable purposes.

In short, in 1993 Congress enacted a carefully designed, precisely calibrated, "win-win-win" public-private partnership that invited charities all over the country to assist the disabled in new and creative ways through the use of a pooled special needs trust. For the two decades since then, MassHealth has permitted individuals age 65 and older to benefit from the use of a pooled special needs trust along with their younger fellow citizens. And yet, in late 2016, MassHealth issued a draft regulation that would withdraw the benefit of this law on a person's 65th birthday.

The story of a client of the Berkshire County Arc illustrates how cruel and ill-advised such a change would be. "Bonnie," a 69-year-old woman diagnosed in 2002 with multiple sclerosis, lives in the community in a rented apartment. Because the MS greatly affects her memory, Bonnie lost her job and now relies upon MassHealth, her modest Social Security retirement income, the Massachusetts State Supplemental Program, Section 8 and food stamps. Just one of the medications for her illness costs more than $6,000 per month. Medicare pays most of the cost and extra help covers the balance. Without MassHealth, Bonnie would find it almost impossible to pay the remaining costs for her medications. There is nothing left over at the end of the month for any extras or emergencies.

She was recently left $10,000 upon the death of her father. The account she was permitted to create in the Berkshire County Arc Special Needs Pooled Trust has helped her to avoid a catastrophic loss in MassHealth eligibility and have a small fund to draw on to meet personal needs not met by her modest benefits.

If MassHealth adopts the proposed change to its regulation, Bonnie, and others in a similar position, would lose access to MassHealth upon receipt of even a modest inheritance. The people who will be affected by the proposed regulatory change live with a range of disabilities, such as intellectual, mental health and physical. They reside in a variety of settings – independently, adult foster care, in group homes and in nursing homes. They are of modest means and seek to retain funds to supplement their benefits to pay for goods and services otherwise uncovered by MassHealth: health care and dental costs, companion services, transportation, clothing, household and personal items are just a few examples.

Fortunately, bills pending before the Massachusetts Legislature (Senate Bill 629 and House Bill 2074) would overrule the proposed change in the MassHealth regulation and preserve access to pooled trusts for those age 65 and over.

On behalf of the vulnerable, disabled elders whom we serve, we urge all human service agencies in Massachusetts to support the proposed legislation that would put a stop to MassHealth's cruel and ill-advised proposal. It will help us help our clients live with the dignity they deserve.

Kenneth W. Singer is the President & CEO of Berkshire County Arc. David H. Jones, Esquire, is counsel for BC Arc, Master Special Needs Pooled Trust.

PREP© West: Creating therapeutic community together

By Melissa D. Weise

Imagine sitting in a therapeutic circle that includes friends, family, mentors, counselors, prescribers and the voices that are speaking from within. All have a say in shaping the way forward for those who have recently experienced their first episode of psychosis.

Welcome to PREP© West – the Prevention and Recovery in Early Psychosis program that ServiceNet launched in Holyoke in the fall of 2015. The PREP Program is based on a cutting edge concept to more effectively treat those who experience psychosis, who have historically been given a poor lifetime prognosis. Our focus is on early intervention, the idea being that this will reduce symptoms of psychosis or even allow symptoms to go into remission. Funded by a three-year grant from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health with backing from SAMHSA, this outpatient day program for up to 50 young adults between the ages of 16 and 30 uses a non-hierarchical approach to treatment, in which everyone participates and everyone learns.

The centerpiece of our program is a robust milieu – or therapeutic community – developed around program participants' interests and needs. We begin each day with active community-building, and soon after start getting ready for lunch, which we prepare together and eat together. In the afternoons, we have a variety of structured groups, ranging from drama to writing, volunteering, peer recovery, wellness and "Creating Change". Program participants connect over their mutual interests and continue making connections throughout the day. We also offer life skills groups, plus several additional outpatient modalities, including individual psychotherapy, medication management, peer counseling and wellness.

PREP is intense, it's creative, it's challenging and it's working. People often come into the PREP© West program shortly after hospitalization and many of them are still symptomatic – hearing voices, having hallucinations and feeling socially isolated. It may take them a few weeks or even months before they are fully engaged, and they may continue to have difficulty with mood changes, lack of motivation and difficulty with cognition. What they learn very quickly though, is that they are not alone – others in the group have been in the same place and come through it. And this can make all the difference.

When Matt (not his real name) came into the program, he was manic, disorganized and distressed by his diagnosis of schizoaffective disorder. He'd been rejected by his local community and soon afterwards suffered a family loss. Still grieving these losses, he soon found others who understood and accepted him just as he was. Matt started participating in groups, cooking meals, participating in therapy, and taking medication to address his symptoms. He'd always been an intelligent, curious young man, and this came through in his interactions with others.

Six months after entering the program, Matt was on medication that worked, had reconnected with his family and community, and had found a full-time job. He was back in his life, and moving on.

Each person's experience is different, of course. Some take more time, some less, though all make consistent progress during their time with PREP© West. We believe much of this happens because of the nature of the community we create together. Though the experiences of our program participants may be more dramatic and disturbing than ours have been, all of us have had to sort through and make sense of how we identify in the world. The more we look at ourselves, while checking our understanding of others and consciously developing our own cultural humility, the stronger our shared community becomes for everyone involved. We don't just provide milieu therapy; we do the work of milieu therapy, alongside the participants in our program.

The same equality holds true in our network meetings. These sessions – which happen as often as once or twice a week when someone first starts the program, then taper off to every couple of weeks – involve anyone the individual might define as a member of his or her support network. Meetings could also include the voices – for the messages they share are all part of the story, like a waking dream analysis, and can help the full network make more sense of the experience. People start a dialogue with each other, bringing their particular expertise and perspective to the discussion. No one at PREP© West has more authority or carries more influence than anyone else. For it is the full therapeutic community that helps in the recovery of the young adults involved.

Melissa Weise, MSW, LICSW, is Director of PREP© West, an outpatient program of ServiceNet.

A Public Guardian for Massachusetts

By Scott Harshbarger and Peter M. Macy

One of the most exciting developments in Massachusetts social policy today is the growing support for an Office of Public Guardian – to protect vulnerable individuals who cannot understand or express critical life decisions, and who are poor and isolated. Often referred to as the "unbefriended," peer-reviewed research completed in 2016 indicates that there are 3,000 to 4,000 such persons in Massachusetts who do not get the help they need.

Many of these individuals languish in hospitals and rehabilitation facilities, awaiting appointment of a pro bono guardian or conservator to approve treatment or discharge. Others are elderly or disabled victims of abuse or neglect by those responsible for them. As Attorney General from 1991 to 1999, I saw many in this situation, suffering through evictions, loss of resources and physical neglect, because they could not act for themselves. These problems have not gone away. The recent White House Conference on Elder Justice in 2015 confirmed that the issue remains, and may be growing.

Legislation to create an Office of Adult Guardianship and Decisional Support Services (House Bill 3027 and Senate Bill 1177) was filed in January of this year, sponsored by Rep. Paul Brodeur in the House and Sen. Cynthia Creem in the Senate. Thirty other senators and representatives are co-sponsoring. Major consumer groups, including Massachusetts AARP and the Alzheimer's Association, support the bill.

The goal of the Public Guardian is not just to be a guardian-of-last-resort for the "unbefriended," although this clearly is a need. Our aging population, over-burdened services for the mentally ill and tightening budgets for agencies of all kinds mean that there are more people who need guardians and fewer resources for them. The situation is approaching crisis level for some demographics, such as the elderly. The public option for them is long overdue.

But other goals are just as important. The Public Guardian will promote alternatives to guardianship, especially when there are committed family or friends who can offer help on a voluntary basis. For those who require guardianship, Massachusetts needs more uniform practice standards, both public and private. And the Public Guardian will offer more and better public education about how to avoid guardianship through health care proxies, durable powers of attorney and other arrangements.

The story behind the proposed bill begins three years ago, when four stakeholder organizations began collaborating as the Massachusetts Guardianship Policy Institute, to re-focus attention on the public guardian issue. Over the past year and a half, the Institute has drawn together more than 30 other public and private stakeholder groups, through several well-attended colloquia and two conferences with other state public guardianship programs, all of whom share an interest in establishing a Public Guardian for Massachusetts.

The proposal now before the Legislature would create a public-private partnership dedicated to leading and serving the goals of the Public Guardian. At the state level, a small new agency – the Office of Adult Guardianship and Decisional Support Services – will focus exclusively on decisional needs, including guardianship, alternatives to guardianship, standards for all forms of decisional help and public education on all of these themes. The needs of the "unbefriended" will be a top priority.

At the private level, a nonprofit agency will be chosen and designated as the "Public Guardian" to deliver guardianship as a last resort for the most vulnerable. For those in better circumstances, it will help with voluntary decisional support services. Unlike most private partners in state programs, the Public Guardian will be self-funded. This bears repeating: The Public Guardian will *not* receive funding from the state. A small part of the funding may consist of limited fees, if allowed by the courts, in cases that can afford them. But the vast majority of funding will be charitable.

Like many new ideas, the Public Guardian will begin as a pilot project. The initial goal is to help 400 of the "unbefriended" in three or four counties, either with guardianship or with an alternative form of decisional support. The aim is to scale up to statewide services after five years.

The Institute today includes the authors, along with John Ford, Esq., of the Northeast Justice Center; Wynn Gerhard, Esq., of Greater Boston Legal Services; and Heather Connors, Ph.D., Director of Research at Guardian Community Trust, Inc. The next Colloquium on Public Guardianship is scheduled for June 21 in Boston. If you are interested in attending, in learning more about the Institute or in joining the online discussion, please visit www.guardianship.institute.

The Hon. Scott Harshbarger is Senior Counsel at Casner & Edwards, LLP and served as state Attorney General from 1991-1999. Peter M. Macy, Ed.M., J.D., is Executive Director of the nonprofit Guardian Community Trust, Inc.



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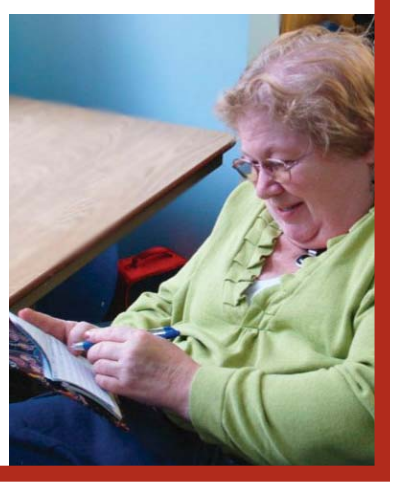
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A View from the Hill



A commentary from a legislator on human services

Bill would help persons with disabilities gain employment

By Rep. Nick Collins

The pursuit of happiness is a cornerstone of our nation. As a policymaker it is part of my job to ensure that everyone in our community has access to opportunities for economic, social, and personal growth. An economy that works for everyone is not only a societal goal we should all strive to achieve, it is also a means to motivate all individuals to seek their full potential.

More than 80 percent of persons with disabilities in our Commonwealth are unemployed. There are more than 300,000 Massachusetts citizens collecting some form of disability assistance from the state or federal government, many of whom are willing, able and eager to work, but are unable to gain employment.

Requiring contracts for certain state services to employ a minimum of 8 percent persons with disabilities is one step forward in addressing this troubling economic and social disparity.

Creating economic mobility for the disability community would not only generate significant economic impact, it would secure Massachusetts' leadership in providing opportunity for all its residents.

While there is certainly an economic argument in favor of this policy proposal, there is an inextricable social argument as well: that all citizens of this Commonwealth have the right to participate in community life, to experience meaningful development of skills and to pursue personal and financial growth.

My proposal would apply to important services like landscaping, food service, mailroom services and custodial work. A number of community-based provider organizations, as well as the Office of Labor and Workforce Development and Mass. Rehabilitation Commission and others, already offer a variety of job training and employment programs in these areas. And these are industries that are currently in a labor shortage, particularly the food service industry. These circumstances create an opportunity to send a signal to private employers that persons with disabilities are ready and able to provide meaningful services. The Commonwealth has an opportunity to set an example, alleviate a labor shortage and mitigate the expenses of public disability assistance with one simple policy. We should seize this opportunity. Now is the time to act.



Rep. Nick Collins

As a society, we should strive for an inclusive and vibrant workforce that reflects our community as a whole. There is a significant amount of human capital that is untapped because of a lack of opportunity for the disability community to access employment.

Certainly there are many qualified and capable individuals with disabilities in our Commonwealth, and they should be given the opportunity to thrive. Requiring state contracts to include employment of persons with disabilities is economically empowering for both the individuals and the Commonwealth.

This proposal is a win-win.

Rep. Nick Collins, D-Boston, represents the 4th Suffolk District.

BUDGET: Conference Committee to resolve differences in FY '18 plan

Continued from Page 1

workers' salaries, but also to rising health insurance premiums, site and utility costs and improving services to clients. A better way to increase employee compensation would be to help community-based providers control their health care costs and to pay rates comparable to state employees doing similar jobs."

Also subject to Conference Committee resolution will be:

• Funding for Competitive Integrated Employment Services. The House budget plan includes language in line item 4401-1000 Employment Services Program that ensures that CIES "will be funded at no less than FY '17 levels." The Senate rejected an amendment to add this language.

• Adult Foster Care rates for FY '18, due to differences in language in the House and Senate bills. Language protecting AFC services at FY '16 levels is in the House budget, but the Senate rejected Senator Jennifer Flanagan's Adult Foster Care amendment (#335) that would have preserved Adult Foster Care at FY '16 levels.

• The early education rate reserve. Funding stood at $20 million in the House and $10 million in the Senate, so the sides will need to work out the differences.

• DCF Family Resource Centers. The Senate proposed nearly double that of the House ($12.2 million to $7.8 million).

The chambers will also need to come to some resolution regarding Gov. Baker's proposed health insurance assessment which initially sought to penalize employers where less than 80 percent of FTE's elected to take health insurance.

The six-person Conference Committee includes House Ways and Means Chairman Rep. Brian Dempsey and Senate Ways and Means Chairwoman Karen Spilka; vice chairs Rep. Stephen Kulik and Sen. Sal DiDomenico; and Republicans Sen. Vinny deMacedo and Rep. Todd Smola. Once a final compromise budget is reached later this month, it goes to the full House and Senate for approval, and then to Gov. Charlie Baker. The Governor can veto specific line items, but he cannot add funding to the bill.

CONVENTION: *We're All In*

Continued from Page 1

June. The awards honor direct care staff, supervisors, CEOs, volunteers, community and governmental partners and more.

• Limited tables are available for the Expo, which has sold out for 12 straight years, so register today to avoid being shut out of this popular event.

• Sponsorship opportunities are still available. Complete information and award nominations forms are online at providers.org/pages/convention.

COLLEGES: Building relationships can create pipeline for gaining employees

Continued from Page 1

sociate Professor and Human Service Internship Coordinator at UMass Boston, made up the panel that discussed different ways to bring students in as workers. The panelists primarily discussed ways of incorporating internships and co-op positions, but also talked of establishing relationships between institutions and provider organizations; utilizing student talent in different ways; and creating employment pipelines and career ladders.

Human resources and recruiting staff from about a dozen member organizations took part in the informative and engaging panel. All of the college personnel noted that students with internships and co-op jobs become leading candidates for employment after they complete their program and also after graduation.

The key for organizations is to start building relationships with people in the placement offices to make them aware of internship and/or co-op opportunities, panelists said. They added that it is also important for supervisors and managers to understand that utilizing students can mean investing time in the mentoring/teaching aspect of the job. The panelists acknowledged that it's not always easy due to the many demands on managers, but it's worth the investment because the students often turn into "rock stars."

Worsh, of Northeastern, noted that the information being presented by the panel was "just an example. There are so many universities in Massachusetts," that providers can find institutions close to their programs that will be seeking to help students find internships and jobs. Noting that transportation is often an issue for finding staff at programs especially in central and western Mass., she pointed out that students attending schools outside of greater Boston are more likely to have access to cars.

She acknowledged that by utilizing co-op students, who work for six months at a time, providers would still have to deal with turnover, "but it's scheduled turnover" and the next co-op student is usually lined up to fill the position being vacated. But on the other hand, a student might be available to transition to working on a per diem basis after completing a co-op stint.

Coleman said that about 60 percent to 80 percent of the Boston College MSW candidates are hired by the end of their first- or second-year practicums.

She noted that relationships between colleges and providers can "also help build career paths," something that millennials value very highly according to research conducted by the Providers' Council and others. Boston College School of Social Work provides training in supervision.

A difference between co-ops and interns is that the former are paid – they are brought on as employees – while the latter usually are not.

The panel also talked about keys to successful internships and co-op programs, including:

• Making a commitment to teaching; "It helps providers to keep people (both students and other staff) if an organization can do support for supervisors on how to supervise," Coleman said.

• Adequate supervision and mentoring; "A student might need a little extra check in during the first couple of months, but after that they become rock stars," said Northeastern's Worsh.

• Students like to be engaged with real projects; "They understand there's going to be grunt work, but if some part is connected to what they want to do in the future and they can take ownership," it helps with engagement and retention, Suffolk's Lazarek said.

• Simple validations make a big impression; "I had one student tell me 'they asked me to come to a staff meeting,' " UMass Boston's Cuf Ferguson said. "It's important in terms of building expertise and providing experience they may not otherwise have."

• While supervisory requirements for graduate-level interns can present challenges, that supervisor doesn't have to be providing the day-to-day supervision, said Cambridge College's Hugh Ferguson.

Another interesting point that was made during the forum is that nonprofit organizations can hire students who have work-study grants.

If you would like more information about the above panelists' internship or co-op programs, please email Ella Froggatt at ella@providers.org or call her at 617.428.3637 x126.

CAMPAIGN: New jobs board, marketing unveiled

Continued from Page 1

job exposures (each time a job can appear in a search listing that is either on Jobs With Heart or another site). The new jobs board remains free for members and is also open to non-members.

Members received a sneak peek at the marketing campaign in May during the forum, "Messaging & Millennials: A Campaign for the Next Workforce." Presented by the full-service communications firm Argus, which developed a campaign comprising a consistent, understandable message to help raise awareness about the community-based human services sector as a viable career choice

"The Council is doing what it always does – getting ahead of a problem and coming up with solutions," said Dafna Krouk-Gordon, founder and president of TILL and a co-chair of the Council's millennial work group. "How do we attract them? That's the marketing message."

During the forum, the Argus team of Caitlyn Dodge, José Nieto and Christine Healy presented the research and methodology that went into creating the campaign geared toward the millennial generation. The messages Argus has developed use powerful imagery to make a quick connection and appeal to millennials' desire for meaningful work, as well as strong current attitudes across generations toward social justice and advocacy. The overall campaign is being designed to "get people to take that next step of applying" for jobs in human services, Dodge said.

"We want to make a few memorable points," Nieto added. "We want to speak to the head and the heart; spark an emotional reaction; make it believable and easy to understand and form a mental image."

The campaign also includes a broad, shared definition of human services and various types of co-brandable collateral materials to help maintain consistent messaging throughout all human services subsectors.

Consistency and repetition are two key pieces of raising awareness about human services, Healy noted, pointing out that during the initial research, an understanding of human services increased among the survey respondents from 26 percent at the start of the survey to 66 percent at the end of it.

"What I've learned throughout this process is that we need to 'emphasize the positive' about our sector," said Providers' Council President and CEO Michael Weekes. "They've been helping us think about how to best communicate that."

Members who are interested in learning more about co-branding opportunities with the Providers' Council or about the marketing campaign in general may email Michelle McKenzie at mmckenzie@providers.org or call 617.428.3637 x114.

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Calendar of Events • Spring/Summer 2017

What:	**Conducting Effective Internal Investigations**
When:	Thursday, June 8th; 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Where:	BAMSI, 225 Foxborough Blvd., Foxborough
Trainer:	Jean Haertl, CEO of Safety and Respect at Work
Cost:	$99 members; $135 non-members
What:	**Suffolk Certificate Program Graduation**
When:	Monday, June 26th, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Where:	Suffolk University, 120 Tremont St., Boston Sargent Hall, 5th Floor Commons
What:	**Clark Certificate Program Graduation**
When:	Wednesday, June 28th, Noon
Where:	Clark University, 950 Main St., Worcester Higgins Center, Grace Conference Room

SAVE THE DATE!
Monday, September 25th, 2017
42nd Annual Convention & Expo: *We're All In*

Pre-registration for these events is required unless otherwise noted.
Online registration is available for most events. No login or password is required. Visit www.providers.org and look on the page's left-hand side for the event you wish to attend.
Questions? Call 617.428.3637 or email the Council at twells@providers.org.

Members' 2017 events

JUNE 13: Coldwell Banker Cares Golf Tournament benefitting **The Home for Little Wanderers** will be held Tuesday, June 13 at Wedgewood Pines Country Club in Stow from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Get information at www.events.org/NEGolf

JUNE 14: Bay Cove Human Services will hold its annual *Changing Lives Gala* on Wednesday, June 14 at the Seaport Boston Hotel at 6 p.m. This year's theme is celebrating families and Alma Wahlberg, matriarch of the Wahlberg family, will receive the Changing Lives Award. More information available at www.baycove.org.

JUNE 15: Amego, Inc. of Attleboro will hold its 3rd Annual Amego Golf Tournament at Norton Country Club on Thursday, June 15. Registration opens at 11 a.m., shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. The proceeds from this event will be used to enhance the lives of our children and adult clientele diagnosed with autism and other developmental disabilities. More information at amegoinc.org.

JUNE 16: Venture Community Services will hold its 20th Annual Charity Golf Classic on Friday, June 16 at Blissful Meadows Golf Club in Uxbridge. The day begins with a shotgun start at 9 a.m. For more information go to venturecs.org.

JUNE 26: Victory Programs will hold its 5th annual Drive for Victory Golf Tournament on Monday, June 26 at Blue Hill Country Club in Canton. Luncheon and registration are followed by a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. There will also be an awards dinner and auction. More information and the golfer information packet are available online at www.vpi.org

JULY 17: The 24th annual OE+ Charity Golf Tournament to benefit the **Brockton Area Arc** will take place Monday, July 17 at Fall River Country Club, 4235 North Main St., Fall River. To obtain the full information and the reservation form, contact Steven Petluck at 508-583-8030 x215.

SEPT. 14: The **Friendship Home**'s 18th Annual Golf Classic is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 14 at Indian Pond Country Club and CrossWinds Golf Club, both in Plymouth. Entrants may choose to play at either course. Shotgun start at 11:30 a.m.; the reception and dinner will be held at Indian Pond starting at 4:30 p.m. More information is available at www.friendshiphomeinc.org

SEPT. 15: River Valley Counseling Center will hold its first annual golf tournament on Friday, Sept. 15 at East Mountain Country Club in Westfield. The event will be a scramble format with a 10:30 a.m. shotgun start. For registration and sponsorship information, please contact Angela Callahan by telephone at 413.841.3546 or by email at Callahan_angela@holyokehealth.com.

SEPT. 18: The 6th annual North Station Classic Golf Tournament to benefit **Community Work Services** will be held at Sandy Burr Golf Course in Wayland on Monday, Sept. 18. This event is hosted and supported by businesses, restaurants and hotels of Boston's North Station area. All proceeds help fund CWS Boston job training programs. For information, contact Andrea Mitsch at amitsch@cwsne.org.

Email your events information to Michelle McKenzie at mmckenzie@providers.org.

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