



Stone Belt

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touchstone

summer 2010

Stone Belt presents news & information for individuals with disabilities, families, friends and our community

THE  Stone Belt EMPOWERED LEARNING SERIES

A GUIDE TO DISABILITY GUARDIANSHIP

Thursday, August 26

@ the **Indiana University Innovation Center**

2719 East 10th Street, Bloomington

offered twice

10:00 am – noon

5:30 – 7:30 pm

What is **guardianship** and how is it different from other legal representative roles?

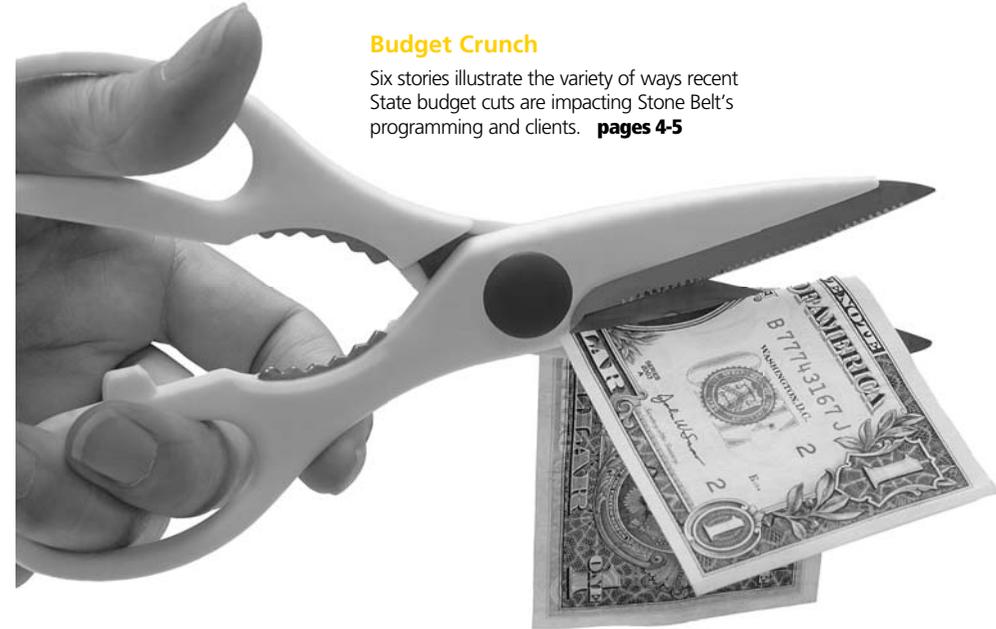
When is guardianship **beneficial** and who best serves as a guardian?

What are the **steps** to establishing guardianship for your loved ones?

Space is limited. This event is free and open to the public. For more information or to **reserve a space** for the seminar contact the Stone Belt Community Engagement Department @ 812-332-2168, ext. 314 / communityengagement@stonebelt.org.

Budget Crunch

Six stories illustrate the variety of ways recent State budget cuts are impacting Stone Belt's programming and clients. **pages 4-5**



Accessible America

Stone Belt Celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the ADA. **page 1**

Dancing Champions

Stone Belt, DeVane win local community fundraising event. **page 3**

Getting Noticed

Milestones adds new program, wins awards. **page 6**

Our Mission

We believe in the uniqueness, worth and right to self-determination of every individual. Therefore, it is our mission, in partnership with the community, to prepare, empower and support individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to participate fully in the life of the community.



ACCESSIBLE AMERICA

Twenty Years ago this July, sweeping legislative reform was passed at the national level to empower citizens of our country who have disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was the world's first comprehensive declaration of equality for individuals with disabilities. It was a collaborative effort of Democrats, Republicans, the legislative and the executive branches, federal and state agencies, and people with and without disabilities.

When President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act in front of 3,000 people on the White House lawn on July 26, 1990, the event represented a historical benchmark and a milestone in America's commitment to full and equal opportunity for all of its citizens.

The President's emphatic directive on that day—"Let the shameful walls of exclusion finally come tumbling down"—neatly encapsulated the simple yet long overdue message of the ADA: that millions of Americans with disabilities are full-fledged citizens and as such are entitled to legal protections that ensure them both equal opportunity and equal access to the mainstream of American life.

This milestone ADA Anniversary is a time when we can reflect positively on a law that has made a great impact on the lives of people with disabilities and our country over the past 20 years, when much has changed. It is no longer unusual to see individuals with disabilities dining out at restaurants, working in professional offices, participating in town hall meetings, shopping at malls, watching movies in theatres and cheering at stadiums. The ADA has made the dream of access a reality.

Over 54 million Americans with physical, cognitive or mental impairments that substantially limit daily activities are protected under the ADA. Success shines in ordinary things. Individuals such as Stone Belt East Region client Archie Herron, a wheelchair user, can go to the grocery store and not be blocked by a turnstile. He can get on a bus that has a lift and go across town. He can go to a movie and not be limited to sitting in a corner at the back of the theater. He can go shopping and use an accessible fitting room. He can travel and find an accessible hotel room at his destination. He can go to the bathroom at the airport and use an accessible stall. Before the ADA not one of these acts was ensured.

Stone Belt Central Region client Angie Ehlers, another wheelchair user, goes to IU basketball games to see

the action in person and to be part of the crowd, like everyone else. But for years, accessible seating was usually located far away from the action with a bad view, or was so isolated from companions and other spectators that interaction was difficult at best.

Ehlers recalled experiences in stadiums built before the ADA, where "all the accessible seating was located in the end zone part of the stadium. Wheelchair users sat up on a cement slab with a railing in front. The person you came to the event with would sit in a fixed seat in front of both you and the railing, but at a much lower level. I didn't really feel part of the crowd and it was difficult to interact with my friend."

Today, under the ADA, at least one percent of the total seats must be established for wheelchair users and dispersed throughout the facility; they must provide a companion seat adjacent to each wheelchair space to allow spectators with disabilities to sit next to family and friends; and they must ensure that accessible seats provide lines of sight comparable to other spectators, so that wheelchair users can still see the playing surface even when spectators in front of them stand up during the event. Accessible routes from parking and transportation areas to accessible seating that connect to all public areas of the facilities are now provided, as well a full access to all concession stands, restrooms, automatic teller machines (ATM), and other amenities.

In 2008, the ADA was amended in order to broaden the coverage of individuals with disabilities that had been narrowed by several Supreme Court decisions. The Amendment focuses on the discrimination at issue, rather

than the individual's disability. Language in the preamble was changed to emphasize that Congress intended to cover a broad range of persons with disabilities.

In the employment arena, a number of companies have found that hiring people with disabilities has helped improve the company's performance. Many have indicated that they do not hire individuals with disabilities for altruistic reasons but rather in order to strengthen their workforce and the health of their enterprises.

"We are fortunate to have employers who understand that hiring individuals with disabilities makes good business sense, in addition to helping those individuals achieve independent and inclusion in the community and contribute to the workforce and economy," said Daniel Grundman, Director of Employee Services for the City of Bloomington, who employs seven Stone Belt clients. "Many recognize that an individual's skills and abilities define him or her as a good employee and asset to the organization."

Bloomington has repeatedly been recognized as an accessible community. In 2008, the City was one of nine nationwide finalists in the Accessible American Contest sponsored by the National Organization on Disability. The City's active Council for Community Accessibility (CCA) is an attributing factor to this label. The group's top priority is to educate community businesses and organizations about disabilities. They also offer services including a free review of blueprints and other remodeling plans for projects in the city. The service was used in the expansion of the Monroe County Public Library and the remodeling of the Indiana University Auditorium. Recently, City officials allocated federal stimulus dollars to replace community-wide sidewalk ramps to meet the requirements of the ADA.

As the ADA moves forward into its next 20 years, several new advocacy issues have emerged including the hot topic of visit-ability and accessibility in places of worship. Look to a future issue of Touchstone to explore these topics further. There is always work more to be done.

The ADA has made a difference in the lives of so many, but there are many others who still face barriers stemming from people's attitudes. These barriers were constructed over generations, and it will now take continued vigilance and dedication to remove them. But if the past 20 years is any indication, Americans with disabilities are well on their way to experiencing all society has to offer.

Save the Date

The City of Bloomington Council for Community Accessibility is hosting a public celebration to mark the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on Thursday, July 29. The celebration will begin at 6 pm in the Fountain Square Ballroom (101 West Kirkwood Avenue, Bloomington). Activities include: a proclamation by Mayor Mark Krusan, an art display and free concert by musical duo Liz Penneck and Dr. Blues.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Craig Brenner, City of Bloomington Special Projects Coordinator, @ 812-349-3471 / brennerc@bloomington.in.gov.

from the CEO

The power of positivity

On his Web site, Remez Sasson, founder and owner of SuccessConsciousness, says, "When going through bad times, faced by disasters, misfortune or hardships, what good can one gain by becoming despondent, negative and unhappy? Why let circumstances and situations affect your moods and state of mind? Being positive will not make circumstances and condition disappear, as if by magic, but with a positive attitude you can improve the situation and be more in control of your state of mind, your reactions and your behavior."

The past few months have been challenging, and so we have needed to bear these thoughts in mind. This issue of *Touchstone* features articles on the effects of recent state funding cuts. We had to take several undesirable actions to lessen the impact of these reductions on client programs. The "hurt" is definitely being felt. Yet, despite the fact that most employees are directly impacted by these reductions, I am impressed daily with their continued dedication, client-focus and resilience. I only hope that better days are close at hand that will put us in a better position to reward our staff for their exceptional efforts.

The news is not all bad. We have bounced back from the December fire in Columbus. Our **Lifelong Learning** and **Milestones** programs are back in full swing in the temporary United Way offices in the Cummins building. We look forward to significant growth of our Milestones services in Columbus when we move into new permanent offices in early 2011. Milestones staff also have new and exciting modalities for serving children through the Incredible Years program. And we have a new self-advocacy group in **Bedford**. This assembly of emerging leaders is taking their cues from the large and highly successful Monroe County Self-Advocates. Both groups participate in local and state activities to learn how to speak for themselves and to advocate for others who are unable to do so.

While we cope with budget adversities, we also remain forward-facing and challenge ourselves to adapt to change. We support The Arc of Indiana's Building Pathways to Empowerment campaign. Through this campaign we will find new ways to provide what people need with the most sensible approach. The Pathways section of the Arc of Indiana Web site (www.arcind.org) provides a resource to stay informed about the important activities taking place. We believe innovation and creative solutions will increase our ability to move out of our current circumstances.

The Stone Belt board has demonstrated tremendous support to the organization in these turbulent times. Through a set of newly initiated actions they have recommitted themselves to insuring that Stone Belt has the resources it needs to be successful — through advocacy, fund development and support of growth efforts. Board members, along with many other donors, were excited to support our *Dancing with the Celebrities* winner, **Gladys DeVane**, who impressed us all with her elegance and generous spirit. We have three talented new board members joining Stone Belt at the start of this new fiscal year. We look forward to introducing them to you in our September issue.

So many employees, clients and volunteer leaders have put Mr. Sasson's words into action by maintaining upbeat attitudes even when faced with great challenges. These positive feelings are bolstered by the support of so many additional stakeholders including families, donors, and community partners. We are working to remain in control of our minds and our actions in order to create a better tomorrow for us all.



Leslie Green, Chief Executive Officer

upcoming events

August 9 | 5:45 pm
Stone Belt Awards Celebration

Bloomington High School North, Auditorium (3901 N Kinser Pike)
• Join Stone Belt for a catered dinner and awards ceremony to recognize our valuable clients, volunteers, staff and community members.

More info @ www.stonebelt.org

August 26 | 10 am & 5:30 pm
Disability Guardianship Seminar

IU Innovation Center (2719 E 10th Street, Bloomington)
• Join us for the Stone Belt Empowered Learning Series as we discuss guardianship for individuals with disabilities. Free and open to all.

More info @ www.stonebelt.org

October 3 | 1:30 pm
DSFC Buddy Walk

Bryan Park • Bloomington
• The Down Syndrome Family Connection (DSFC) will host its 3rd annual Buddy Walk. Register by September 8 to get a t-shirt.

More info @ www.buddywalkbloomington.info

touchstone

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quarterly donors

Stone Belt extends appreciation to all our generous donors from March 26, 2010 through June 30, 2010. We are grateful for their continued support.

BUILDERS SOCIETY LEVEL GIFTS (\$1,000 – \$2,499):

Carlisle Industrial Brake & Friction; Crowder's Super Drugs Stores; Mallor, Clendening, Grodner & Bohrer; Don & Carol Anne Hossler; Betty Underwood; United Way Anonymous (1).

ADVOCATE LEVEL GIFTS (\$500 – \$999):

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IN KIND GIFTS:

Cardon & Associates; Richard Laraway; Clarissa Saunders

people make the difference

Self-Advocates Bedford: Building a Future

Stone Belt South region clients in Bedford recently formed a new Self-Advocates group. They voted on the name: *Self Advocates. Building a Future* to best represent their vision.

At the group's first meeting on February 18 an election was held to select officers. The results are: **Sam Durbin**, President; **Brenda Noel**, Vice President; **Mike McCleary**, Secretary; **Gina Barger**, Treasurer and **Robbie Huber & Burton Franklin**, Sergeants At Arms.

The group meets the fourth Wednesday of every month. Currently there are 16 members. Since forming, guests such as members of the Monroe County Self-Advocates and Betty Williams from the State Self-Advocates have spoken at their meetings. There are plans for a membership drive picnic this summer.

Some of the things the group hopes to accomplish as Self-Advocates are increased volunteerism and education for themselves and the larger community. "It's important to let the community know what we're trying to do and that we want to become more involved in our community," said group Secretary Mike McCleary.

Currently there are 15 other Self-Advocate groups across Indiana, under the larger group the Self-Advocates of Indiana. Stone Belt clients in Monroe County also have a group based in Bloomington.

✉ To find out more about either group contact **Carrie Elkin** (Bedford) celkin@stonebelt.org or **Linda Samples** (Bloomington) lsamples@stonebelt.org.



IU Women's Basketball Coach Visits Stone Belt

Felisha Legette-Jack, IU Women's Basketball Coach, visited Stone Belt's Central Region on May 20 to speak to clients in Job Club, a support group open to any individual who is currently employed or is seeking employment through Stone Belt. She gave the group tips on how to be a good team player, using basketball as an example.

Coach Legette-Jack also had another connection to Stone Belt in May when she joined Stone Belt Community Engagement Director **Amy Jackson** and five other local women as a recipient of the first ever Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce's Women Excel Bloomington Award.

Stone Belt congratulates all the award winners, especially Amy who is responsible for facilitating the building of relationships between Stone Belt in the community. Her responsibilities including fund development, marketing, public relations and the oversight of Stone Belt's service learning and volunteer programs.

Donate Online

Did you know that Stone Belt now offers an easy and convenient way to show your support? Donations to our general fund can now be made online using PayPal. Log on to www.stonebelt.org to make your gift today. All gifts help individuals with disabilities reach their full potential.



Stone Belt, DeVane Win Dancing With the Celebrities

Congratulations to dancer **Gladys DeVane** and Stone Belt for being crowned champions in this year's *Dancing with the Celebrities* competition for the second consecutive year! Thanks to the generosity of our many donors, Stone Belt raised the most philanthropic dollars, \$24,640, and therefore was awarded the Overall Winner trophy.

In *Dancing with the Celebrities*, six Bloomington personalities each dance in support of one area agency in an annual competition, sponsored by the **Arthur Murray Dance Studio**, that is much like the TV hit show, *Dancing with the Stars*. This year, Stone Belt was once again selected as one of the agencies. During the four months leading up to the event (which was held Saturday, May 22 at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater in Bloomington), Stone Belt worked to bring in donations. Every dollar counted as a vote for Gladys DeVane – our celebrity – as well as for Stone Belt.

At the event Gladys, an acclaimed local actor, did an outstanding job mastering three challenging dance routines with **Todd Linger**, her trained professional dance instructor from Arthur Murray (Gladys and Todd are pictured above). She was an excellent performer at the event, which boasted an audience of over 600. The points she received from the judges were combined with the "votes" (dollars) that Stone Belt raised.

Between the six non profits participating in the event, more than \$92,000 were raised to support important work in the community. Stone Belt thanks the organizers of the *Dancing with the Celebrities* event, which has provided us with two great years of fundraising opportunity. And a very special thanks to Gladys DeVane for all of her efforts.

State DDRS Director Visits Stone Belt

Director of the Indiana Division of Disability & Rehabilitative Services (DDRS), **Julia Holloway**, visited Stone Belt on June 9.

Holloway is new to this position and has spent her first weeks on the job visiting a variety of providers. She requested to visit Stone Belt because of its wide array of programming and organizational success.

CEO **Leslie Green** led Holloway on a tour that started at the Stone Belt's 10th Street headquarters in Bloomington. Next they visited the Milestones program where Director Maureen Gahan and the two psychiatrists talked about the mental health needs of individuals with disabilities.

For lunch, the group stopped at the Southern House Group Home then continued to Bedford to visit Dunn Memorial Hospital (national APSE Award Winning Employer) where Stone Belt client Nick Parsley and his supervisors talked about their successful employment partnership.

They finished the tour at Stone Belt's South Region headquarters where Holloway saw some old friends from her home community of Bedford.



DDRS Director Julia Holloway and Stone Belt Southern House resident Betsy Higgins.



Project SEARCH Indiana Holds First Open House

On June 23, Project SEARCH Indiana hosted an Open House to celebrate a successful beginning to this new internship program; a partnership between **Cook, Inc.; Ivy Tech Community College, Bloomington; Stone Belt, Indiana University Institute on Disability & Community (IIDC); and the Indiana Family & Social Services Administration (FSSA)**.

The event was held at Ivy Tech's Indiana Center for the Life Sciences, the home of the classroom portion of the program. Open House attendees got to tour this space and meet the four program participants (above from L/R: **Jack Thrasher, Misty Lawyer, Nathan Buffie, Justin Richardson**). The participants prepared display boards highlighting their time in the program and told stories of their professional accomplishments. The group is currently on the third rotation of four internships at host businesses Cook, Inc. and Ivy Tech Community College.

Modeled on a nationally recognized program developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Project SEARCH provides students aged 18-24 with quality, paid and unpaid internship experiences in the "real world." The program began in Indiana in 2008 and currently there are eight Project SEARCH programs in the State. Stone Belt's is the only model to focus on young adults aged 18-24, rather than current high school students.

✉ To learn more about the program contact **Bitta DeWees**, Stone Belt Director of Community Employment at 812-335-3507, ext. 273 / bdeweess@stonebelt.org.

employment

As a result of the recent State Budget cuts, Stone Belt's Community Employment program is forced to discontinue one of its most successful newer programs, **Work Experiences**. Work Experiences was a program which provided job trials or assessments at businesses. The client employee was paid by Stone Belt, not the employer, through this arrangement. These funds were made available by the State through Vocational Rehabilitation services. These Work Experiences could last up to four weeks, truly allowing the employer and potential employee to figure out the job and whether it was a good fit for both parties. Ultimately, it was Stone Belt's hope that the "experience" would turn into a full-time job upon its conclusion.

The true success of the program was its ability to give the client needed experience during this economic downturn when there are few job openings. In Stone Belt's program, six of eighteen Work Experiences turned into a permanent job placement; in Bedford, a community with one of the highest unemployment rates in the State, five of eight turned into jobs. The opportunity to provide the program was invaluable in this community.

One of the cuts made to the Indiana State budget were the funds available through Vocational Rehabilitation to organizations, such as Stone Belt, to fund Work Experiences. We believe this will make finding jobs much more difficult for our clients in this tough economy.

One of Stone Belt's most recent Work Experiences program successes is **Brian Mellenbruch** (pictured at right). Brian is a young man that had only had one other job in his life and it did not work out for him. He thought he would like to work stocking in retail, but had never done anything like this before. He observed a lot of others doing the job and thought he would like it. Stone Belt approached JC Penny about offering a Work Experience with Brian and they were willing to try the program. Brian did very well during his 4-week Experience and at the end JC Penny hired him. He is currently still employed by JC Penny.

Brian said that he really liked the Work Experience because he was able to try the job and he really liked it. The trial offered both parties the opportunity to try something new. Wouldn't we all love to test out a new job before we took it? This opportunity undoubtedly leads to greater long-term success on the job.

By *Patty Rocco* (Stone Belt South Region Employment Consultant)



residential

State budget reductions are impacting Stone Belt's residential clients by influencing their home choices and limiting staff support hours, two things that are directly connected to their quality of life. After State budget decreases two years ago, Stone Belt's Supported Living program started a push to prepare for any future cuts in advance by creating **three person households**. This helped in the following way: If there were two individuals living together receiving 24-hour services and either of their staffing hours were reduced, a third individual in the home could provide enough funding so that 24-hour staffing could continue. The only other option was to consider whether home alone time could be added or increased or to continue serving individuals at a loss.

Recently we were notified of the newest round of cuts. The State is reducing the hours for staffing in client's plans and also the rate that Stone Belt is reimbursed for services provided. For example, one type of residential service hours provided was cut by \$1.50 an hour. This may not sound like much, but for every site that requires 24-hour supports, the result is an approximate \$10,000 loss per year, per 24-hour site. In the Central Region alone Stone Belt supports 21 sites that are staffed 24-hours per day and 18 sites that receive other amounts of staffing. The math works out to be at least a \$250,000 loss and this is only the cut to one service (many others were also reduced).

Group home settings in conjunction with loss of funding toward staff support hours are quickly making their impact on Stone Belt's residential services. East Supported Living client **Matt Holland** has been challenged to live with a roommate in the past, but over time he has proven that this can be successful if they each have their own support staff. Matt has blossomed with these supports. However, with the recent State cuts to his funding, Matt's time with individual staff support has declined radically, causing him anxiety and affecting his relationship with his roommate. It's a cycle of less support given which causes a need for more support. Unfortunately a problem that will likely only increase.

We pride ourselves on our ability to offer a great deal of individual choice. Budgetary reductions like this impact choice. We are still committed to the highest quality of service and will do everything within our power to provide our clients with the programs they deserve.

By *Billie Woods* (Supported Living Coordinator) & *Susan Russ* (Central Region Director of Day Services)



manufacturing

Arguably one of the most critical areas of concern in the recent State cuts to the Medicaid Waiver program are plans to put a time limit of 24 months on some clients' ability to work in Stone Belt's Manufacturing programs. Pre-Vocational Habilitation (manufacturing) will now have **time limits** that will go into effect upon the date of a client's annual renewal plan for anyone receiving Medicaid Waiver funded services.

Beginning in October of 2009, each client's "clock" begins at the time of their annual budget review with the State. After the time limits elapse, Pre-Vocational services will no longer be authorized and alternative services will need to be chosen to replace them. If these regulations remain as currently stated, Stone Belt clients participating in the Manufacturing Services program whose services are funded by Medicaid Waiver (48% of our clients) will soon have fewer options for work available to them.

These changes would not only limit options for paid work for some, but make it practically impossible for others who have difficulty succeeding without the structure and supports provided by manufacturing staff members. When individuals lose their work, they lose a sense of accomplishment, identity, pride and the choice they have to work in a job they love. Wherever possible, it is hoped that these clients will turn their ambitions to community employment.

Stone Belt's Manufacturing Services program has been extremely successful during the course of its almost 40 years of service. The agency features 30,000 square feet of manufacturing space in two facilities. Some of our business partners, for whom we do subcontracted work, include: Cook Medical, Cook Urological, K & K Products, Oliver Winery, Indiana University and the United States government. The time limits will severely impact the number of client workers available to support the quantity of meaningful work available.

Stone Belt supports 172 clients in its Manufacturing Services program in two locations. One of the first clients whose "clock" will expire is long-term Manufacturing employee **Polly Scroggin** (pictured above). She has worked in the program for over 15 years. Stone Belt leadership is actively advocating for a change in the time limit policy so that the full range of work options remains in place.

By *Cheryl Paul* (Communications Manager)



lifelong learning

Stone Belt Lifelong Learning client **Jenny Burton**'s story illustrates how drastically the landscape of day services has altered in the past two years due to changes in Medicaid funding structures.

Jenny lives alone with her mom (her primary caregiver) in Bloomington. Her State Waiver funding allows her to attend Stone Belt's Lifelong Learning program as well as to receive Residential and Respite support through a partner service provided, so her mom can have help at home.

Jenny's support team was given encouraging information in early 2009 that the State would be increasing her Waiver budget. She and her mom started thinking about the new choices they would have with this increased budget. Their goal was to increase the number of days Jenny attended Stone Belt's Lifelong Learning program, which she currently only attends three days per week. They also wanted to increase Jenny's one-on-one staff time. They felt she would thrive with this increased attention. It is difficult for her to participate in a group activity since she is unable to communicate with spoken word. One-on-one staff time would also give Jenny the opportunity for more community activities.

But all plans were put on hold when, in the middle of 2009, State Budgets were frozen and allocation changes stopped being referred. The State was starting to experience the first of major funding problems. When Jenny had her annual conference in February 2010, her team had to stop plans to move forward with the expected larger budget and instead plan for a decrease in budget, something that until the meeting wasn't even discussed.

In April of this year Jenny's support team met again to finalize her budget. Her mom had to make some tough decisions regarding how her time would be spent. Jenny would have no additional one-on-one time with a Stone Belt staff member and her Residential and Respite hours for weekends would also be decreased. Her mother was particularly frustrated with these decreases because she felt the State promised something and then a few months later reneged on this promise. The one bright spot in the new scheduling was that Jenny's Case Manager was able to figure out some creative scheduling to squeeze in an extra day of Lifelong Learning programming.

Jenny's story illustrates the experience that many Stone Belt clients will face as the reduced funding continues to diminish opportunities for lifelong learning.

By *Allison Pack* (Client Support Coordinator)



the arts

Stone Belt has had a thriving arts program for many years, encompassing art exploration, community collaboration, and the production of art pieces for sale. The program has provided individuals with disabilities with the opportunity to expand their capacity for self-expression, contribute to the beautification of the community, develop new life skills, and work professionally in the arts.

Through Stone Belt's art program, individuals share their personal stories and earn income which greatly impacts the quality of their lives. One of the key components to the success of Stone Belt Arts has been the exhibiting and marketing of the works of client artists. Artists' works have been featured in exhibits in government buildings, restaurants, banks, art galleries, and faith organizations.

Recent budget cuts from the State of Indiana, coupled with upcoming changes which will significantly restrict facility-based manufacturing (see article above), have had a significant impact on Stone Belt's art program, and most certainly on the participating artists. The agency has been forced to eliminate the position of Business Development Director, the individual responsible for facilitating art production, sales, marketing and exhibits.

Carolyn Abbitt is one of Stone Belt's most gifted and prolific artists. Known throughout the community for her iconic nature and still life scenes, Carolyn has displayed her work in more than a dozen shows throughout Bloomington and beyond. Art collectors from throughout the community are drawn to her work, and attend the openings of each of her exhibits to view and purchase her latest creations. Carolyn has had the opportunity to improve her quality of life by subsidizing her restricted funding from Medicaid, and by creating myriad opportunities for her to create social capital through the building of relationships with community members who value her as a gifted artist.

Because of the necessary elimination of the Business Development position, Carolyn Abbitt and her artist peers will now unfortunately have far fewer opportunities to display their beautiful creations and share their powerful stories with the community.

By *Amy Jackson* (Community Engagement Director)



staffing

The latest rounds of cost reductions from the State of Indiana have had a direct and painful effect on the staff of Stone Belt. Measures to reduce the agency's costs continue and will undoubtedly have an on-going effect on the entire Stone Belt community.

In an effort to keep the direct impact on staff's take-home pay as small as possible, the agency first took steps to eliminate costs by ending a company paid life insurance policy, suspending the match on the 401(k), and making significant structural changes to the agency's self-funded health insurance. These combined changes, although not felt directly on an employee's biweekly paycheck, do reduce what Stone Belt pays for the services provided.

Even with these changes and the loss of seven administrative positions, the agency also had to reduce pay levels for many staff. The decreases were done in a manner that kept those at the bottom of the pay scale whole, with graduated percentage pay reductions implemented to most significantly impact those at the top of the wage chart.

In the previous fiscal year Stone Belt – for the first time – had to forgo any level of staff pay raises. And now, in this second year, the agency has been forced to take the unusual and unwanted step of these graduated wage decreases. Stone Belt is, first and foremost, a service providing organization. More than 80% of Stone Belt's operating budget is therefore composed of salary and benefits. Any reductions in funding have a corresponding impact on the outstanding staff of Stone Belt as well as their families and beyond, into the communities in which we all work, live, and play.

Critical to the board of directors and executive leadership of Stone Belt has been a focus on keeping morale up among staff during this unprecedented moment in the agency's history. The agency leadership is tremendously grateful for the supportive and understanding feedback they have received from staff throughout the organization, as individuals recognize that these steps were unavoidable and imposed by dilemmas beyond our control.

By *Brad Galin* (Senior Director of Human Resources & Corporate Compliance). Brad is pictured above.



Budget Crunch

Stories illustrate impact of State cuts

Indiana State budget cuts and changes to the Medicaid Waiver will have an unprecedented impact on the financial state of Stone Belt and the lives of our clients. Some effects of the \$706,000 cuts are illustrated in the following stories.

program update

Milestones adds new program, wins awards

Through funding made possible by a grant from the Community Foundation of Bloomington & Monroe County, Milestones therapists **Deb Mishler, Lynda Ransburg** and **Maureen Kipp** recently attended a three day workshop in Seattle Washington in the acclaimed **Incredible Years Parent Training Series**.

Milestones is privileged to be able to offer several therapist-led programs for behavior problems in children using the Incredible Years Series. This training program works with both parents and children, and includes prevention and intervention components developed to reduce problem behaviors and enhance children's social and emotional competency. The series has won multiple awards for proven outcomes. The curricula were developed for use by parents, children and teachers and can be used independently or in conjunction with each other.

Milestones is excited to be able to expand its menu of early intervention services and add such excellent treatment options to our community. The Milestones therapists are in the process of designing and planning parent groups which will be offered starting this fall.



Therapists **Deb Mishler** (seated) and **Maureen Kipp** display some of the training materials used in Milestones' Incredible Years program.

Psychiatrists Win Award

Milestones Psychiatrists **Dr. Mindy Weakley** and **Dr. Lia Kettenis** received the award for Outstanding Community Service for their work with the students of the College Internship Program (CIP) at the Bloomington Center. CIP provides individualized, post-secondary academic, internship and independent living experiences for young adults with Asperger's Syndrome and other learning differences.

Milestones Play Therapy Services Honored

Milestones has been awarded the 2010 Indiana Association of Play Therapists (IAPT) **Vivian Thompson Award** for outstanding play therapy services. The award was presented during the group's June 25 annual membership luncheon in Carmel, Indiana.

Special congratulations to Milestones Play Therapists **Bree Russo, Rosie Falls, Lynda Ransburg** and **Claudia Dominik** for their superb clinical work and their continued efforts to increase their education, improve their skills and reach official play therapist certification.

The Vivian Thompson Award is given to individuals or organizations that have made outstanding contributions

in the field of play therapy over a period of at least 5 years. This award is named in memory of an extraordinary child therapist, social worker and supervisor. Milestones Director Maureen Gahan had the privilege of working with the Award's namesake, Vivian Thompson, for 3 years while she was studying for her degree in family therapy.

➤ To learn more about any of the information listed above contact Maureen Gahan, Milestones Director @ 812-333-6324, ext. 284 / mgahan@stonebelt.org or visit the Milestones Web site @ www.milestonesclinic.org.

employee recognition

AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Five Stone Belt employees were honored with 2010 Awards for Excellence for making outstanding contributions to Stone Belt. Winners were nominated internally and selected by a team of Board members and executive level staff. Recipients received a \$1,000 award and were assigned as "reverse" mentors to a member of the senior management team. This will provide the executives with ongoing insight to the quality of services and opportunities for organizational improvement. This event is funded through Stone Belt's fund development activities.



CRICKET REA Operational Excellence

Cricket, a 5-year veteran of Stone Belt, is a Day Program Team Leader in Columbus. After the recent United Way fire in Columbus, Cricket "lit her own fire" and began her plan to reopen day services. Clients missed only four days before operations began in another location. The growth in the East day program is a direct result of her dedication, leadership and energy.

KATIE FLOERKE Quality of Service

Katie, an 11-year veteran of Stone Belt, is a Client Support Coordinator in the South Region. She is responsible for Stone Belt's group homes and day programs and works out of the South Region offices in Bedford. Katie is the driving force in helping staff stay focused on the long-term outcomes for clients. Her motivation is always what's best for clients and improvement in their quality of life.



STEVE WARREN Community Outreach

Steve, an 8-year veteran of Stone Belt, is an Employment Consultant in the Central Region. Advocacy is Steve's forte. He strongly believes all clients can and will make a vital contribution to the workforce. He works tirelessly to empower them to become successfully employed. Building long-lasting partnerships with employers throughout the community is a crucial part of his success strategy.

DAVID FURR Resource Efficiency

David, a 4-year veteran of Stone Belt, holds two positions at Stone Belt. He works part-time as a Fiscal Intern and part-time as a Direct Support Professional (DSP). In the Financial Services office, David continually tries to find better, easier, faster ways for operations to run as efficiently as possible. As a DSP, he is an outspoken advocate, and supports clients to reach their fullest potential.



ROSE DICKERSON Positive Outcomes

Rose, a 6-year veteran of Stone Belt, is a Supported Living Site Supervisor in the Central Region. Rose supports the clients she works with in making major lifestyle changes that increase their independence. Success stories abound. One client is no longer insulin-dependent due to changes in diet and exercise, while another has increased his social network and now holds monthly game nights.



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engaging with the community

Together we make the difference

Every gift to Stone Belt makes a huge difference. Contributions go directly toward achieving excellence in client supports, innovation in staff training and development, and the creation of substantive programs that impact thousands of lives.

Our community is stronger when every individual experiences success. Visionary donors help empower people with disabilities to form meaningful relationships, live independently, experience professional employment, contribute to the building of community, and develop new life skills.

Help Stone Belt make our community a better place for us all. Consider a gift to our Annual Fund today. Gifts can be made online through our secure Web site, at www.stonebelt.org.

Stone Belt Publications: An Important Tool for Reaching the Community
Sharing the story of Stone Belt with the community is one of the most important things we do in the Community Engagement Department of the agency. We are proud of our publications and materials, and equally proud that we are able to effectively utilize these resources while keeping costs to a minimum. We do this by keeping all of the design and much of the printing in-house, and by utilizing our Web site as the sole location of publications such as our annual report. Stone Belt continues to explore Web-based media for telling

our story to the community. Our Web site is updated daily, in order to provide the timeliest information to our constituents. Stone Belt also now utilizes social media, such as Facebook, to get the word out and inspire people to get involved. And we've now begun to send email updates about the good work happening in our agency.

Please become a "fan" of Stone Belt on Facebook, and let us know if you'd like to be added to our email list to receive occasional updates about exciting programs, client successes, and important legislation affecting individuals with disabilities. Please spread the word to others who would benefit from receiving our publications and being kept informed about our work. And remember, all of our past publications can now be found on our Web site in an easily searchable format.

NAP Tax Credits Are Back!

Stone Belt is extremely pleased to have had such great success with the 2009 NAP tax credit program. The State of Indiana awarded Stone Belt \$16,000 in NAP tax credits in July of 2009, and we were able to pass along these tremendous tax savings to our donors. Stone Belt donors utilized the entire allocation in less than one month, raising \$32,000 in support of Milestones' Clinical & Health Resources - a Stone Belt program of excellence that provides much needed psychological and psychiatric services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

Because of this generosity, Milestones is able to provide approximately 1500 more hours of clinical services during 2010, enhancing individuals' efforts to become more independent and active members of our community.

Through NAP, a contribution to Stone Belt of a *minimum of \$100* makes a donor eligible to receive 50% of the total contribution in tax credits - allowing the donor to receive half of a contribution back as a TAX CREDIT when filing an end-of-year Indiana tax return. In addition, donors are also eligible to claim the total amount of the gift as a tax deduction on an itemized federal income tax return, extending the savings even further. Therefore, a gift to Stone Belt goes more than twice as far! Not only does a donor earn a significant break on taxes next April; the gift also provides funding for a much-needed program serving individuals with developmental disabilities. This is a wonderful opportunity to support the essential work of Stone Belt while receiving an outstanding tax benefit in the process.

Stone Belt is pleased to have once again been awarded a limited number of NAP tax credits. Each year the credits go quickly, so please be in touch with the Community Engagement Department as soon as possible if you are interested in taking advantage of this wonderful giving program.

➤ For more information on the programs described above, please contact Amy Jackson, Community Engagement Director, at 812-332-2168 ext. 314 / ajackson@stonebelt.org.