



Individual focus. Community perspective.

# NCIA Gazette

The Newsletter of the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives

Summer 2015

## A Night at the Yard!

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The crack of the bats, the roar of the crowd, the throws, the slides, and the catches. It's baseball season here in Baltimore, and on June 30th the Adult Residential Program of NCIA went out to the old ball game.

The forecast called for thunder showers all day and night, but the weather held off and the only thing storming the stadium were thirty-six of our Adult Individuals accompanied by their staff. It was a perfect night to watch our O's take on the Rangers at Camden Yards.

For some of the individuals, and even a few of our staff, this was their first time being at the Park, and every moment of the game was relished. Section 84 was bustling. Dressed in their orange and black, baseball caps, and some even breaking out their gloves, the left field section was full of cheers, yells, singing, and dancing during the game and between the innings. A couple of our individuals even ended up being broadcast on the scoreboard!

Though the Orioles were beaten 8-6 in a close game, our individuals came out as the real winners. No loss could ruin the experience and their excitement of sitting in the stands with friends, peers, and people they call family, rooting for the Home Team and watching America's national past time. Bringing a smile to the faces of those we serve is a goal we strive for here at NCIA, and I am grateful that we were able to provide that as an organization. Their enjoyment was contagious all around that night.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the House Managers for



arranging their individuals to participate, organizing transportation, and scheduling staff. A big thank you of course goes out to all the additional staff that drove, accompanied, and assisted the individuals to the game and made the night one to remember. Finally, thank you to NCIA and Herb and Martha Hoelter for organizing the event and arranging the tickets providing a memorable event for our adults to remember and relive.

*Richard Tringali, Residential Director*

## Driver Appreciation Picnic

**N**CIA wouldn't be who we are today without our 100% transportation guarantee for all our individuals. Between our Youth in Transition School and Adult Programs, we transport hundreds of people to and from their homes and workplaces every day. Managing transportation is no easy task, and therefore, we would like to give a special THANKS to all of our drivers! We truly appreciate all the hard work that you do.

On June 13, 2015, we hosted our very first Driver Appreciation Cook-Out, located on the beautiful pavilion right behind our school farm. We served hotdogs, hamburgers, Italian sausages, wings, pasta, fruit and cookies! The food was delicious. This event will be the first of many to show how grateful we are to have such a large group of dedicated staff.

Again, THANK YOU to Gary Antonino for organizing the event and to all the NCIA drivers and the rest of the staff that contribute to the success of our organization.

*Herbert J. Hoelter  
CEO and Co-Founder*



## Fifty-Seven Strong!

**F**or most people, fifty-seven does not seem like the typical milestone age to celebrate a birthday, but for Bill Grabau it certainly was. At the age of 56, Bill was diagnosed with lymphoma and leukemia. For the last six months of his 56th year, he has been battling through chemotherapy, ER visits, nausea, fractures, hair loss, and weight loss just to name a few. But on June 28, 2015, turning 57-years-old, you would not have even known.

Tracelle Higgins, his House Manager, along with her supportive and caring staff, organized a wonderful celebration and prepared a feast of Bill's favorites: hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken tenders, pasta and potato salads, deviled eggs, and watermelon. Even with a decreased appetite, Bill's stomach was bigger than his eyes that day. To simply see Bill enjoying food again, even for a short amount of time, was an uplifting relief for his staff who just hours before had a difficult time persuading him to eat half a bowl of oatmeal or soup. Bill loved every bite, and so did his guests.

Bill has been with NCIA for almost 25 years; without a doubt he is the senior member of the Laurel team. Dozens of his friends whom he has known for so long gathered at his home to wish him a happy birthday and share in the fun. The most meaningful guest though was a wonderful surprise.

Bill has a sister, whom no one from NCIA had ever spoken to until last year when, by sheer luck, she reached out to several former employees until finally getting a hold of Tracelle. She has been a constant support for her brother ever since. Not only did she attend with her family, but she brought along another family member who had little to no interaction with Bill for the last decade; his Father. He has his own health issues, preventing him from contacting Bill, but that day they were inseparable. Again, just hours before, staff saw Bill laying in bed, straining to sit up or walk to the kitchen. That day he was sitting up, hugging, leaning in for pictures, dancing, clapping, singing, and most importantly laughing for hours.

This was a day that Bill had been working so hard to get to and we at NCIA are so proud of how he made it there. Tracelle and his staff will continue to fight alongside Bill in his 57th year in hopes to make this his best year yet. That is, until his 58th.



*Richard Tringali, Residential Director*

## Maryland Freestate ChalleNGe Academy Graduation

The Maryland Freestate ChalleNGe Academy is a military-based program for youth to help them learn discipline and the skills necessary to be successful in the real world. In order to enhance the program's positive impact, a select group of 40 cadets were sent to NCIA to receive hands-on vocational training classes in Culinary Arts, Automotive or Barbering.

Each of the students gained valuable experience and knowledge that will allow them to enhance their resumes and pursue a career in any of those three fields. Amongst this group lie our future culinary chefs, barbers and automotive mechanics! Here is what some of the cadets had to say about what they learned:

*Joselyn, Culinary Arts:* "Here at culinary arts I learned how to cook different kinds of pastries, how to use different knives and how to work as a team and to get things done by a certain time. It was really fun and I had a really good experience here."

*Eugene, Barbering:* "In the Barbering Program we learned how to cut and fade hair. Not only that, it teaches you about things you can use in the real world, like professionalism that can help you better yourself if you do want to get your own business."

*John, Automotive:* "I've learned how to change oil, oil filters, wheel bearings, transmission and how to rebuild a motor. This program is really helpful."

We are proud to say that upon completion of the training program on June 10, 2015, all 40 cadets graduated and received a Certificate of Achievement signifying their hard work and dedication.

Congratulations to all the Maryland Freestate ChalleNGe Academy cadets. NCIA wishes you the best of luck in all your future endeavors.



## Youth In Transition School 2015 Graduation

June 30, 2015 marked a very significant day for the Youth in Transition (YIT) School. Not only does this date signify the end of a very successful school year, but it also represents a new beginning for our 2015 graduates.

On this special day, sixteen graduates walked across our stage and received their High School Diplomas or Certificates of Completion. It was a joyous occasion as friends, family and staff gathered to celebrate how far the students had come since attending YIT School.

For some, the path was not easy, but with hard work and dedication, each of them was able to overcome obstacles to accomplish their goals.

Commencement speaker Gussener Augustus, Jr., Director of Mayor's Office of Neighborhood & Constitutes Services, reiterated how important it is to stay true to yourself, to continue your education, and to have faith in yourself as you apply what you've learned to the real world. It was a message well received.

Herbert J. Hoelter, CEO and Co-Founder of NCIA, said "I couldn't be more proud, as this becomes a moment that I will cherish forever. It's truly amazing to see each student's transformations as they leave us with the life lessons and skills necessary to achieve their dreams. Each of them is extremely unique and has something very special to offer the world."

With such bright futures ahead, we will continue to support our graduates and hope that they help lead the way and remain positive role models for the rest of our YIT School students.

Congratulations Class of 2015! We wish you all success as you take on the next chapter of your lives. Thank you for making this school year such a great one!

*India Gordon*  
Program Development Assistant

## Anniversaries

### July 2015

#### 10 Years

**Shermise Degrafenried**  
*Adult Residential Services*

**Linda Jones**  
*Adult Residential Services*

#### 5 Years

**Leah Hughes**  
*Youth In Transition School*

**Olufunmilayo Okeadeniyi**  
*Adult Residential Services*

**Lashell Thompson**  
*Career Development Center*

**Ayodele Banjo**  
*Adult Residential Services*

**Joseph Oino**  
*Adult Residential Services*

### August 2015

#### 15 Years

**Jerome Bunch**  
*Adult Residential Services*

**Christiana Akinsete**  
*Adult Residential Services*

**Roland Tamajong**  
*Adult Residential Services*

#### 10 Years

**Earl Williams**  
*Youth In Transition School*

**Doreatha Leslie**  
*Adult Residential Services*

#### 5 Years

**Kelvin Barnes**  
*Career Development Center*

**Keith Bost**  
*Adult Residential Services*

**Tara Holland**  
*Career Development Services*

## 2015 Open Enrollment

Open Enrollment for 2015 will be here next month. From August 19-28, 2015, you can make any changes to your health, dental and welfare benefits with no questions asked.

Be on the look-out, more information will be coming your way shortly. Contact Kay Glover at ext. 1332 with any questions or concerns.

*Kay Glover*  
*Benefits Specialist*

## NCIA Career Opportunities

Interested in trying something new or applying your talents in a different position? You can check out all open positions on NCIA's website at [www.ncianet.org](http://www.ncianet.org)

### Positions Available

- Speech Therapist
- Job Coach
- Residential Counselors

## You've Got eMail!



Remember – check your NCIA email for NCIA announcements and communications. Also, training schedules are being sent to your email accounts. *You must check your emails regularly for any training updates.*

*Jayne Gessner*  
*Human Resources*

## Paperless Paystubs

Remember that your pay history is always a click away in ADP. From any computer you can access your paystubs through [portal.adp.com](http://portal.adp.com). From the ADP homepage open the Pay & Taxes tab. Click on the date of the paystub you want to see to open your (*Patricia Wagner*) paystub. Stubs can be printed from any computer with a printer.

## Win \$\$\$ for Reading the NCIA Gazette!

Read the *NCIA Gazette* and you could win \$25. Congratulations to Nathanel Smith our latest winner! If you find your name displayed like this: (*Jane Doe*) in the *Gazette*, contact Jayne Gessner, HR (443.780.1313) by 10:00 a.m. on Friday, July 24, 2015, to claim your \$25!

## Missed Training Fee Charges are in Place

If you haven't heard, staff who miss scheduled trainings are now being charged a \$20 "No Show" fee. Please don't end up on this list.

If you can't make a scheduled class, *just inform your director* as far in advance as possible and ask to reschedule your class.