



The Challenger

Total Care Services, Inc.

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The Red Wagon Report—Ms. Drucella Wheeler-Ndoye, MSW



In any organization, there must be synergism for the organization to be effective and meet its mission and goals. Synergism means “the whole is greater than its parts.” With that backdrop, I am asking each employee where do you fit within this paradigm. To explain further, I would like to use this visual—just imagine that TCS is a large red wagon, you know the model you may have had as a child. The wagon I had growing up had a long bronze handle that allowed me to steer when there was no one to push me. I could put one knee in the wagon and push off for a great run. I had even more fun and gained more distance when someone was behind the wagon pushing me.

Imagine that TCS is a big red wagon. Do you see yourself as guiding the red wagon (being a leader); pushing the wagon (a support employee); or an employee simply idle sitting in the wagon (needing support). Which one are you? A leader, a member of the support staff, or in constant need of direction, supervision and guidance?

The wagon leader will always step up to resolve problems, make suggestions and recommendations to address challenges. The leader uses his/her creativity to design programs, forms, processes and heads off problems before they occur. The leader pulls the wagon in a positive direction and places support staff in suitable job positions commensurate with their skill sets. The leader is strategic in planning, fiscally conservative and preserves his/her energy for the steep hills, valleys

and mountains. A leader will avoid rough terrain when she can take an alternative route with the manually steered wagon. The leader guides the organization with the support of its team.

The beauty in the red wagon visual is that without the energy of the “pusher” or the support staff, the wagon would stand at a halt. This support team or pushers are essential to carrying out the mission and goals of the agency, while following policies and interpreting those for others. They operationalize the dreams of the leaders.

The last group is the weight that simply sits in the wagon and does not contribute to the momentum. This staff person is simply along for the ride. He/she does not offer leadership or support. They pile on more and more rocks slowing down the wagon. They have problems with leaders and support staff. The staff person who is looking for a ride offers no solutions. They weigh the organization down. They cause conflict and will keep on piling on rocks, sand and boulder to weaken the organization.

Can TCS transform a ride to a supporter or a leader? Yes. We Can! Our goal is to groom leaders and support staff and to encourage riders to become team players. If we all pull in the same direction we will reach our goals. So where do you fit in the big red wagon?



Special Points of interest:

- The Red Wagon Report
- Program News Updates
- Bridging Maryland and DC Services - Laretta Refell's Experiences
- Health and Wellness Tips

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Featured Employee—Reffell Knows DDA and DDS— MD

For over twenty-five years, Laretta Reffell, BS, MBA, has worked in the field of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) with private, public and non-profit agencies within the United States and overseas. She has helped provide opportunities for individuals with IDD to have meaningful lives. Laretta has extensive knowledge of organizational management and the policies and procedures of the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration. She served as a Supervisor of Resource Coordination with the District of Columbia Department on

Disability Services. During her tenure with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, she was the New Directions and Home and Community -Based Waiver Program Specialist/Resource Coordinator. She also served as a Training Contractor with Montgomery County.

Ms. Reffell is a highly knowledgeable and results-oriented professional with a record of achievement in facilitating effective management and service delivery to intellectually and developmentally disabled individuals.

Contributors to this edition:

Candice Robinson

Ginger Robinson

Gail Telesford

Jodi Van Laven

Laretta Reffell

Drucella Wheeler-Ndoye

Olliena Wheeler

Tiffany Williams

DC News Scene— by Ricardo Lyles, Staff Reporter



Over the last few weeks, the DC Programs have been engaged in rapid fire activity. In December

2014, with the completion of renovations, the staff transitioned back to the DC offices located at 5780 2nd Street, N.E. A few weeks prior to our relocation, we received notification from the Department on Disability Services that our programs not only passed the Annual Provider

Certification Review (PCR), but that most of our programs are certified for two years. We are all excited and proud about this news.



The DC Programs also announced the opening of our new Respite Home. The respite program is located at 1737 24th Street, N.E. The DC program will have an open house at the respite facility on March 6, 2015.

Newbies and Vets — by Candice Robinson and Gail Telesford, staff writers



Ms. Rosalyn Davis is a Resource Coordinator and a skilled human services professional with over twenty years of social work and public education experience. Her fields of experience include mental health, developmental disabilities, special education, crisis management and individual, group and family counseling services. Ms. Davis has developed expertise in working with adults, children and families through agencies in both the private and public sectors. She is a dedicated, results-oriented professional who takes a person centered approach to service delivery.

years experience in providing services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. His experience includes two years working with young adults diagnosed with Mental Health Disorders and nine years with adults dually diagnosed with Intellectual Disabilities and Mental Health Disorders. During his tenure with Total Care Services, Inc., Mr. Jones served in the positions of Director of Residential Services, Director of In-Home Support Services, and Director of Quality Assurance. His current role is the Incident Management Coordinator, where he acts as a liaison between Total Care Services, Inc. and the DDS.

Marlon A. Jones, M.Ed. graduated from Howard University with a Masters Degree in Counseling Psychology. He has a total of 11

(Continues on page 5)

– Gail Telesford

After the recent annual meeting, we reached out to our newest employees for feedback about the session. Here are some of the comments from Ruth Medina and Christina Thomas:

“From the meeting I learned that communication amongst colleagues is important. I also learned the importance of keeping the Total Care Services mission statement in mind while performing my work. Some of the major areas that struck out for me were the open platform that was available for employees to voice their concerns and being able to discuss things with colleagues throughout the programs.” - Medina

“The major area that stood out to me the most in the meeting is how Total Care Services is a family working together in efforts to meet the goals and mission of the organization. All the staff are passionate about serving the individuals and strive to provide the best quality of life for each individual. I learned that Total Care Services values their employees and makes a conscious effort to let their employees know that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. I think that all the staff here at Total Care Services have a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field and are great assets to the organization.” - Thomas



Christina Thomas



Ruth Medina

Maryland Updates—by Jodi Van Laven, staff writer

The Maryland Division continues to grow. Throughout the Southern Region (Montgomery, Prince George’s, Charles, Calvert and St. Mary’s Counties and Central Region (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Howard and Harford Counties) we now support 1510 individuals with developmental disabilities. Our families seem very happy with the service that our 36 Resource Coordinators are now

providing. These RCs are supported by our Director and a full support staff of 6 who keep us growing and flourishing. Due to this growth, we anticipate adding additional RCs.

By the end of February, DDA will have worked with Montgomery County to complete the handover of



Position

Announcements

- Accountant (DC)
- Project Supervisor (MD)
- Resource Coordinator (MD)
- Direct Support Professional (DC)
- Training Coordinator (DC)
- Consultant Nutritionist (DC)

Coming Events

- February 2015—Developmental Disabilities Day at the Legislature
- February 2015 Total Care Services, Inc. Year in Review Meeting (Direct Support Staff)
- March 2015—Weight Watchers Kick-off



- March 2015—National Disabilities Month
- March 2015—

Downs Syndrome Awareness Week

- March 2015—International Women’s Day
- March 6, 2015—Respite Open House
- March 2015—World Water Day
- April 2015—Autism Awareness Month
- May 2015—National Mobility Awareness Month



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January and February 2015 New Hires

Antionette Jackson, Direct Support Professional
Aretha Thompson, Direct Support Professional
Benedicta Balfour, Direct Support Professional
Christina Thomas, Resource Coordinator
Danielle Pinkney, Direct Support Professional
DaQuante Thompson, Home Coordinator
Jill Moore-Brooks, Registered Nurse
Joyce Johnson, Direct Support Professional
Kim Henderson, Resource Coordinator
Krista Dugger, Direct Support Professional

Linda Daniels, Direct Support Professional
Morifat Sanni, Direct Support Professional
Pearl McCullough, Direct Support Professional
Roslyn Shaw, Direct Support Professional
Ruth Medina, Resource Coordinator
Tasha Brown, Direct Support Professional
Toni Ball, Direct Support Professional
Dominique Alston Training Assistant

Maryland Updates (continued)

their last community coordination cases.

We continue to market Maryland to Transitioning Youth, and to work extensively with our Waiting List and Ongoing Community Coordination individuals.

Our Comprehensive Assessment Team regularly markets our program and services to the 20-25 people we interview each month.

On February 19, 2015 our interns participated in the annual *Developmental Disabilities Day at the Legislature*. Gail Telesford and Candice Robinson joined members of the ARC of Prince George's County in advocating for services for the 8,000 individuals on the DDA wait list before Prince George's County legislators. The advocates urged the legislature to restore funds cut from the budget for services to intellectually and developmentally individuals.

A Taste of Total Care—Recipe of the Month



Seafood Salad Recipe

Ingredients:

1 box Tri-Colored Pasta
3 tbs — Mayonnaise
½ bottle (or depending how much you like) of Ranch Salad Dressing
Large Salad Shrimp 50 in bag
3 packs of Imitation Crabmeat
1 can of Albacore Tuna
Sweet Pickle Relish
Small Onion diced
½ diced Green Pepper
Garlic Powder

Soul Food Seasoning
Black Pepper

Boil pasta and drain, dice onions and green pepper, chop up crabmeat, put pasta in a large bowl, drain water from tuna and add tuna, shrimp, crabmeat, onions, green peppers, and sweet relish. Add mayonnaise, ranch salad dressing, mix well, and then sprinkle in soul food seasoning, black pepper and sprinkle in extra garlic powder. Cover and refrigerate for about 4 hours before serving.

Five Facts About Black History Month

1. Carter G. Woodson was the son of former enslaved Africans. He gained a master's degree at the University of Chicago in 1908, and in 1912, he received a Ph.D. in history from Harvard University. Woodson, known as the "Father of Black History" started Negro History week in 1926, which later became Black History Month.

2. February was chosen as the month to observe Black history because it is the birth month of abolitionist and writer Frederick

Douglass (Feb. 14) and President Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12).

3. Prior to his death in 1950, Woodson pressed schools to shift from studying Black history one week a year to studying Black history throughout the year. Woodson's ultimate goal was to have Black people learn of their past all year so that the annual celebration would no longer be necessary.

4. In 1976, 50 years after the first celebration,

President Gerald Ford expanded Negro History Week to Black History Month.

5. Countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history.



Newbies and Vets (Continued)

Aksa Williams has been a resource coordinator/ case manager in the field of developmental disabilities for 10 years. She also worked in the mental health field for 18 years. When asked about her experiences at Total Care, she stated that, "My experience with Total Care has been very nice. The training and experience that I've acquired over the span of my career has made my experience

as a resource coordinator easier, especially since I've been working with DDA for so long. I'm grateful that my supervisors and administration are very cooperative, knowledgeable and supportive."

Peter Igbukolu has 24 years of experience in social services. He believes that Total Care is a great place

to work because you learn how to multitask, obtain balance and overall become an efficient worker. He has a very optimistic personality and believes that there is always room for growth. If anyone needs help, Peter stated that, "I'm excited to assist them in attaining the services they need".



Work and Life Balance – Gail Telesford

Tips for a Better Work Life

Balance Work-life balance means something different to every individual. Thanks to *Forbes* magazine's expert opinions on health and career tips, I will share ideas to help you find the balance that's right for you. Here are a couple of tips to help you balance your work and personal life.

Unplug From telecommuting to programs that make work easier, technology has helped our lives in many ways. But it has also created

expectations of constant accessibility. The work day never seems to end. Work text and emails interrupt your days off.

"Make time off, truly time off."

By not reacting to the updates from work, you will develop a stronger habit of resilience.

"Resilient people feel a greater sense of control over their lives," while reactive people have less control and are more prone to stress. –

Robert Brooks (Forbes)

Exercise and Meditate

Even when we're busy, we make time for the crucial things in life. We eat. We sleep. And yet one of our most crucial needs – exercise – is often the first thing to go when our calendars fill up. Exercise is an effective stress reducer. It pumps feel-good endorphins through your body. It helps lift your mood and can even serve a one-two punch by also putting you in a meditative state, according to the [Mayo Clinic](#). (Forbes)

Change the Structure of your life

Sometimes we fall into a rut and assume our habits are set in stone. Take a birds-eye view of your life and ask yourself: *What changes could make life easier?* So instead of trying to do it all, focus on activities you specialize in and value most. Delegate or outsource everything else. (Forbes)



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Our Vision:
"To be the leading company that designs, promotes, and provides high quality health care programs, services, and products that empower people to maximize their potential."

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Gail Telesford, Staff Writer



Candice Robinson, Staff Writer

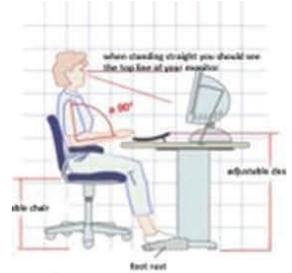
Correct Position At the PC Desk —Tachanda Oliver

I've seen many people complain about back pains or headaches. In most cases, people don't adopt a proper position in front of their computer. See the attached picture showing the correct position, when sitting in front of a PC.

Here are some important PC positioning tips:

1. The monitor should always be 16-29 inches away from your eyes and should be in alignment with your eyes.
2. Keep your head and body straight and your shoulders relaxed.
3. Adjust your chair backrest so that the curve of your chair matches with the curve of your back.

4. Keep elbows close to your body at approximately 90 degrees (keep the wrists and forearms parallel to the floor).



5. Keep your feet on the floor.

Also, don't stare at your computer all day. Every 60 minutes, take a walk or relax your eyes by looking somewhere other than at the computer screen.

Health and Wellness Tips -Candice Robinson

If you're going to spend 8 hours a day, and probably more, at the office, make them count! Healthy habits may start at home, but why not take them to work with you? Here are a few tips that'll help you do just that.

1. **Smart snacks:** In advance prepare your own favorite snacks such as fresh fruit or mixed nuts. Planning your snacks prior to coming to work will help you make healthy choices and help you avoid impulse buys during the day.
2. **Workplace Fitness:** Most workers don't have much time to hit the gym throughout the day. Small movements, however, can make a big difference, even in the workplace. You may want to try some chair yoga, a couple of minutes of stretching and breathing techniques. These are proven to

reduce anxiety and they can help increase your fitness and focus.

3. **Pack your own lunch:** This tip ties into "Smart Snacks" with respect to choosing healthy snacks and meals. Studies show that people who eat lunch out less frequently are more likely to lose weight. Even one fast-food meal a week can do damage by increasing your risk for heart disease.



January Birthdays

Happy Birthday!!

Amoussou Aholoukpe
Barbara Farmer
Chantayle Watkins
Checago Bright-Sawo
Erica Collins
India Smith
Jaleesha Jenkins
Jasmine Jones
Jaunice Ross
Jovanna Anthony
Kahmele Jones
Larry Adams
Lorraine Cooper
Lydia Evakise
Melverna Wheeler

Sahr Mabay
Sammy Robinson
Shelby Garrett
Steve Holley
Tamora Carter
Tiffany Church
Trisha Foster
Wanda Williams

