

MORE than you think.

THE INITIATOR

FEBRUARY 2010

Starbucks® & Speaker Series

Since 2007, Disability Network/ Lakeshore has been using a new tool to open the eyes of the community: a cup of coffee – and an informative presentation to go along with it.

Up to eight times a year, we invite the public to join us for our Starbucks & Speaker Series. “Our goal is to break down stereotypes and take away the fear of the unknown when it comes to engaging people with disabilities,” says Steven Crawley of our Business and Employment Resource Team. “Our programs are about people first—and then what a disability really is—something one in four of us lives with every day.”

The presentations aim to educate the public on the breadth of disabilities and the impact they may have on people trying to live fully engaged lives. When scheduling the series, Crawley says he looks for “speakers with engaging personalities and ‘want to know’ topics that fit with our message.” All presentations introduce the topic from a positive, problem-solving perspective. The event also offers networking opportunities for the participants.

Michele Chaney, Branch Manager at United Federal Credit Union, attended two of last year’s presentations on Disability Etiquette and Seasonal Affective Disorder, and she now plans to become a regular attendee of the Series. “What I appreciate the most is the opportunity to learn how to be a better team leader and a better relationship manager with customers who may have different needs,” she

says. “This series can teach me how to be more sensitive, open-minded, and improve the way we do business. If we make this a friendlier, more inclusive community, it will benefit all of us in the long run and help build our economic growth.”

The next event, scheduled for February, will feature Sandy Faulkner and Katie Prins from Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services. Faulkner explains, “We’ll talk about the deaf culture and deafness in terms of employment, from both a deaf person’s and a hearing person’s perspective. Most hearing people don’t have a lot of experience working with and around deaf people, so we want to lessen any fears and discomfort people may have and reach out to potential area employers.”

In March, the Series will turn to workplace depression and substance abuse, led by Jude Vereyken of Pine Rest Holland Clinic. “These issues cost employers billions of dollars each year,” she says. “It is very common for those with untreated depression to self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. While employers cannot diagnose depression or substance use disorders, they can be aware of the signs and encourage their employees to seek assistance.”

Asked if she and her employees would attend the Starbucks & Speaker Series in 2010, Michele Chaney said, “Definitely. I think the Series is great, and we’re always interested in more opportunities to learn.”

Visit www.dnlakeshore.org for more information.



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— Steven Crawley

Join us for our next event!

Tuesday, March 16, 2010

8:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

2nd floor of Ottawa MiWorks

121 Clover Street, Holland

\$15 per person

(discounts available for groups and donors)

Pre-registration is required.

616 396 5326

Thanks to: Spartan Stores/D&W Fresh Market for the Starbucks refreshments and all of our speakers who volunteer their time to make this series possible.

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Electronic Newsletter

Did you know that Disability Network/Lakeshore has an electronic newsletter that includes: more info, pictures, video, links and upcoming events? Visit www.dnlakeshore.org to register!

Join Us on the Web

Disability Network/Lakeshore is now on Facebook and Linked-In.

Volunteers

We rely on our wonderful volunteers for so much of what we accomplish. To find an opportunity that fits your skills, interests and schedule, please contact Annie Hilchen at 616 396 5326.

Donations

As a non-profit organization, we welcome gifts of all sizes. You may make a tax-deductible contribution by mailing a check (payable to Disability Network/Lakeshore) to:

Disability Network/Lakeshore
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Or online at: www.e-giving.org



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Who we are

Most people equate disability with limitations. It's our job to change the perceptions and realities that prevent people with disabilities from sharing in the community. Every year, we provide training, mentoring, and referrals to help people with disabilities and their families live productive lives. Because disability touches so many people, we also work on a larger scale, helping governments and businesses make changes that benefit not just those with disabilities, but everyone in the community.

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