

Network

A publication of
Sertoma Centre



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**Sertoma
Centre, Inc.**

Discovering the
potential in all of us

Letter from Gus van den Brink, Executive Director



There is a lot happening at Sertoma Centre, as you will see as you read this issue of our newsletter. We are excited about the new fiscal year and cautiously optimistic that it will be a more stable year with the passing of the state budget. We know that things will remain tough financially and changes will continue, but within our resources we are working to passionately pursue our mission; to provide opportunities that empower individuals with disabilities to achieve personal success.

One exciting change is our new Youth Empowered for Success (YES) program. This is our new High School Transition Program with a complete focus on moving the students we serve into the community for services and employment as they approach the end of their high school years on their twenty second birthday.

We are also continuing to expand our Community Mental Health and Counseling Services that operate from our facility in Matteson. Many of the services are expanding, including our Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program, Crisis Services, Outreach Services, and Transition Services. Our work to assist individuals with mental illness to move out of institutions and live and participate in their community is one of the most important aspects of what we do. Equally important is the provision of Community Support Services that assists a person in recovery to manage their symptoms and maintain their independence in the community.

The new fiscal year also brought an additional staff member to our Advancement Department as our Donor Relations Manager. You may have already heard from Paula Biancalana who moved from our program services into this position. With the poor funding rates for our services and no increases in ten years we must reach out for support more intentionally to our families and others to be able to sustain services. Paula is leading this effort and we are encouraged by the responses she has received from families and friends for first time or increased support.

Please read through this newsletter to learn more about what is new and changing in how we provide services and how you can support our efforts. As always many thanks to those who support us. We could not continue our work without you!



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#Giving Tuesday is Back!

GIVING TUESDAY is back along with the wildly successful "PIE IN THE FACE"! from last year's Giving Tuesday campaign.

There will be eight chances for you to see Sertoma Centre "employees" take a pie in the face! Be sure to LIKE and follow our Facebook page and join us on the big day, Tuesday, November 28th. We will go LIVE on Facebook each time we reach a benchmark goal and you will witness one of our staff members take one for the team, but it will be based off your votes! Who will be first? Tune in to find out. Please check out our #ILGive page on #GivingTuesday for our #serviceTUEmankind campaign! Be sure to DONATE! See you via social media on Tuesday, November 28th!



#serviceTUEmankind
NOVEMBER 28

CARF Survey Summary

Sertoma achieved yet another three year CARF (Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) accreditation for the following program services: Community Employment Services (employment supports and job development), Community Housing, Community Integration, Employee Development Services, Organizational Employment, Services Coordination, Supported Living, Transition Services, and Community Integration



Psychosocial Rehabilitation. The three day survey was conducted in March 2017 with four surveyors from California, Florida, and Alabama. A three year accreditation outcome indicates the organization's substantial conformance to the CARF standards with continued efforts toward quality improvement. This was Sertoma's 13th CARF survey totaling 37 years as a CARF accredited organization.

Here are a few of the organization's strengths documented by the surveyors:

Staff members provide excellent leadership to the organization and bring pride and dedication to their work, which provides great benefits to the persons served.

Sertoma Centre provides services in an individualized manner based upon best practices and regular input from the persons served.

The organization demonstrates a high regard for the rights of persons served and advocates by supporting the persons served to advocate themselves.

The organization is commended for the variety of nontraditional community jobs that have been developed for the persons served.

Sertoma has developed ten community homes located in various communities. The homes are attractive, well decorated, and many have updated kitchens and bathrooms. The choices of persons served were evident throughout the homes.

Sertoma Centre is well known in the community and has a sterling reputation as an honest, well-managed, and valuable resource for persons served.

The full CARF survey report is available for review on the agency website.

Troop 159 Silver Project with Sertoma

Girl Scout Troop 159 from New Lenox wrapped up their Open Book, Open Hearts Silver Award project by working with some of the consumers from the Alsip and Ridgeway CILAs (Community Integrated Living Arrangements) and consumers from the Bridge program in April and May. It took the girls twelve months of brainstorming, planning and executing to earn the Silver award, which is the second highest honor in girl scouting. In that time they held three different book drives, collecting over 2,000 new and gently used children's books that were donated to a local book bank. The last part of the project was working with adults with disabilities. They read *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein and helped them paint their very own giving tree. This was such a rewarding project for both girls and consumers. One of the ladies at Ridgeway said they made her weekend and wanted to know when they can come back. The girls of Troop 159 already have Sertoma in their sights for their Gold Award!



Girl Scout Troop 159 from New Lenox visit one of the CILA homes to help consumers create beautiful artistic creations.

The Associate Board Gains a New Vice President

Meet the new Vice President of Sertoma Centre's Associate Board. Anne Murphy has served as the Associate Board's Treasurer for the past two years and is excited to take on her new role. When asked why she joined, she said, "I heard about Sertoma through a good friend and I thought that it would be a great fit. While I have been involved in service work for the last 15 years, I felt that I could use my skills on a larger scale to benefit Sertoma."

Throughout the last two years, Anne has co-hosted trivia nights and brought in thousands of dollars' worth of donated items for Sertoma events. Her next mission will be leading the winter coat drive.

Anne works as a Sr. Financial Analyst for Weber Shandwick in downtown Chicago. Thank you, Anne, for your heartfelt contribution to Sertoma Centre!



Current officers are David Troy, President, Anne Murphy, Vice President, and Caitie Cross Lombard, Secretary, and

members Terra Jacobson, James Johnstone, Jeff Lombard, Zach Reid, Nicolette Varan, Jessica Weiler, and Mitchell Zeiler.

Benefits of Sertoma Centre's Associate Board:

- Serve as an Ambassador of Sertoma Centre and create new relationships
- Enhance your resume by learning new marketable skills
- Network with other passionate philanthropic individuals who care about their community
- Expand your leadership potential through new and innovative initiatives

Applications for the Associate Board are now available. We have many ways to get involved through our Committees. To find out how you can become part of this group, contact staff liaison Lisa Molloy at lmolloy@sertomacentre.org or 708.730.6210.



Consumers enjoy art therapy classes with certified therapists from the Institute for Therapy through the Arts.

Gardening Program, Artwork Creations and More!

Sertoma Centre has teamed up with the University of Illinois Extension Programs for support with our garden. In May, Nancy Kreith and her partners offered a horticulture class for staff members. They have also taught horticulture to the consumers at 123rd street and have volunteered their time working with them to ensure the garden was properly prepared, planted, and harvested. All of the consumers have done a beautiful job and the garden looks amazing. The consumers sold herbs from the garden after the most recent harvest and we are looking forward to continuing to share that opportunity. We also learned about the transition from caterpillar to butterfly and released butterflies into the garden. Thank you to Shunte Arnold for her work coordinating these great programs!

In July we welcomed two sets of occupational therapy interns. Four students from Fox College and four students from Governors State University have worked with consumers this summer. These internship opportunities are a great way for students to learn and gain a passion for working with adults with disabilities. It is also a chance for the people we serve to get additional services and individualized attention from professionals with an occupational therapy perspective.

Sandler Partners Supports Sertoma Centre



Sandler Partners hosted a fundraising raffle to support Sertoma Centre at its Chicago Partner Summit on May 24th. This effort was made possible by our faithful Board Member and Vice President at Sandler Partners, Dennis (DJ) Fioretti. The amount

raised was nearly \$4,300! Thank you Dennis and Sandler Partners for your support!

The Power of YES!



The Employment Services division, led by Dana McFarlin-Lloyd, has implemented an exciting new skills training and job placement program for high school students between the ages of 16 and 22 called the Youth Empowered for Success Program (YES).

YES assists young people in high school and their families through the often intimidating process of transition to adult services. The program teaches transferable skills needed to be self-sufficient in personal, social, vocational and occupational areas and can provide linkages to residential services. Program participants spend time visiting communities to be exposed to all the various programs and services available, so they become empowered to make choices for themselves that meet their individual needs and desires.

Participants receive skills training in the areas of:

- Social Skills
- Financial Literacy
- Recreation and Leisure Activities
- Assertiveness Skills
- High School Diploma Attainment
- Independent Living Skills Training
- Job Readiness Training
- Job Placement

For more information, please contact our [Consumer Support Services Coordinator, Lynn King](#), at 708-730-6352.



CMHC consumers and staff visit Springfield to let their voices be heard.

Sertoma's CMHC Consumers Speak Up and Speak Out in Springfield

On May 17, 2017, 8 CMHC consumers and 4 Sertoma staff members embarked on a 200 mile road trip to Springfield, Illinois. Although the trip was paved with a few unexpected colorful obstacles, including a dust storm, the trip proved to be a rewarding experience for all of the involved parties! Consumers had the opportunity to share their recovery stories with current legislators and politicians from all over the state of Illinois. All of the attending consumers did an amazing job of advocating for bills associated with mental health services and opposing the newest version of the American Health Care Act. For most, this was their first opportunity to participate in any type of advocacy effort. However, the eight attendees were chosen for their commitment to consumer advocacy and passion for their mental health recovery. After meeting several Illinois legislators, including Senator Michael Hastings and Senator Melinda Bush, consumers had an opportunity to tour their state capital. This tour provided consumers with a first-hand look at the legislative process and the state capital's rich history and overall architecture. The tour began in the Senate Chamber where the group was able to learn about the legislative process and voting. Following the tour of the House chambers, the group stopped on three floors of the rotunda, where the tour guide pointed out various architectural features, as well as the historical significance of several paintings and statues.

Heartfelt Letters From CMHC Consumers To State Representatives

In preparation of the visit to Springfield, CMHC consumers wrote their personal stories about recovery and the importance of the services received through Sertoma Centre to their mental and physical health. Below are just a few that were submitted.

Honorable Senators and Representatives

Hi my name is Jim, I am 51 yrs. old, and my social support groups at Sertoma are very good for me. Talking with others about my symptoms of schizophrenia helps with my resiliency in my community. However, my program needs temporary funding from the state government to operate efficiently. Many injustices are at work while we see our government lose track of the many people who need your support. With masterful inaction we believe that we're getting nowhere. But there's time, I believe you still care. Transportation, day programs, and links to job training and housing have helped me cope. But it's time for us to unite. We cannot sacrifice the principle for which we stand. We need stability for our health system and no tipping points in our budget. People of Illinois need to know this and respond to positive action in saving money and saving our state from collapse. Dollar for dollar benefits and support for everyone covered with our voice."

- James Young

Hello my name is Patsy. I am a consumer at Sertoma Centre. I am 58 years young. This is my story. My insurance company found the Sertoma Centre for me. I think it is a very much need service. If it hadn't been for God and the Sertoma Centre, I wouldn't know where I would be. Sertoma has helped me a lot of ways. I had been through trauma, violence, and domestic violence, sexual violence, depression, and O.C.D. It's a process, but Sertoma is helping me through all of it. Among other things, Sertoma helps me. The Sertoma Centre is also my support system. I love coming here. It motivates me to come here. I feel that I have blossomed and am nourished by coming to Sertoma. I have more of a balance in my life, I look forward to coming here. I feel that coming here has made me more committed to sticking with something. Sertoma is wholesome for me. Overall, Sertoma has helped me in many different ways. I feel that God has sent me angels and comforters.

-Patsy Franklin

Housewares Heaven!

Sertoma Centre had another wonderful haul at the 2017 International Home and Housewares Show at McCormick Place on March 21st! We are so grateful to be one of six local charities allowed into the Home and Housewares Show each year to pack up donations from companies who are not taking their merchandise with them. This year we enjoyed beautiful items from BIA Cordon Bleu, ARC International, Boston Warehouse, Gibson Overseas, and Home Essentials and Beyond. In past years we usually end the evening with about 30 companies donating to us, but this year we had a record number of 50 companies who assisted Sertoma in reaching their goal. WOW - we were so excited to have that many companies donate and Sertoma Centre ended up with over 110 pallets of merchandise! Another ground breaking number this year was the amount of volunteers we had sign up for the event. We had approximately 143 volunteers registered to help assist us at McCormick Place. We are so grateful to the many wonderful, amazing and FUN volunteers who joined us that day! THANK YOU, THANK YOU! And it is never too early to plan for 2018 - our team is working hard to improve the systems and last minute changes we encounter each year at the show. We are developing new volunteer positions to help make the pack up smoother and less stressful as well as detailing how to pack a box, load and shrink wrap a pallet and other essentials a volunteer would need to know for this event. Watch for upcoming information regarding these items on our website and save the date for Tuesday, March 13, 2018!!

Super Sale = Super Fundraising for Sertoma Centre!

Many jaws dropped when our guests entered the Old Dominick's property off Ridgeland and 127th in Palos Heights this spring. A handful of semis had come and an entire store became filled with incredible new products from donating vendors at the close of the 2017 International Home + Housewares Show. After several long days of unpacking and then organizing over the next few weeks,



our volunteers and staff filled over 200 tables with beautiful items ready to live in the homes of our shoppers!

After making sure that our consumers had anything they needed in Sertoma's CILA homes, on April 29th we opened the doors to the public and offered goods in everything related to the home. We showcased essentials like pots and pans, bakeware, cleaning supplies, chairs, tables, glasses and mugs, as well as convenient accessories like coffee makers, décor, ice cream

makers, and party supplies. We even had bean bag furniture! This year we made sure that lines moved as quickly as possible, and featured "10 Items and Under" and "Cash Only" lines. We also made sure that we had food and drink available to the folks that needed nourishment while they were perusing the aisles, which included Demon Dawgs, Aurelio's Pizza, and Nothing Bundt Cakes. And to be respectful of our small business neighbors, we offered free shuttle service to and from the Super Sale in order to relieve parking congestion. We counted over 3,000 people who went through the doors and everyone we spoke with said that it was the smoothest experience they remember for our Super Sale! A huge shout out to our volunteers who always help make our fundraising

events a success with their time and talents, as well as a gigantic THANK YOU to all our shoppers who helped us raise \$79,000 for our Sertoma Centre programs!

The BIG Event brings in BIG family fun, BIG taste, BIG prizes, and BIG fundraising bucks

This year marked our 14th in the celebration of the BIG Event & Firefighters' Cook-Off fundraiser! We were excited to bring back some favorites from last year, including the BIG sound of The Kennedy Compound, Animals for Awareness, and Ritter Art and Face Painting for the kiddos. Guests were able to enjoy wonderful food from our competing firehouse chefs from all around the Chicagoland area, try their luck in our BIG Raffle that is highlighted with a \$10k grand prize, participate in POW-R Sertoma's Split-the-Pot, and bid on our silent auction. Children had a special area all their own with cotton candy, carnival games, glitter tattoos and balloon art, and an amazing educational show & touch experience with some rather exotic rescued animals.



This marvelous event, held on Sunday, May 20th at 115 Bourbon Street, is our largest fundraiser of the year at Sertoma Centre. We had amazing sponsors that helped bring in \$75,000 with their support alone. Amongst them were our \$10k Volcanic Sponsors, Proven Managed IT Solutions and ACTION Sertoma Club and we had five 5-Alarm Sponsors who donated \$5k, including POW-R Sertoma Club, Chicago Lawn Sertoma Club, EverBank, Toshiba, and Katherine Vennetti. Over 30 businesses donated in-kind gifts to round out our silent auction baskets. Our BIG Raffle brought in over \$40k and we had donors sponsor 21 consumers to attend the event. We had amazing firehouse chefs from Niles, Chicago, Lemont, Lombard, and Lyons cooking ribs, chicken, chili, and pulled pork.

All told with everyone's help and generosity, we raised \$125,000 for Sertoma Centre. Next year we are shaking things up a bit and expanding our Cook-Off competition to include ALL First Responders! Keep your calendars marked for May 5, 2018, as we help celebrate Cinco de Mayo in our own way...expect some serious spice!

Associate Board raises almost \$6,000 at their "Quest for the Cup" Trivia Night

At the "Quest for the Cup" Trivia Night held on March 30th at Jenny's Steakhouse in Chicago Ridge, the Sertoma Associate Board raised \$5,907 to help fund programs for our consumers. Volunteer trivia host Rick Hart combined questions with corresponding music and had all the guests completely entertained. Co-chairs Terra Jacobson and Anne Murphy offered an amazing variety of raffle baskets and a few very unique items to bid on, including autographed Chicago Blackhawks gear. Guests dined on a delicious buffet, indulged in the liquor package, and enjoyed a special treat for dessert.





NEW! Save-the-Date for Sertoma Centre's Holiday Bazaar Arts & Crafts Fair

Sertoma Centre is hosting its first annual Holiday Bazaar Arts & Crafts Fair, Friday thru Saturday, December 1-2, 2017. On Friday, December 1, 2017, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., we open to the general public at our 123rd Street facility. This also gives consumers an opportunity to shop with veteran and new vendors. On Saturday, from 9 am. to 3 p.m., we'll be hosting the Arts & Crafts Fair at our 127th Street Martha Polacek Facility, which houses a much larger space with ample parking. All three days will be filled with beautiful and unique hand-crafted items, gift wrapping stations, and delicious treats at Mrs. Claus' Bake Shop and North Pole Cafe; it will be a fun time for all. The proceeds from each of Sertoma Centre's Vendor Booths go directly to the participating programs, and support people with disabilities.

Join The Circle!

Sertoma has launched a new giving option for individuals called the Circle of Friends Giving Club. The club is a group of our supporting Friends who make a commitment to provide monthly, bi-annual (twice a year), or annual gifts at various levels by authorizing scheduled payments from a credit card or by submitting a check at a designated time. By committing to support Sertoma in one of five gift categories, you are helping to bridge the gap between State of Illinois funding and the true costs of providing quality services and programs. There is room for you in the Circle for as little as \$25 a month. You will be making a big difference in the lives of those we serve, and will have opportunities to connect with other Friends at events throughout the year. For more information contact our Donor Relations Manager, Paula Biancalana, at (708) 730-6227 direct.

USA Voice & Data Asks For Facebook Likes Gives Back \$100!

USA Voice & Data featured Sertoma Centre as their chosen non-profit on their Facebook page for the month of June and for their

"#100for100" campaign. The company donated \$100 dollars after Sertoma Centre followers helped USA Voice & Data receive 100 likes on their Facebook page. Thank you USA Voice & Data for helping empower individuals with disabilities at Sertoma Centre.

Sertoma Centre's Wish List

Looking for a fun way to give? Our programs could use any of the following: iPads for speech therapy and other sensory exercises for consumers with autism, games, puzzles, craft activity kits, and art supplies (colored pencils, crayons, markers, construction paper, and glue sticks). We would also happily receive any donations for outings, museum tickets or sporting events tickets. For a complete wish list of items, visit our website at www.sertomacentre.org.

If you would like to donate any of these items or prefer to make a financial donation to underwrite a purchase, please contact the Director of Advancement and Communications at (708) 730-6206.

Sertoma Centre, Inc.'s Mission Statement

At Sertoma Centre, Inc., our mission is to provide opportunities that empower individuals with disabilities to achieve personal success.

CARF Accredited, 501(c)(3) Organization

Sertoma Centre, Inc. Code of Ethics Policy

Sertoma Centre has the obligation to act in ways that will merit the trust, confidence, and respect of individuals, their families, and the community. To this end, we have a Code of Ethics. Our commitment is to ensure any allegation of violation of this Code by individuals, family members, guardians, staff, and members of the community are investigated and addressed. For a complete copy of the Code and the complaint process, please visit the Sertoma Centre website: www.sertomacentre.org.



Discovering the
potential in all of us

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Mark your calendar with these important upcoming events:

- September 29 & 30, 2017- POW-R Candy Days**
- October 13, 2017- Paint it Forward**
- October 20, 2017- ACTION Roctoberfest**
- November 2, 2017- Spirit of Sertoma Celebration Luncheon**
- November 8 - 11, 2017 - Carson's Community Days**
- November 11, 2017 - ACTION Sertoma 50TH Anniversary Dinner**
- November 28, 2017 - #GivingTuesday**
- December 1, 2017 - Holiday Bazaar**
- December 2, 2017- NEW! Holiday Bazaar Arts & Crafts Fair**
- January 21, 2018 - POW-R NFL Bash**
- February 2, 2018 - Silent Partner Dinner**

Watch our website and social media pages for events happening through our partner Sertoma Clubs and other Sertoma Centre events!

For more information, call or write:

Sertoma Centre, Inc.

4343 West 123rd St. Alsip, IL 60803

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