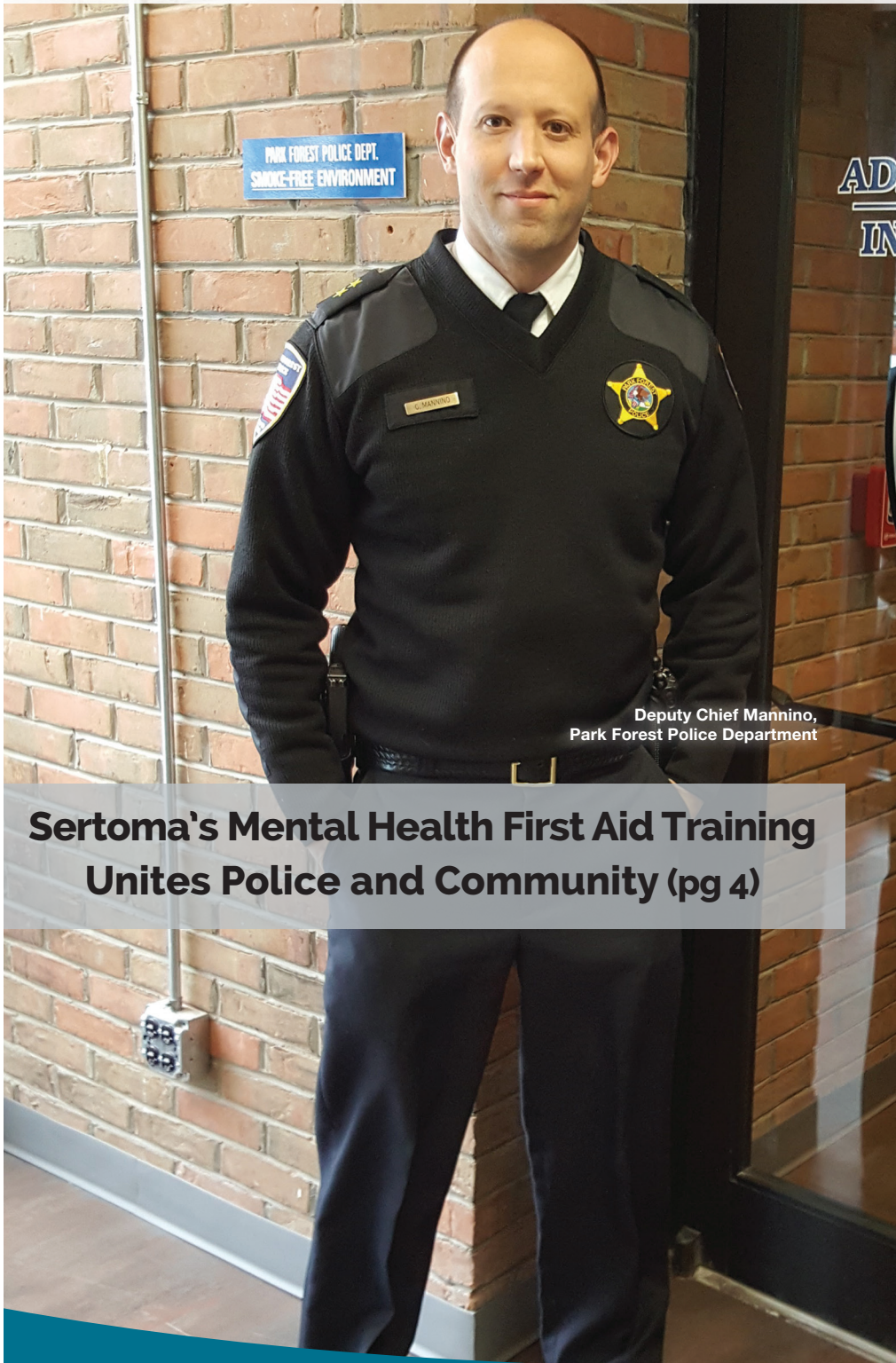


Network

A publication of
Sertoma Centre



Deputy Chief Mannino,
Park Forest Police Department

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**Sertoma
Centre, Inc.**

Discovering the
potential in all of us

Letter from Gus van den Brink, Executive Director



It is hard to know what to say as I begin writing this article. Should I scream and shout about the finances of our state and the negative impact it is having on Sertoma and human services in general; or should I be positive and excited about some of the new things we are doing and our great hopes for the future? It is a time of uncertainty and contradictions and I could go in either direction. We have great challenges to overcome and yet there are significant opportunities

that we are working to seize for the benefit of our community and the individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and mental illness we serve and support.

On the scream and shout side I need to say that community service providers have a critical need for additional funding to be able to address the crisis in hiring direct service staff. Please take any chance you have to tell anyone and everyone of this problem, especially your state representative, senator, and the governor. Community services providers serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities cannot hire the needed staff at the wages state funding allows us to pay.

Now on the positive and excited side I want to say more and let you know, despite the challenges we are working to make a difference in the lives of more individuals in a bigger way. In October we were awarded an Employment First grant from the IDHS which is allowing us to assist more individuals to secure a job in the community. It is exceptionally rewarding to see the joy and excitement of an individual who has been in our day programs or workshop when they get a job in the community. It is the primary goal and desire of many of the individuals we serve. This new grant is allowing us to provide more intensive services so that additional individuals can realize this achievement.

We are also working to expand our community mental health and counseling (CMHC) services. As I write, the final work on renovations at our Matteson facility are being completed so that we can support additional individuals with a severe and persistent mental illness through our Psychosocial Rehabilitation program. In addition we are also expanding our CMHC services to reach out to, assess, and provide transition services to more individuals that have been placed in nursing homes. The transition and support services that Sertoma staff provides allow individuals the opportunity to move into their own apartment so they can live and hopefully work in their community. It is not easy work for us or the individual since their needs are significant and they may have been living in the nursing home for an extended period of time; but boy is it rewarding for the individual and us at Sertoma too, when the transition is successful. Just a side fact here; affordable housing is one of the greatest barriers to individuals living in the community.

So times are tough yet we seize any opportunity to serve our community better and achieve our Vision, "Sertoma Centre envisions communities where all people with disabilities live, work and fully participate".

Please consider sending in a donation to support our important work using the envelope in this newsletter. I hope to see you soon at one of our events or, if you give me a call, let's make a plan for you to come visit the Centre to see firsthand what we do and who we serve. My number is 708 730-6216 or you can email me at gvandenbrink@sertomacentre.org. As always, thank you for your support of Sertoma Centre! It is truly appreciated.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gus van den Brink". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

2016-2017 Board of Directors

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We Are Growing!

Advancement and Communications is proud to introduce our new team member! Paula Biancalana is our new Donor Relations Manager, specializing in the cultivation of individual donors to support the mission of Sertoma Centre. She holds a Master's degree in Public Administration (MPA) from Governor State University and a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree from Northeastern University.



Paula has a rich work history in the field of developmental disabilities in community and residential programs at Easter Seals of Metropolitan Chicago, Misericordia Home and Sertoma Centre. She also worked with students in special education programs at Chicago Public Schools.

In the field of philanthropy, she was a member of a select group that raised \$1.3 million for the Archdiocese of Chicago. Paula was one of our top telethon fundraisers at our last Giving Tuesday campaign in 2016 that in total raised \$40,000. In addition to her many noted talents; she is an accomplished writer and member of the Oak Lawn Writers Group.



Paula Phillips, Assistant Executive Director and Gus van den Brink, Executive Director join Intersect for Ability

Sertoma Centre Joins Intersect for Ability

In September 2016, Sertoma Centre became a full partner in the Intersect for Ability collaborative network. The group is comprised of 13 Chicago area organizations that exclusively serve individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. The Coleman Foundation oversees and guides its strategic and collaborative direction. According to the Intersect for Ability website, "network members engage in program evaluation, technical assistance, shared leadership, collaborative program development, engagement of varied funders and a variety of efficiencies designed to reduce costs and enhance quality."

Sertoma is very proud to be represented by its top administrators, Gus van den Brink (Executive Director) and Paula Phillips (Assistant Executive Director), on such a prestigious team of innovative leaders. Their participation brings the voice and expertise of Sertoma to the

most critical charge of ensuring best practices in current and future consumer programming for service providers in the field of disability. The list of participating organizations follows:

Barbara Olson Centre of Hope, Clearbrook, Countryside Association, Easter Seals Metropolitan Chicago, Elim Christian Services, Helping Hand Center, Little City, Misericordia, Neumann Family Services, PACTT Learning Center, Park Lawn Association, Sertoma Centre, Inc., and UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago.

The Associate Board Gains a New Secretary

Meet the incredible person who will be keeping things in order as the Secretary of Sertoma Centre's Associate Board. Caitie Lombard is one of our most valued volunteers in addition to her role on the Associate Board. When asked why she joined, she said, "I heard about Sertoma Centre and the Associate Board from Chris Van Eck. He thought it would be something my husband and I would both be interested in. I had done volunteer work in high school and college through various organizations.



I thought being on the Board would be another way to give back to the community. Many people are unaware of what Sertoma Centre offers. I think it is important to bring awareness to the community, especially to young professionals who may not know about Sertoma Centre and its mission. It is great working on fundraising ideas and projects with a Board that helps spread the word about what a great organization Sertoma Centre is."

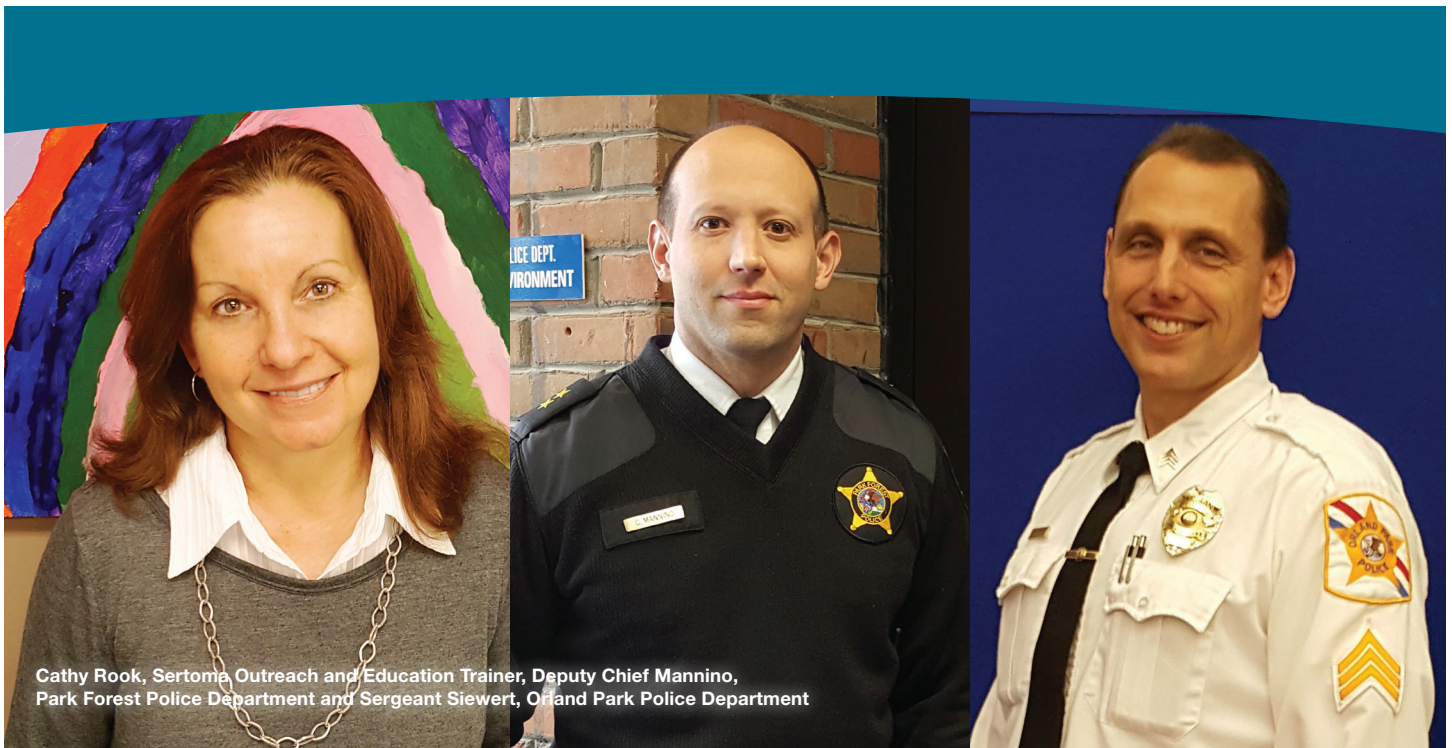
Caitie works as a Registered Nurse in the pediatric emergency room at Advocate Children's Hospital in Oak Lawn. Thank you, Caitie, for your heartfelt contribution to Sertoma Centre!

Current Associate Board officers are Chris Van Eck, President, David Troy, Vice President, Caitie Cross Lombard, Secretary, and Anne Murphy, Treasurer, and our board members include Terra Jacobson, James Johnstone, Thomas Kopko, Jeff Lombard, Michael Murphy, 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.



Cathy Rook, Sertoma Outreach and Education Trainer, Deputy Chief Mannino, Park Forest Police Department and Sergeant Siewert, Orland Park Police Department

Sertoma's Mental Health First Aid Training Unites Police and Community

CMHC is doing outstanding work in the community, especially with local police departments. And it all began with Cathy Rook, Outreach and Education Trainer, who brought it all together.

As part of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) marketing efforts at CMHC, Cathy distributed materials to local agencies and followed up with emails. The flyer sparked the interest of Deputy Chief Mannino of the Park Forest Police Department and he reached out to Sertoma Centre.

In the fall of 2016, Chief Mannino attended the International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference in San Diego. At the conference he heard of the One Mind Campaign Pledge. They were asked to take the pledge in the next 12 – 36 months. The pledge has four pillars to complete the program.

1. Have an established mental health policy and determine how the department will interact with the individuals with a mental illness.
2. Have an established relationship with a mental health provider.
3. Have at least 20 percent of sworn officers training as Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) officers and any non-select sworn they want to add.
4. Within 12-36 months the police department will have 100 percent of their sworn officers trained in MHFA in law enforcement as well as any selected non-sworn.

When Chief Mannino saw Sertoma Centre's materials for a free training in MHFA and had already pledged his department, it was a win-win situation for everyone involved.

The Park Forest Police Department was the first to take the pledge in Illinois. They have 100 percent trained staff in MHFA, thanks to Sertoma Centre, and 50 percent have been trained in CIT, with the commitment to have 100 percent trained, exceeding the pledge requirements. Now that the staff has been trained Mannino says the staff feels better equipped to respond to a mental health crisis or make a referral for mental health services. "The role of the officer is an ever increasingly complex role, but I think as long as we are giving our personnel the training to fulfill that role, they can handle it. They would say I am a cop, not a social worker. But in

law enforcement you are a social worker. There is a social component to that. Officers are beginning to realize that and embrace that."

Cathy's tenacity and outreach in the community led her to attend the Third Annual Mental Health Conference at Prairie State College where the Orland Park Police Chief, Timothy J. McCarthy, was the keynote speaker. His desire was to increase awareness about mental health/mental illness and get the number of calls down. He is also a big advocate of CIT training. After the meeting Cathy met Sergeant Siewert, who is the program coordinator of the Orland Park Police Department, and contacted him about MHFA training through Sertoma Centre. Sergeant Siewert had already pledged the OPPD to do the One Mind Campaign pledge in November 2016, but needed the resources to get the whole staff trained. MHFA training was a priority to the Sergeant due to the huge increase of involuntary committal calls the police department received from 2014 to 2016 (from 0 to 162). The Orland Park Administration, Chief, the Deputy Chief and the Village Hall looked at this statistic and said this is a need that must be filled and addressed.

Sergeant Siewert recalled a wonderful story about how the MHFA training has had an impact on families in the community. He mentions, "There is a lady in the community that appreciated the way the team members handled her son with mental illness on various occasions. She was selling her home, but took it off the market and decided not to leave Orland Park because of the appropriate way we treated her son. She recognized her son may not receive the same treatment somewhere else. When you hear things like that you know you have made a difference and have impacted someone else's life and that gets back to why you took the job. It makes it all worthwhile."

Sertoma Centre's MHFA training has not only had a great impact on the community, but reignited a passion in law enforcement and built a stronger network with mental health providers. Thank you, Cathy, for helping to spread the word about MHFA in the community! Cathy has been with Sertoma Centre for the last two years and has a teaching career that expands over 15 years. She has always been connected with mental health education through her role as a teacher. We are glad to have you on our team.

If you would like more information about Mental Health First Aid training for your organization or business, contact [Gia Washington](mailto:gwashingt@sertomacentre.org) at (708) 748-1951 ext. 418 or email gwashingt@sertomacentre.org.



Diane Williams, lucky co-worker who pied Executive Director, Gus van den Brink, when the \$10,000 benchmark was reached for Giving Tuesday



Consumers show off their beautiful gifts received under their Christmas tree through the Adopt a House program

Sertoma Centre Celebrates Mind-Blowing Results for 2nd Annual Giving Tuesday Campaign

Sertoma Centre participated in the 2nd Annual Giving Tuesday campaign called #serviceTUEmankind on Tuesday, November 29, 2016. The agency raised over \$15,000 through telephone and online pledges. And this year, The Coleman Foundation partnered with Sertoma Centre to match every new donated dollar up to \$10,000. Sertoma Centre received an additional \$9,500 from The Coleman Foundation, and \$15,000 from the Carlig family bringing the grand total to \$40,000, which fully funded the renovation of Sertoma's CILA (Community Integrated Living Arrangement) homes to accommodate wheelchairs and other equipment for senior citizen residents. Each time the agency reached a significant benchmark, members of Sertoma's management team voluntarily took a pie to the face. These events were recorded on Facebook Live and even Executive Director Gus van den Brink has proof of his "sacrifice" when the \$10,000 benchmark was reached.

Sertoma staff was enthusiastic and dedicated their time and financial support to the cause. Many consumer families gave generously in response to the volunteers' calls, in particular from Staff Service Coordinator, Paula Biancalana. A big shout out goes to Board Member and owner of X4 Solutions, Dennis "DJ" Fioretti, who got the phone room ready for the all-day telethon and made a personal appearance to get a big pie in the face too! Both the Centre and Foundation Board were generous with significant gifts that took the contributions over the top.

According to Debra Marillo, Director of Advancement and Communications for Sertoma, "It really does take a village to get results like this. Those who watched from a distance by viewing Sertoma Centre's social media pages could feel the 'Spirit of Sertoma' in action. The consumers fueled the passion for others to want to give and help Sertoma to keep delivering the high quality of services it is known for."

All proceeds went directly to the #serviceTUEmankind campaign, which were used immediately after the campaign to complete the renovation project. Consumers were able to move into the home before the holiday season to end the year on a merry note.

Adopt a House & Adopt a Consumer Programs

Last year we began a new effort to adopt each of our 10 CILA homes to groups or individuals who would purchase gifts for each member living in the home. This year, the homes were quickly adopted so we extended the program to individual consumers in need. In addition to the 58 individuals living in the homes, we were also able to adopt out 20 consumers from Day Programs who all received a few presents under the tree. Thank you so much to the wonderful elves who made the 2016 Holiday a special one through their kindness and generosity: Jessica Appleton, Laurie Balwierz, Nancy Bishop and Bunco Group, Caroline Bozell, Debbie Brambrink, Katie Brickman, Debby Cole, Maureen Datzell, Carole DeVries, Allison Feeney, Lauren Finnegan, The Gardner Family, Trish Grenier, Rachel Hayeslette, Dawn Jersky, Pam Kerr, Terry Kinczyk, Pat Klikuszewski, Maria Kroener, Maurine Lloyd, Debbie Macenas, Patti Mailhot, Debra Marillo Marquette Bank, Dana McFarlin, Larry Owens & Salem Lutheran Church of Blue Island, Susan Pagnusat, Bill Palaima, Kathy Panek, Mary Pistek, Catherine Rook, Gwen Rucker & Family, Patricia Salgado, Keith Schroeder, Catherine Stacy, Evelyn Swan and Family, Sheila Thomas, Simona Tuminello, the Vindicated Vixens Roller Derby League, Gia Washington, Sarah Wiemeyer, Diane Williams and Laura Yanez.

Ho Ho Ho's and Cheer at Annual Holiday Bazaar

Santa Claus and his trusty sidekick elf were back to spread a little cheer at the fifth Annual Holiday Bazaar! Santa Claus was played by Associate Board President Chris Van Eck, and his sidekick elf was portrayed by Zach Reid, a member of the Associate Board. Santa Claus made his rounds throughout the second floor and also stopped by to visit all the program rooms. The Holiday Bazaar was again a huge success. The general public and consumers were able to shop with some repeat vendors and a couple of new vendors in the consumer lunchroom and classrooms at 123rd Street. Filled with beautiful and unique hand crafted items, free gift wrapping stations, and delicious treats at Mrs. Claus' Bake Shop and North Pole Cafe, it was a fun time for all. The proceeds from each Sertoma Centre vendor booth are allocated directly to the programs that participated, and support people with disabilities.



Turkey Drive

During the Thanksgiving Holiday all ten of our CILA homes enjoyed a turkey feast compliments of Dominique Jaroche, a member of the Alsip VFW. Every year Mr. Jaroche donates ten of his finest turkeys so that each of our homes has a turkey dinner! In addition to our Residential homes, twenty five consumers and their families enjoyed a turkey dinner donation from Senator Michael Hastings in partnership with South Suburban Access. Each year Senator Hastings generously donates 500 complete turkey dinners with all the trimmings to disadvantaged residents in the South Suburbs. Thank you all for your kindness and generosity over the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Food Baskets Fill Up Consumers with Joy

Over the past two years Sertoma Centre has been able to triple the amount of food baskets given to consumers in need for the Christmas Holiday. Due to very generous donors of non-perishable food items and an amazing donation of \$1,000 in Walmart gift cards from the American Heritage Club, we again were able to distribute 30 food baskets to consumers right before the holiday. Each basket contained items for a holiday feast plus a few extras thrown in as well as a \$50 Walmart gift card to buy the essentials needed to round out the meal. Thank you to everyone who dropped off food for our Food Drive sponsored by the Consumer Leadership Council from CMHC in Matteson.

Trim-a-Tree Contest

Two weeks before Christmas the CILA homes had a Christmas tree decorating contest among Sertoma Centre's 10 CILA homes. Each home could spend two hundred dollars for decorations to adorn their tree. Judges John Young, Valerie Lynch and Dina Raya, visited each home to view their beautiful designs and declared Ridgeway the winner. Winners of the contest won a free meal for both consumers and house staff.

Coat Drive Warms the Hearts of Consumers

Sertoma Centre was able to provide new warm winter coats to 65 consumers thanks to the generous donations from our Sertoma Clubs; POW-R, ACTION, Chicago Lawn, United Sertoma Lemont Chapter and the Chicago Local 1001 Laborers' Union. We would like to send a super shout out to JCPenney in Orland Park for all of their help and generosity during our 2016 Coat Drive. JCPenney helped tremendously and because of their commitment to their community, Sertoma was able to purchase more coats than last year as our list of needs had grown. Thank you to all the organizations and individuals that helped this year!!



Holiday Card Contest Winner

Every year we hold a contest for Sertoma Centre's holiday card. Consumers are provided with paper, markers, and crayons and from there use their imagination to create amazing artwork. Many consumers from the 123rd, 127th and Matteson locations participated this year.



A committee then reviewed all submissions and voted for the chosen card. This year's winner was Kerry Keane, from CMHC in Matteson, who was excited to be chosen.



Residential Consumers Enjoy Harvest Festival

Residential Services hosted a social event called Harvest Festival on October 21, 2016 at the 127th building. It was organized by Merrie Hoteka, CILA Operations and Residential Staff Manager. Consumers from our ten CILA homes participated with staff, parents and volunteers. There were fun activities to keep the consumers busy, from pumpkin decorating to receiving a one-of-kind portrait drawn by John Young, Director of Residential Services. There was a raffle contest that raised \$50.00 and a lucky consumer won a \$25.00 gift certificate.



Left to right: Gus van den Brink, Larry Owens, Senator Cunningham, Representative Hurley, Debra Marillo, and Representative Burke

Sertoma Visits Local Legislators with Parent of Consumer

Gus van den Brink visited local legislators before the holidays to share the concerns and challenges of Sertoma Centre. Larry Owens, Centre Foundation member and parent of a consumer, gave a personal account of how services have been beneficial for his daughter and the importance of Sertoma Centre to the community.

CMHC Continues to Thrive!

Sertoma Centre, Inc. has one of the largest on-site Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) Programs in the Chicago area. The PSR program is expanding to meet the demand for services. The program will offer two additional hours of programming per hour, supporting an additional 60-70 new consumers. The demand also remains high for those interested in individual therapy services. CMHC is hiring additional therapists to serve another additional 50-60 new consumers in this area as well.

Sertoma Staff Member Participates in IARFuture Leaders program

Sertoma's Director of Program Operations, Joan Snyder-Budz, will be participating in a progressive future focused initiative called IARFuture Leaders program through October 2017. We are excited she will be participating in this to further develop leaders at Sertoma Centre and for all that she will bring back to share with staff at the agency.



Sertoma Centre's Wish List

Looking for a fun way to give? Our programs could use any of the following: 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.

Join Our Silent Partners In Supporting Our Mission

Silent Partners are donors who make an annual contribution of \$750 or more and these donors are the foundation of our annual individual giving campaign. We recognize these donors in our annual report, on our website, at a private dinner in February, and as part of our golf outing in October.

Silent Partners not only help us provide programs and services to more than 1,700 people each year, but they also have the opportunity to network and establish relationships with other partners who share the same philanthropic goals. We would like to welcome you to this partnership. If you are interested in becoming a Silent Partner, contact [Debra Marillo, 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:

International Housewares Show Pack Up – Tuesday, March 21, 2017

“Quest for the Cup” Trivia Night – Thursday, March 30, 2017

2017 Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle 8K – Sunday, April 2, 2017

Housewares Super Sale – Saturday and Sunday, April 22-23, 2017

The BIG Event & Firefighters’ Cook-Off – Saturday May 20, 2017

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

Phone: **(708) 371-9700** | Fax: **(708) 371-9747**

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