

Network

A publication of
Sertoma Centre



**Cruise for a Cause Fundraiser Sails to Success
with Mitch Zeiler Leading the Ship (pg 7)**



**Meet and Greet Breakfast
Introduces New Families to
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to Consumers (pg 3)**

 **Sertoma
Centre, Inc.**

Discovering the
potential in all of us

Letter from Gus van den Brink, Executive Director



I'm not sure what season of the year slips by the fastest but I am thinking it is summer. It seems that spring came just yesterday and here we are in the middle of August. Just like summer our new fiscal year for Sertoma started July 1st and here we are half way through August. We are excited about this new fiscal year as we have worked hard to plan for it and make it a great year for all the individuals we support in our programs and services.

It is said that an organization is only as good as its staff. I think this is especially true for a service

organization like Sertoma Centre. We want the best qualified staff with a passion for our mission and I think we in most part, have succeeded to do this. One thing that made this a little easier is the efforts by the "They Deserve More" coalition and the State increasing our rates to allow for a \$0.50/hour pay increase for direct support professional staff. Although it is still not enough it has made recruiting and retaining quality staff a bit easier. With our FY 2018 budget year ending balanced, we were also in a position to give all staff a pay increase effective July 1st, something we could not accomplish the last two fiscal years.

So what do we have planned for the year that will help us be better at serving the individuals we support? Several things including, an additional staff position in our autism services program. The goal of this position is to further develop the program by enhancing current services through curriculum development, additional staff training, and staff support in implementing daily program services.

We are also excited about the second year of our Youth empowered for Success (YES) program. It has had a very successful start and we look forward to the high school students participating in more opportunities to be out in the community in trial work experiences, learning adventures, and activities.

In late fall we will be implementing new services in our DD/MI program. Services that previously were only available through our community mental health and counseling programs located in Matteson will be provided to individuals with a dual diagnosis of developmental disabilities and mental illness at our location on 127th street in Alsip.

We are also working to move the development of our new permanent supportive housing project in Orland Park closer to reality. The primary funding application has been submitted and within the next few months we believe we will see the project's funding approved. This 16 unit apartment building will double our capacity to provide independent housing for individuals with disabilities.

As you read this newsletter you will learn more about what is happening in our programs and services and ways you can participate in supporting individuals with disabilities through Sertoma Centre. If you have not done so already, please consider giving your support through a financial gift, participating in one of our fun events, or by volunteering. Know that your support is greatly needed, used effectively and much appreciated.

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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.

Dog Therapy Brings Happiness to Consumers

Our dog therapy class was started by our Behavioral Health Coordinator, Ashley Schehr at 127th for our consumers. Lenore and Jacque come to see our consumers on Tuesdays for class. Jacque is a 7 year old black poodle who is a certified therapy as well as a grief therapy dog. This class is beneficial because most of the consumers don't have daily interactions with dogs or pets at their CILA homes or families homes. This class has taught consumers how to appropriately interact with a dog, what commands dogs can be taught, how dogs are helpful to people with disabilities, along with watching and learning how a certified therapy dog like Jacque was trained to bring happiness and peace to those who need it most. The consumers loved learning about all different types of dogs and the amazing things they can do!



127th consumers enjoy Jacque, certified therapy and grief dog with trainer Lenore.

New Flatscreen TV's are a Big Hit in the Sertoma Lobbies



Jason and Kristin Neilsen, supporters of Sertoma Centre donated flatscreens to our 123rd and 127th lobbies. The TV's are a big hit with consumers as they see themselves on the big screen. The TV's display upcoming event videos, ads, interviews as well as general agency information. The community is now aware of what's currently happening in the agency. Our Matteson location recently received a flatscreen TV donated by one of our housewares vendors.

CMHC Debuts New 24/7 Support Line

We rolled out our new 24/7 Elevated Consumer Support Line at Community Mental Health and Counseling in September. The Elevated Consumer Support (ECS) Line is an additional mental health resource now available to the consumers of the Community Mental Health and Counseling programs and services. The purpose of the ECS Line is to provide support to consumers in addressing immediate needs that do not necessarily require emergency

services. The goal is to encourage the use of coping skills and identify natural supports while working through challenging life events or to manage elevated symptoms associated with their mental illness. It is managed by mental health professionals currently employed with Community Mental Health and Counseling who are on call after hours, on weekends and on holidays. The consumers have been using the support line and there is a decrease in need for emergency services in the community.

UPCOMING 2018 FALL EVENTS - SAVE THE DATE!

Paint it Forward Fundraiser

Join Sertoma Centre for our Paint it Forward fundraiser on Friday, October 19th from 6 pm - 9 pm. Enjoy creating a multi-media project, hanging out with friends and having fun while helping individuals with disabilities!



Annual Holiday Bazaar

Our Annual Holiday Bazaar is back again. Be sure to bring cash to get some awesome hand crafted items and delicious treats. Tell your friends and family about this fun day and be sure to take a picture with Santa and his trusty sidekick elf! Don't worry if you miss the Black Friday deals this year – The Holiday Bazaar has you covered with gifts for everyone on your list.



Annual Holiday Bazaar Arts & Crafts Fair

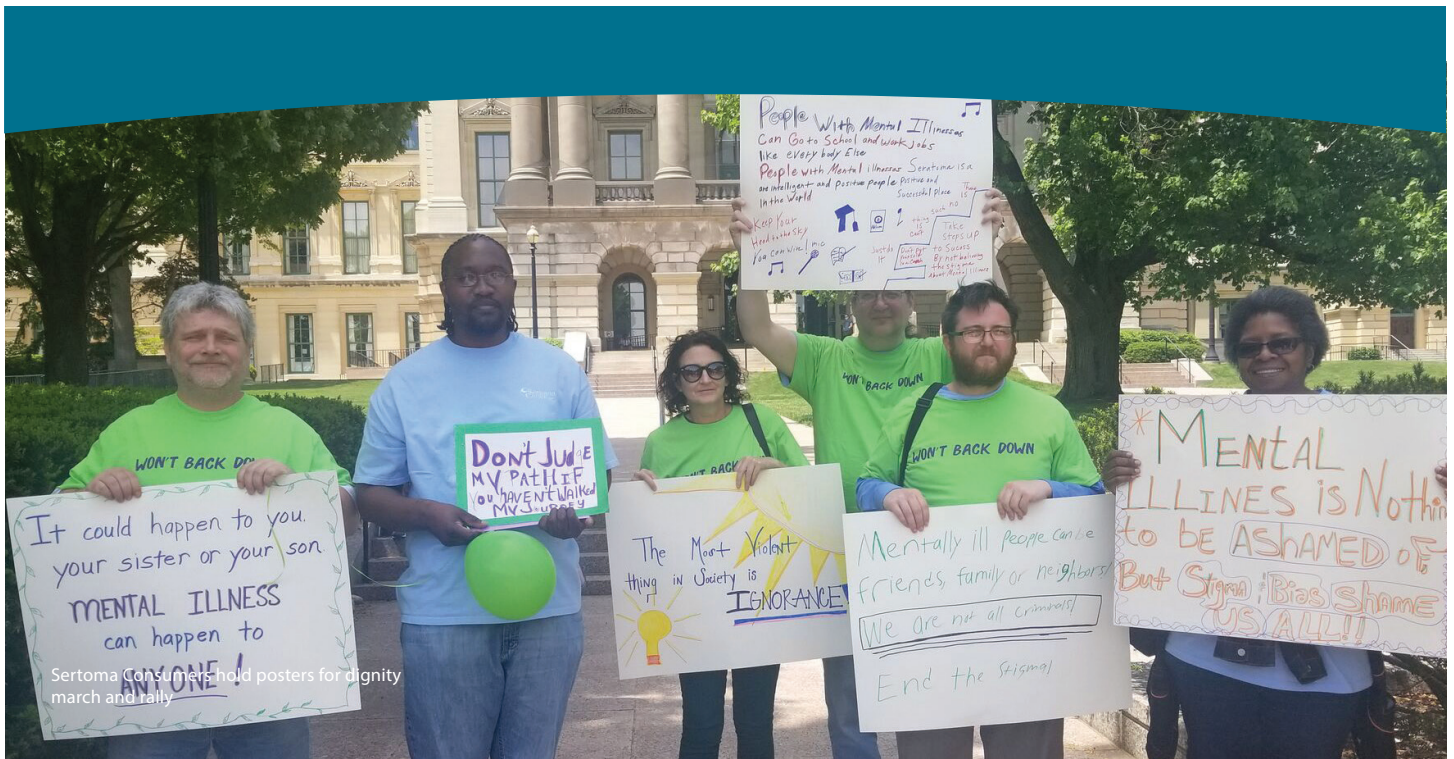
Celebrate the season with Sertoma Centre at the second annual Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, December 1, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will be held at Sertoma's Martha Polacek Facility at 4100 W. 127th Street, Alsip, IL 60803. This festive shopping experience will showcase diverse local artisans and their handmade jewelry, artwork, home goods and décor, oils, scarves, baked goods and so much more!



#GivingTuesday #ReadyTechGo!



Join us for #GivingTuesday, a 24-hour social media event on November 27th. This year's theme is called #ReadyTechGo! Our goal is to raise \$20,000 for individuals with disabilities that we support with technology so that they succeed to their fullest potential in life! This would include iPads, smart phones, software and phone apps. Be sure to save the date!



Sertoma Consumers hold posters for dignity march and rally

Sertoma Centre Consumers Join 2018 Recovery and Empowerment Day

Did you know that nearly 10 million adults in America live with a serious mental illness? However, nearly 60% of these adults did not receive mental health services in the previous year due to stigma and/or lack of treatment resources. Consequently on May 17, 2018, eight CMHC consumers and 4 staff members took a 200 mile trip to Springfield in order to raise awareness and advocate for mental health services. This was CMHC's 3rd year taking a historic advocacy and empowerment trip to Springfield! During this year's trip, the group had the opportunity to take part in many interactive advocacy activities, including a mental health rally, dignity march, and several politician meetings.

Prior to embarking on this year's journey, the consumers worked very hard to draft their own unique recovery stories on beautiful, Sertoma branded advocacy postcards. In addition, the attending consumers created memorable and empowering posters that were utilized in the dignity march and rally. While meeting with their elected representatives, consumers were encouraged to share their own recovery stories and promote mental health treatment. In fact, all of the attending consumers did an amazing job of advocating for themselves and the bills associated with mental health services, with little to no encouragement from the attending staff members! After sharing their mental health recovery stories and meeting several Illinois politicians, consumers had an opportunity to tour their state capitol. This tour provided consumers with a first-hand look at the legislative process and the state capitol's rich history. 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 at the 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. For many of the attending consumers, this was their first opportunity to explore and experience their state capitol.

Although stigma and overall mental health resources may not be dramatically improving from this advocacy trip; with dedication, perseverance, and determination, CMHC consumers were able to have their voices and recovery stories heard in Springfield! As John Wooden once said, "It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen."

ACTION Sertoma Club Serves Pizza to Consumers at Sertoma Centre

On Friday, April 27th, members of ACTION Sertoma visited Sertoma Centre at 127th Street and served delicious pizza to the consumers and also had pizza delivered to our 123rd street location. Hundreds of consumers from three lunch shifts devoured this tasty treat. The pizza was provided by Bartolini's, located in Midlothian on 144th and Pulaski Road. The Club also stopped by our Matteson location on June 23rd, and served pizza for three lunch shifts as well.



The idea for this mouth-watering event was created by ACTION Sertoma Club President, Bob Scott. Bob came up with the idea while attending a Bible study that we should not only donate money to help people in need, but in addition, we should give our time to serve. "We do a lot to improve the lives of those less fortunate than us and we're all looking to make a difference in our community" said Bob.

For more information on Action Sertoma visit www.actionsertoma.org or visit them on Facebook.



Circle of Friends Giving Club Turns One Year Old



SERTOMA CENTRE
CIRCLE OF FRIENDS
Giving Club

The Circle of Family of Friends Giving Club was launched in the summer of 2017. We knew that it was time to create a giving program where we would engage our families and others in making a meaningful impact with their contributions, while building and cultivating strong relationships with them. We found through this process of creating a scheduled gifts program, Sertoma Centre would be able to predict the annual revenue that would be needed to operate programs and services for the individual's it serves. Since the beginning of the program, we have seen an increase of twelve new members; eleven were families and a \$10,000 increase in contributions.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our new special partners who have been so generous and made it a priority to get involved in our Circle of Friends giving club by becoming monthly sustainers. These monthly gifts will enable us to bridge the gap between the State of Illinois funding and the true costs of providing quality services and programs. This is an important step for Sertoma Centre's future and we want to continue moving forward in making our families an integral part of this process. We know that with time and effort this program will succeed and continue to evolve and grow by keeping our families engaged long-term. Through this important endeavor we will be able to continue our mission in providing opportunities that will empower more individuals with disabilities to achieve personal success.

If you would like more information on how you can get involved in the Circle of Friends Giving Club, please contact Paula Biancalana our Donor Relations Manager at 708-730-6227 or you may email her at pbiancalana@sertomacentre.org. If you would like to volunteer for an upcoming event, please contact Laura Gardner our Volunteer Services Manager at 708-730-6211, or you may email her at lgardner@sertomacentre.org. We look forward to speaking with you.

First Executive Director's Meet and Greet Breakfast Gives New Families A Look Inside Sertoma Centre

Sertoma Centre hosted the first Executive Director's Meet and Greet breakfast on Saturday, June 30th. Guests included new consumers in FY'19 and their families. We had a great turn out with fifty people attending. We were able to meet the new families and share all the exciting things that are going on at Sertoma. During the event our guests met Executive Director Gus Van Den Brink and learned how Sertoma Centre began and the impact that it has made in the lives of individuals with disabilities since 1971. Attendees also had the opportunity to meet Dina Raya, Director of Consumer Services, Assistant Director, Megan Mc Shane and Dana McFarlin, Director of Employment Services. Volunteer Services Manager, Laura Gardner, spoke on the importance of volunteering and ways to get involved.

In addition, a charter family member and current Sertoma Foundation board member, Alan Haraf, shared his personal experience on how Sertoma Centre has made a meaningful impact on his family, and the importance of making a long term commitment to sustain the organization into the future. Families had the opportunity to engage with other families while enjoying a delicious breakfast. All the guests were included in a special raffle for a chance to win an exciting door prize. We are looking forward to hosting this important event each year and look forward to the opportunity to meet more new families in 2019.

Housewares Success!



Sertoma Centre had another wonderful haul at the 2018 International Home and Housewares Show at McCormick Place on March 13th and 14th! 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, The Legacy Companies, InterDesign, Inc., Boston Warehouse, Gibson Overseas, and W. C. Redmon Co. Inc. We were so excited to partner with these and many other companies who provided us with 87 pallets of merchandise! But Sertoma Centre wouldn't have been able to do what we did without our wonderful, amazing and hard working VOLUNTEERS!! For both days, we were so fortunate to have over 145 volunteers who logged over 1,255 total volunteer hours!! We are so grateful to the many wonderful, amazing and FUN volunteers who joined us those days! THANK YOU, THANK YOU! And it is never too early to plan for 2019 - our team is working hard to improve the systems and last minute changes we encounter each year at the show. We are developing new plans to help make the pack up smoother and less stressful as well as providing videos on 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 5th and Wednesday, March 6, 2019!!

Super Sale is a Super Fundraising Hit!



As guests entered the Old Dominick's property off Ridgeland and 127th in Palos Heights this spring to come out of the cold, a countdown chorus began. Over 3,500 people went through the doors over two days to contribute to this unique fundraiser.

Three weeks before we opened, the entire store became filled with incredible new products from donating

vendors at the close of the 2018 International Home + Housewares Show. After several long days of unpacking and then organizing over the next few weeks, our volunteers and staff filled 200 tables with beautiful items ready to live in the homes of our shoppers! Of course, our consumers' needs come first, so our house managers visit us at the store and take anything they need for our Sertoma CILA homes. Then, after our day programs are stocked, we showcase all home 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, toasters, and party supplies. We even have a selection of furniture and shelving for easy storage solutions! This year we again made sure that lines moved as quickly as possible, and have "10 Items and Under" and "Cash Only" lines to get people through. We also had a few of our favorite outside vendors come to the delight of our guests, as well. We need to give a huge shout out of THANKS 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 just under \$80,000 for our Sertoma Centre programs!

Sertoma Centre's 2018 BIG Event Heroes Cook-Off Unites First Responders with a Fresh and Spicy Twist All For a Good Cause!

Sertoma Centre added a spicy and fresh twist to the 15th Annual BIG Event Heroes Cook-Off competition to include Heroic First Responders and say thank you to the superheroes that show up each day without fail and protect us and our communities. Nearly 400 people crowded 115 Bourbon Street on Cinco de Mayo! Saturday, May 5th, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. to taste local First Responders dishes. The event helped raise nearly \$110,000 and awareness for individuals with disabilities at Sertoma Centre, Inc.

It was a great night filled with a fierce First Responders Cook-Off, delicious food, live entertainment from The Kennedy Compound band and kid-friendly activities! Guest celebrity judges Chef Jen Gavin, Season 4 Hell's Kitchen, Tom Grotovsky, The Unforgettable Chef and Rachael Hoffman from Vindicated Vixens Roller Derby sampled each dish to determine the best Chili, Ribs, Chicken, and Ethnic Dishes.



Congratulations to all the winners and all participants of the 2018 BIG Event annual cook-off!

The winners are:

Best Ribs: Niles Fire Department, Jim Leibach and Steve Zook - Tillerboy BBQ Ribs

Best Chicken: Lombard Fire Station 1, Bob Hopper - Buffalo Bob's Chicken Sliders

Best Ethnic/Other: Matteson Fire Department, David Klinger - Firehouse Smoked Pulled Pork

Best Chili: Lemont Fire Protection District - Fred Heller - Fred's Firehouse Chili

People's Choice: Lombard Fire Local 3009, Mike Fetzer - Smoked Brisket

The following First Responders are coming back next year for another chance to take the win:

Alsip Fire Department, Charles Harding

Park Forest Police Department, Amanda Casey, Christopher Mannino, Brian Rzycki

South Holland Fire Department, Tony Bruegmann, Tony DiNovo, Ron Kalkowski

A HUGE THANK YOU to all our BIG Event Sponsors, especially our Volcano and 5-Alarm Fire Sponsors that made this event a success: Proven Managed IT Solutions, ACTION Sertoma, The Rich Foundation, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Chicago Lawn Sertoma, EverBank, Katherine Vennetti, POW-R Sertoma, and Toshiba. Also, thank you to all the volunteers, that helped make the event run as smooth as possible behind the scenes! Be sure to save the date for next year's event on Saturday, April 27, 2019.



Sertoma Centre Hosts the Summer's Biggest Fundraiser on Water, Cruise for a Cause!

On Saturday, June 23rd over 400 guests from all over the Chicagoland (and the country, actually) gathered to celebrate with Sertoma Centre and raise money for our consumer programs as they boarded the Anita Dee II yacht and cruised the Chicago skyline. For three hours our supporters ate delicious appetizers, enjoyed platinum top-shelf liquor, and danced while live band Over The Side belted out amazing tunes.

Mitch Zeiler, one of our truly amazing Associate Board members, lead this project with true enthusiasm and tenacity! He was able to get an enormous amount of corporate sponsorship support and in-kind donations for our fundraising event. And with the help of fellow AB members, Jeff & Caitie Lombard, and Anne Murphy, raised over \$60,000 (double check final gross amount raised with Debra) for Sertoma Centre!

There were many highlights throughout the evening--amongst them, an eclectic silent auction, our traditional split-the-pot raffle, and the sailor girls from Zhantra Entertainment who helped sell tickets. We were also graced with the coverage of Southland Vibe magazine and the Patty Ridings Show. So many pictures were taken of people dancing, laughing, and enjoying the Navy Pier fireworks during our grand finale!

We couldn't have held such a successful fundraiser without the support of our incredibly generous sponsors, community supporters, favorite local establishments and our beloved staff and volunteers!

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Join The Circle!

Sertoma has a 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.

Sertoma Centre's Wish List

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

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.

Weather Announcements: Important Notice for Parents, Guardians, and Third-Party Providers

The cold weather will soon be upon us! We think. If temperatures are at a high of zero degrees or below for the day, for the safety of consumers, transportation services will not be provided. The facilities will, however, be open. You can find up-to-date information regarding Sertoma Centre transportation and possible closings on the home page of our website at www.sertomacentre.org. Facebook fans can like Sertoma Centre's page (facebook.com/SertomaCentreInc) and you will see the announcements as they are posted.

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Discovering the
potential in all of us

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Mark your calendar with these important upcoming events:

- October 12, 2018 - ACTION Sertoma Rocktoberfest**
- October 19, 2018 - Paint it Forward**
- November 27, 2018 - #GivingTuesday, Ready Tech Go!**
- November 30, 2018 - Holiday Bazaar**
- December 1, 2018 - Holiday Bazaar Arts & Crafts Fair**
- January 20, 2019 - POW-R Dr. John Nolan NFL Bash**
- February 1, 2019 - Circle of Friends 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:

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