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PCSI Sets Grassroots Advocacy Record

Washington, D.C.

Did we set a record? In just two days, PCSI employee, Amy Thom, and her mother, Sherry, met 12 U.S. senators and representatives in their Washington, D.C. offices to advocate for AbilityOne and more employment for people with disabilities. PCSI President, Carroll Schubert, and Public Affairs Manager, Jaimi Edgmon, accompanied Amy and Sherry to the meetings as part of SourceAmerica’s Grassroots Advocacy Conference, held June 16 – 19 in Washington, D.C.

PCSI hosted Amy and Sherry as our grassroots advocates. Amy, who has worked as a secretary/clerk on PCSI’s Administrative contract at Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas for five years, and her mother delivered short, personal stories to the 12 senators and representatives they met. They shared their experiences, as mother and daughter, navigating the road to employment and self-sufficiency. By telling their stories, the advocates hope to raise awareness of the challenges people with disabilities face and to influence decision making in Congress.

It was a busy week for the advocates. On the first full conference day (Tuesday, June 17), participants were briefed on what to expect and how to interact with members of Congress and their legislative assistants. On the second and third full days, the advocates and their CRP* chaperones met as many legislators as they could. In most cases, the advocates met with the legislator’s assistant; however, Congressman John Carter, who represents Amy’s home town, heard her story face-to-face. It was an exciting and emotional experience for Amy to speak truth to power.

There was much behind-the-scenes work to arrange so many meetings. Months before the Grassroots Advocacy Conference, Public Affairs Manager, Jaimi Edgmon, contacted dozens of senators and representatives in the states where PCSI works: Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Virginia, Washington, Georgia, and Kentucky. Her purpose was two-fold: First, schedule meetings for Amy and Sherry with senators and representatives. Second, enlist new Congressional Champions for AbilityOne (see “PCSI Wins Congressional Champions”).

Everyone’s hard work paid off with a highly successful Grassroots Advocacy Conference, which was attended by 50 CRPs. However, where most CRPs succeeded in scheduling four to five meetings with members of Congress, PCSI scored 12. The record holder is clearly PCSI!

*CRP = Community Rehabilitation Program—the term used for AbilityOne contractors such as PCSI.
PCSI Wins Congressional Champions
Washington, D.C.


The Congressional Champions program was initiated in 2001 to increase Congress’ awareness of AbilityOne and to show appreciation for the support of our legislators. Today, about 150 U.S. senators and representatives are counted as Congressional Champions.

There are four steps for U.S. Congress members to become Congressional Champions. 1) Meet with a CRP representative; 2) Tour a CRP job site; 3) Use an AbilityOne product or service in the member’s Congressional office; and 4) Distribute an official communication of support for AbilityOne.

After completing the above steps, Representative Cole received his Congressional Champion membership in his office on June 18. In attendance were Edgmon, advocates Amy and Sherry Thom, President Carroll Schubert, and SourceAmerica President Bob Chamberlin. Senator Inhofe will receive his award shortly.

Edgmon has secured commitments from nine other members of Congress who have begun the four-step process: Senator Michael Bennet and Representative Doug Lamborn of Colorado; Senator Ted Cruz and Representatives Joaquin Castro, Lamar Smith, John Carter, Lloyd Doggett, Pete Gallego, and Roger Williams of Texas; and Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia.

As a federal program, AbilityOne relies on the goodwill of Congress. AbilityOne and affiliated nonprofit agencies, including PCSI, need our legislators on Capitol Hill to fund AbilityOne and to expand it with new federal contracts that employ people with disabilities. Hooray for the Congress members who champion AbilityOne!

PCSI Endorsed by Texas Hospital Association (THA)
Austin, TX

The Texas Hospital Association (THA) officially endorsed PCSI as a healthcare support services provider. This prestigious recognition sends a message to all Texas hospitals that PCSI is a highly-capable and reliable contractor. THA’s endorsement is also a key step in PCSI’s new effort to win contracts at private-sector hospitals—an effort that will create even more employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

THA’s endorsement of PCSI is an acknowledgement of our success at providing excellent Environmental and other support services to the healthcare industry. Other healthcare-relevant services we provide include: Total Facilities Management, Grounds & Landscaping, Laundry & Linen, and Patient Transportation.

THA chose to endorse PCSI after a careful review of our company’s performance history and work processes, all of which illustrate PCSI’s effectiveness in delivering customer and patient satisfaction, and rigorous quality and infection control, in the healthcare environment.

PCSI Business Developer, Gary Anderson, and the corporate marketing team worked many months to make the endorsement a reality. Anderson first contacted THA in December 2013 to begin the endorsement process, which was completed in June 2014. Following initial contact, Anderson and teammates created a 500-page proposal book, and multiple brochures and information sheets for THA review. They worked tirelessly on PCSI’s new website and the company’s re-branding effort in order to give the company a more polished, professional appearance. They attended THA’s annual conference, held in San Antonio in February 2014, to increase

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PCSI’s visibility in the Texas healthcare market and to signal our participation in it. Anderson and colleagues met multiple times with THA representatives to keep the endorsement process moving. Congratulations, PCSI, on achieving this important recognition for excellence in support services!

JBLM’s Janet Smith Receives Management Excellence Award
San Diego, CA

Congratulations to PCSI’s Janet Smith on receiving the 2013 Northwest Region National Council of SourceAmerica Employers (NCSE) Management Excellence Award! Smith accepted her award in 2014 at the SourceAmerica National Training and Achievement Conference, held May 5-7, in San Diego, California.

The purpose of the NCSE Management Excellence Award is to recognize “excellence in leadership” in managing an AbilityOne contract while “enhancing employment opportunities for people with significant disabilities” in each SourceAmerica region. Indeed, Janet Smith has accomplished this in the Northwest where she serves as Project Manager for PCSI’s First Sergeant’s Barracks Program (FSBP) contract at JBLM.

Operations Manager, Daisy Harrison, nominated Smith because she is exceptionally personable and exceptionally dedicated to creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Harrison noted that following layoffs at JBLM, Smith invested her own time to locate jobs for her former employees. When Smith toured the Boeing manufacturing facility in Seattle that employs people who are visually impaired, she invited community leaders with influence over employment for people with disabilities to join her on the tour. AbilityOne contractors throughout the Northwest were invited to nominate individuals for the Management Excellence Award; Janet was selected as the most worthy among those nominees. As part of her award, Ms. Smith will receive extensive SourceAmerica media coverage and $1,000 in SourceAmerica Training Vouchers. The vouchers will allow her to continue expanding her horizons and honing her professional skills in service of the PCSI mission: to create employment opportunities for people with every type of disability.

For Hawaiian General, Fort Hood Food Service is “Beyond Compare”
Fort Hood, Killeen, TX

Members of the Hawaii National Guard, while training at North Fort Hood for two weeks, were treated to a taste of home, thanks to PCSI’s Full Food & Dining staff. To please the guests, PCSI staff prepared and served such regional favorites as Island-style fried rice and spicy shredded pork. The Hawaiians were so impressed that their commander offered PCSI a special honor. On June 1, the Adjutant General of the State of Hawaii, Major General Darryll Wong, presented his Coin of Integrity, Service, and Excellence to the PCSI team, received by Assistant Manager, Oliver Nash. The coin, Wong said, was in recognition of PCSI’s outstanding meals and friendly service.

Giving coins is an old tradition in the Armed Forces used to demonstrate connection among troop members and appreciation for excellent service and hard work. Major General Wong’s coin is engraved with his office “the Adjutant General” and “Launa Ole” which in Hawaiian means “beyond compare.” Clearly, he and his troops have a high opinion of our food service team at the North Fort Hood dining facility!
Stanley Bailey’s Service Exceeds “Fine Restaurants”

Fort Hood, Killeen, TX

PCSI’s North Fort Hood Full Food & Dining team takes pride in the food they serve. So when one diner mentioned that his cauliflower was overcooked, PCSI staffer, Stanley Bailey, went straight to the kitchen to order a fresh plate. Five minutes later, Bailey returned with steaming broccoli and cauliflower—cooked to perfection—and served it on a tray. The diner, Chaplain Major Francisco Stodola, was so pleased that he wrote a thank you to PCSI’s Assistant Dining Facility Manager, Myriam Frederick. In the letter, dated May 10, the chaplain offered his “highest compliments for the excellent service” provided by PCSI personnel. He noted that the food is always tasty, the staff courteous, and the dining hall immaculate. As for Bailey’s actions, he remarked, “Such professionalism and concern for the diner is seldom found today even in fine restaurants.”

Along with Major Stodola, we offer Stanley Bailey and the Fort Hood team our “highest accolades . . . for their diligent efforts to serve those who serve our nation.”

Pete Kutheis Runs for Vets

Fort Hood, Killeen, TX

Congratulations to Fort Hood Food Service Project Manager, Pete Kutheis, who ran the Wounded Warrior Half-Marathon in Irving, Texas on June 8. Running as a member of Team RWB (Red, White & Blue), Kutheis completed his first half-marathon (over 13 miles) in just two hours and six minutes. The event drew 3,500 participants who raised money through entry fees and donations for the Wounded Warriors Project and Fisher House Foundation.

Having served 20 years in the U.S. Army, including tours in Bosnia and Iraq, Kutheis is happy to support veterans’ causes with his own two feet—either bicycling or running. He is proud of his recent runs because this is his first year back in the sport after an eight year hiatus. In March, Kutheis joined Team RWB for a St. Patrick’s Day run in Temple, Texas in support of Children’s Hospital, and won the 10K in his age group! In April, he ran ten miles in the Austin 10-20 race. He is happy to have finished the Wounded Warrior Half Marathon, while averaging 9:40 per mile, so early in his return to running.

Team RWB is a nonprofit that connects veterans with their communities through physical and social activity. The Fisher House is a nonprofit that provides military families housing close to a loved one during hospitalization.
Schriever Janitors Earn Certificates

Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, CO

John Madrid, Contract Manager at Schriever Air Force Base (AFB) in Colorado Springs, arranged for 11 PCSI janitors to become certified—free of charge—through a partnership with Western Paper, the company that supplies the Schriever janitorial contract with paper products.

Madrid, who recently completed his Registered Executive Housekeeper (REH) certification, wanted his janitors to have an opportunity to improve their skills, too. Last summer, Madrid spoke with his Western Paper sales representative who informed him of the company’s custodial certificate program. With the support of PCSI, Administrator, Janine Lewis-Barr, and Quality Control Manager, Villiam Kundlak, 11 PCSI janitors soon began their months-long training, which they completed in April 2014.

As a result of training, PCSI janitors at Schriever now have the scientifically-based knowledge to:

• clean and sanitize restrooms and carpets
• prevent the spread of blood-borne pathogens
• handle chemicals safely

Trainees learned not only how to be professional janitors, but also why their work is so important. Clean, attractive buildings make occupants comfortable. Health is improved by removing allergens and pathogens. Money is saved by cleaning carpeting and floors correctly, which makes them last longer.

Madrid noted that Western Paper’s hands-on training program allowed all trainees to operate each floor care machine. Every PCSI janitor at Schriever now knows how to machine-clean a carpet and to strip, finish, and buff a hard floor.

For Madrid, certification represents professionalism. Obtaining certification sends a message to employees that they and their work are valued. It also sends a message to the Air Force customer that PCSI is dedicated to career development for its employees and to continuous improvement of its contract performance.

The 11 janitors who received their certificates on May 22 are:

Keith Choi
Mario Cisneros
James Cockrell
Mario Enriquez
Sean Gray
Mark Hill
Rick Marquez
Charles McConnell
Chris Nolte
Jason Ragon
Robert Wright

Congratulations to the Schriever janitors for realizing such a SMART goal! Congratulations to John, Janine, and Villiam for EMPOWERING your team to enhance their skills!
Vicki Hoppes' daughter, Jessica, packs goodie bags

Team Tinker Volunteers
96 Hours at UCO Endeavor Games

Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma City, OK

Three members of Team Tinker—Contract Manager, Vicki Hoppes, Vehicle Maintenance Manager, Tim Rupert, and Rehabilitation Specialist, Melissa Baker—along with Vicki’s daughter, Jessica, and another young friend, Mackenzie, logged an amazing 96 hours of volunteer service over a five day period (June 4-8) while supporting the 2014 University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) Endeavor Games. Now in its 15th year, UCO Endeavor Games is the nation’s largest multi-sport, multi-disability event, welcoming athletes with physical disabilities from nearly 40 states and several countries to compete in 11 sports.

Although the games didn’t begin until Thursday, June 5, Vicki and daughter Jessica were on board Wednesday, packing goodie bags—with water bottles, t-shirts, toiletries, and PCSI koozies—for the 400+ athletes and their 50 coaches to receive at check-in on Thursday and Friday.

On Thursday, the games got going and Team Tinker got busy, with Vicki, Tim, and Melissa volunteering nine hours each. Vicki, Melissa, and Mackenzie worked the information table for half a day while Tim spent all day shuttling athletes, coaches, and officials in vans between athletic events and their hotels. Vicki also moved tents and brought water for the para-triathlon while Melissa fetched volleyballs for sitting volleyball.

Vicki and Melissa put in another nine hours each on both Friday and Saturday, slowing down to a mere half day on Sunday, while Jessica and Mackenzie continued working Friday and Sunday. They checked-in and shuttled athletes, supervised volunteers, and assisted with table tennis, 5K cycling, archery, swimming, and track & field. Vicki even drove one young athlete and his mother to the mall to buy special shoes for the long jump.

Throughout the weekend, the PCSI volunteers muscled wheelchairs in and out of vans. Vicki noted that she had never seen so many wheelchairs, service dogs, caregivers, and “extra” legs in one place. One athlete, who walked with a prosthetic leg, carried a running leg strapped to one side of his backpack and an extra walking leg strapped to the other. Vicki also noted how aggressively the athletes played, including a girl who overturned her chair during wheelchair basketball, righted herself, and kept on going without dropping the ball.

The Team Tinker volunteers listened to many interesting stories from people who travelled from near and far to participate in the games. One of the most touching stories was by a veteran with a service-related disability. He and his wife are both Purple Heart recipients who met in a hospital following their injuries, fell in love, and got married.

This is the first year Team Tinker has volunteered at the Endeavor Games, after being “turned on” to the event last year by PCSI body shop repairman, Kyle Smith. In addition to being a repairman, Smith is a marksman who has participated in Paralympic Archery. This is also the second year that PCSI has sponsored the Endeavor Games with a generous donation.

Many thanks and congratulations to all for investing so many resources—time and money—to EMPOWER people with disabilities to realize their potential as competitive athletes!
Bob Dewey, Hall of Famer
Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, VA

Bob Dewey, PCSI Rehabilitation Specialist at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, is a Hall of Famer! Bob was inducted into the “Platelet Donor Hall of Fame” in March for having reached a milestone: 20 units of blood platelets donated to the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) at Fort Belvoir. Bob is the sixth inductee at the Fort Belvoir program which began in January 2014.

Dewey’s rare blood type, AB+, is exceptionally valuable because anyone can receive it. He has generously shared this special gift with others since he first discovered it upon joining the Army in 2005. Bob tries to donate twice monthly because the demand for his blood is so high. Prior to the 20 units he gave at Fort Belvoir, Bob donated 24 units at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, where he began working for PCSI as a General Clerk III in 2010.

ASBP Donor Recruiter at Fort Belvoir, Donna Onwona, notes that Bob is “one of our most faithful donors” and that he encourages co-workers to donate, too. The Fort Belvoir Blood Donor Center has recently closed, but that hasn’t stopped Mr. Dewey, who now travels to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center to give blood to the ASBP there.

Donations Follow Volunteers
JBLM, Tacoma, WA

Would you like PCSI to donate $500 to your favorite charity? Then be like JBLM’s Darion Reese and Christine Gagne. Volunteer for a worthy organization and win PCSI’s Volunteer of the Quarter award. PCSI will honor your volunteerism with a $500 donation to the charity of your choice.

Darion Reese, JBLM Maintenance Worker and PCSI 1st Quarter 2014 Volunteer, is a civic-minded individual who has spent years volunteering for the City of Tacoma’s Human Rights Commission, its Police Department, a community garden, and a food bank. As chair of the Human Rights Commission’s Community Outreach Committee, Reese helps residents, including those with disabilities, combat discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations. He has also worked to make the language of Tacoma’s municipal code more inclusive. Reese chose Centro Latino—a community-based nonprofit assisting youth and families in Pierce County—to receive $500 from PCSI.

Christine Gagne, JBLM Maintenance Worker and PCSI 2nd Quarter 2014 Volunteer, is a U.S. veteran who loves motorcycles. An active member of Brothers in Arms—a motorcycling club comprised of veterans who rally for veteran and community causes—Chris helped her South Puget Sound chapter raise funds for the Veterans Memorial Museum in nearby Chehalis, Washington. Built in 1995, the 12,000 square foot museum houses an event center and 85 displays with military artifacts from the Revolutionary War to the Iraq War. In honor of Chris’ volunteering, PCSI wrote a $500 check to the museum.

All job sites are invited to nominate candidates for PCSI Volunteer of the Quarter.
Great Ideas: Bulletin Board Biographies

Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), Tacoma, WA

PCSI Rehabilitation Specialist, Mercedez Bournes, came upon a great people-focused idea: the biography bulletin board. With permission and input from employees, Bournes writes biographical sketches and posts them on the same 3’ x 4’ bulletin board that holds announcements, job postings, site information, etc.

Bournes begins with a biography template and a short questionnaire she developed. She invites an employee to complete the questionnaire and sit for a brief interview. Her purpose is to discover background information and fun facts about the person. Using the template, she writes one biographical sketch per month, which will stay on the bulletin board for two months.

Each biography includes an employee photo, a job description, a testimonial (from a supervisor or customer), and answers to five questions: 1) What are your hobbies, 2) What is your background, 3) What is something interesting your co-workers might not know about you, 4) What is the farthest you have been from home, and 5) What do you like about working for PCSI?

JBLM Project Manager, Janet Smith, notes that the biography bulletin board is a great team-building tool as everyone looks forward to reading the next entry. DJ Wyatt, formerly assigned to Schriever AFB in Colorado Springs, is continuing this new JBLM tradition. In May, he took over Mercedez’s job as she moved to Virginia to be PCSI Rehabilitation Specialist at Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth (NMCP).

What’s your great idea for building community and sharing information at your job site? Please share it with the Green Scene.

Dr. Ruth Visits Colorado Springs Job Sites

Colorado Springs, CO

Green Scene newsletter writer, Ruth Chlebowski, Ph.D., also known as “Dr. Ruth,” travelled in April to PCSI’s two Colorado Springs job sites to take a closer look at what our people do. She spent a day and a half touring Evans Army Community Hospital in Fort Carson, where PCSI provides Healthcare Environmental Services, and another half day touring Schriever Air Force Base, where PCSI provides Janitorial and Grounds Maintenance services. Since Dr. Ruth also writes content for new business proposals, she and her supervisor decided that visiting job sites would enable her to write from a more informed perspective.

At Evans, Quality Manager, Donna Cutshall, escorted Dr. Ruth throughout the hospital, as heads turned and people asked, “Are you two sisters?” Housekeeper Ron Wilson insisted that Chlebowski must be Cutshall’s twin. Interestingly, Donna, who had seen Ruth’s photo on the PCSI intranet before her visit to Evans, wondered herself if they might be related.

Chlebowski found the PCSI staff at Evans and Schriever to be very welcoming and helpful. Before flying home to Austin, Dr. Ruth enjoyed Colorado Springs tourist attractions, including Garden of the Gods and Pike’s Peak Cog Railway.

Could they be sisters?
On Saturday, May 31, about 90 corporate folk (employees and family) enjoyed an afternoon at Shady Springs Party Barn in southeast Austin. An enormous pecan tree shaded the picnickers who ate a lunch much like the Fort Sill group. A tug-of-war game between the north and south wings of the office building ensued. After losing to the north, the south was pelted with water balloons. Employees played a heated game of volleyball and cooled off in the swimming pool. Owners of the Party Barn treated the kids to a choo-choo-train ride. Horse shoes and put-put golf were available outside. Employees brought dominoes and board games to play inside.

Every job site receives employee recognition funds to host picnics, parties, etc. What will your job site do to celebrate the hard work your team does?

On Saturday, June 14, about 90 Fort Sill folk (employees and family) picnicked at Lake Elmer Thomas Recreation Area (LETRA) on Fort Sill. On the water, they enjoyed paddle boating, canoeing, and fishing. On the land, they played miniature golf, volleyball, and horseshoes. Two bounce houses were rented for the kids. In addition, the LETRA swimming pool with water slide was open to visitors. Fort Sill managers and their spouses prepared lunch for the employees: hamburgers, hot dogs, hotlinks, bratwurst, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, chips, cookies, and drinks. Yum!

SPEAK

Congratulations to all PCSI employees for completing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 SPEAK cycle! SPEAK, which stands for Success, Performance, Engagement, Alignment, and Knowledge, is PCSI’s first company-wide performance evaluation program.

The new FY 2015 SPEAK cycle begins in July with the following milestones ahead:

- Create your SMART goals on the Performance Management Evaluation form (see PCSI Intranet, SPEAK) by end of August 2014
- Review your SMART goals with your supervisor by mid-September 2014
- Review your progress toward your goals with your supervisor in early December 2014
- Document your completed SMART goals on the Performance Management Evaluation form by end of May 2015
- Have a calibration meeting with your supervisor in early June 2015

In FY 2015, Human Resources will limit employees to three and four SMART goals so that they can better focus their energies.

Many thanks to the Program Managers who worked diligently to calibrate employee performance by end of FY 2014. Many thanks to all employees for making FY 2014 a great year for PCSI!
Employee of the Month

March 2014: Rigoberto Armendariz, El Paso
April 2014: Joseph Hamm, JBLM
May 2014: Stanley Bailey, Fort Hood Dining

Second Quarter 2014 Awards

Employee of the Quarter: Joseph Hamm, JBLM
Supervisor of the Quarter: Leon Santos, Laredo
Volunteer of the Quarter: Christine Gagne, JBLM

If you have a story idea or photo that you want to share with the Green Scene, tell your supervisor or contact Public Affairs directly at PublicAffairs@pcsiinc.com.