

# DEVELOPMENTS

Prospectus Berco

Reaching Beyond Expectations



**PROSPECTUS BERCO**

*Celebrating 45 Years  
Our Future Shines Bright*

Providing innovative supports for individuals with special needs to lead meaningful lives for 45 years...  
...our future shines bright.

## ANOTHER MILESTONE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



***Well, well, well, where do I begin?***

If you have not heard the great news, Prospectus Berco is ecstatically marking our 45th year as a respected service provider for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Throughout those 45 years, we have changed locations where services were provided, we have experienced turnover in professionals providing services, we have benefitted from the guidance and governance by a spectrum of invaluable Board Directors and other volunteers, and the four and a half decades of lives we have touched are too numerous to count. However, one critical aspect of this corporation that has not changed over its 45-year history is the respectful and compassionate care that forms the core of who we are. I feel especially qualified to render this assessment having been a member of Prospectus Berco's workforce since our incorporation in March of 1977.

Celebrating 45 years of successfully inspiring the men and women we support to lead meaningful lives also means recognizing the role that our dedicated workforce played in this accomplishment. We recently conducted an anonymous, online Stay Survey to learn why employees stay here, what they feel we do well, *(continued page 2)*

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Daniel E. Wiekrykas, President**  
S&T Bank

**Jonathan C. Becker, Vice President**  
Senior Project Manager, RPA Engineering

**Michael Billera-Smith, Treasurer**  
Vice President & Financial Advisor,  
Fulton Financial Advisors

**Susan Kolb, Secretary**  
Senior Director of Admissions for Graduate  
and Adult Education, Alvernia University

**Mark Chaknos**  
Associate Real Estate Broker,  
Keller Williams Platinum Realty

**Dale G. Derr**  
Retired Executive Director,  
Berks County Department of Veterans Affairs,  
Parent of Consumer

**Eric J. Fabrizio, Esq.**  
Partner/Shareholder Bingaman Hess Coblenz & Bell

**John Hunter**  
Lieutenant Colonel, USAF, Retired  
Parent of Consumer

**Joelle R. Lauchner, D.O.**  
Doctor of Internal Medicine,  
Tower Health, Douglassville

**Jennifer Matten**  
Brand Strategy Manager,  
Sweet Street Desserts

**Leslie Shaud, M. Ed.**  
Guidance Counselor,  
Tulpehocken School District

**Nic Thomas**  
Business & Community Development,  
GAGE Personnel

**Courtney L. Tull, MHS**  
Director of Violence Prevention Services,  
Pennsylvania Forensic Associates

**Christine Werner**  
Realtor Associate, RE/MAX of Reading

**Mark G. Yoder**  
Retired Partner/Shareholder  
Bingaman Hess Coblenz & Bell

## ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

**Jody Wagner**  
Executive Director / CEO

**Kim Alarcon**  
Human Resources Administrator

**Debbie Dallago**  
Residential Services Administrator

**Jonathan Colon**  
Operations Administrator

**Stacey Mikatavage**  
Corporate Administrator/Assistant to CEO

**Jessica Penchard**  
Development & Public Relations Director



*(Executive Director's  
Message Continued)*

and what we can do better as an employer. The average length of employment of our workforce is 11 years—pretty impressive for any field but especially notable for the human service industry. While we learned many things from the survey, one consistent message heard was that our employees stay because they love the individuals they work for and team members they work with. As the proud CEO of Prospectus Berco, that attitude is music to my ears. Knowing that we are hiring the right people who are here for the right reason gives me confidence that no matter the financial, regulatory, or public health challenges we face, this awe-inspiring corporation has a future that shines bright! ■

## Annual Giving Campaign

*Ensure that our future shines bright, support our Annual Giving Campaign!*

As we work together to rebuild our capacity, know that your support matters. Hundreds of lives are impacted directly by Prospectus Berco services, and even more lives are benefited when you consider the support we provide families and our community. Thank you for being a part of our mission; your gift does matter!

**GOAL \$65,000**

*We're Almost There...*

\$53,542

**82%**  
of our Goal

Annual Fund	\$47,226
Endowment Fund	\$ 2,000
Helping Hand Fund	\$ 648
Laura Isenburg	
Education Enrichment	\$ 568
RES-COVID Fund	\$ 3,100
	<hr/>
	\$53,542

**WE NEED TO RAISE OVER  
\$11,000 BY JUNE 30th!**

# Welcome Our Newest Board Members

Prospectus Berco announces the addition of three new members to its Board of Directors: Dale G. Derr, Joelle R. Lauchner, D.O., and Courtney L. Tull, MHS. Jody Wagner, Executive Director and CEO said, "Prospectus Berco is honored to have three distinguished community members serve us in our mission, especially at this momentous time as we celebrate our 45th Anniversary. Forty-five years of serving individuals with disabilities living and working in Berks County is quite an accomplishment and one I am very proud to be a part of. Our successful journey these 45 years is definitely in part due to the dedication and leadership of those who give of their time, talents, and resources to serve on our Board of Directors."



**Dale G. Derr**

Dale G. Derr served as a Board Director from 2014 to 2019 and is a parent of one of our consumers. Dale is a retired U.S. Air Force Officer and former Executive Director of the Berks County Department of Veteran Affairs. He is a graduate of Kutztown Area High School and Kutztown University with a Bachelor of Science in secondary education-biology, and he earned a master's in education-counseling and guidance from Boston University. His career includes U.S. military service 1976-2000; government service as Berks County Court Administrator, 2001-2006; nonprofit disability and aging services organizations, 2006-2010; and government service again as the Berks County Department of Veteran Affairs from 2010-2019. Dale resides in Spring Township with his wife Susan; they have three children. He is very active in the community and enjoys assisting aging and disabled military veterans across Berks County; volunteering at Bausman UCC, Wyomissing; and supporting the TOP soccer program, Spring Township, a soccer program for athletes with intellectual, developmental, and physical disabilities.



**Joelle R. Lauchner, D.O.**

Joelle R. Lauchner, D.O. began her career practicing medicine with the Tower Health Medical Group in Douglassville in 2015. She completed her medical education at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and her residency in Internal Medicine at Reading Hospital. Dr. Lauchner also serves on the Board of Directors of PRO-A (Pennsylvania Recovery Organization- Alliance). Dr. Lauchner cares deeply for her patients and the community she serves. She is looking forward to continuing this mission through serving as a Board member of Prospectus Berco.



**Courtney L. Tull, MHS**

Courtney L. Tull, MHS, started his education in Trinidad and Tobago, the land of his birth. Mr. Tull obtained a degree in General Draughtsmanship from the University of Trinidad. He worked as a Draughtsman in the Trinidad and Tobago Oil Company before transitioning to becoming a high school teacher for the next 13 years. In 1995 Mr. Tull migrated to the United States and pursued a new career in social work. Employed at the Children's Home of Reading, Courtney worked his way through the ranks from Group Life Counselor working with adolescent sex offenders, to Case Manager, to Unit Supervisor, to Residential Supervisor of a 721-bed residential facility. Earning his master's degree in Human Services at Lincoln University, Mr. Tull assumed a position with Reading Specialists, now known as Pennsylvania Forensic Associates, as a Therapist and Senior Member of the Management Team. He currently holds the position of Director of Violence Prevention Services while also facilitating other programs. Courtney served on the Vestry Board of Christ Church, Reading, from 2016 to 2019. ■



### ***Lifetime of Shared Memories***

For 45 years Prospectus Berco has been impacting lives of real people in our community, real people whose lives are enriched by our programs and services. Throughout our evolution, there have been several individuals who grew along beside us, including Jeff. Pictured above is Jeff as a young boy. Jeff has grown into a strong man who overcame many challenges to pursue his dreams of happiness. As an avid sportsman he played baseball, mastered karate, and won many awards through Special Olympics. Prior to the pandemic, he was a great asset to our vocational team, and he continues to bring joy to the lives of those who know him.

There are nine program participants who have been with Prospectus Berco for all 45 years: Diane B., Joan B., Joe D., Bob H., Robert H., Rodney I., Charles T., Melvin W., and Jeff W. Prospectus Berco continues to transform lives every day by providing meaningful supports so people can live the life of their choice. ■

## **The Next Step Toward Gainful Employment**

### **Robby's Success Story**

*If you can't hire a hundred, hire one.*

**Call Afiyo at 484-331-4728**

*Together we can advance opportunities and transform lives for people with disabilities in our community.*

Prospectus Berco has a stellar reputation for providing quality vocational services throughout the region, partnering with the business community to help them meet their production and packaging goals. Now Prospectus Berco will also be offering Supported Employment Services to help individuals take that next step toward gainful employment.

Join Prospectus Berco in congratulating Robby on his new job with KKBS Facility Services (KKBS). Robby has been working with KKBS for several weeks as an Office Cleaner for one of their customers. He is employed part time by KKBS working in the evenings and has routine assignments that include trash removal, cleaning the computers, and vacuuming the floors. Robby said, "I like to clean for the customers, and I enjoy keeping the place spotless." He also said, "it makes me feel good to earn a paycheck."

Robby enrolled in the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Program to determine if he would be eligible for services through Supported Competitive Employment. After becoming approved for services, Robby requested to work with Prospectus Berco. At which time Afiyo Awouya began to meet with Robby regularly to help him identify his interests and employment goals. Afiyo helped Robby develop a resume and assisted him in applying for open positions that met his criteria. She then prepared Robby for the interview process and worked with his prospective



*(Pictured left to right are Kristy Ott, Vice President KKBS Facility Services, Robby Office Cleaner for KKBS, and Afiyo Awouya Employment Specialist with Prospectus Berco.)*

employer. Afiyo taught Robby how to do his job to meet the expectations of his employer. She continued to work with him until he became comfortable doing his duties independently. Afiyo said that Robby is doing a great job, and she is able to progressively remove herself from assistance. Afiyo maintains good communication with the employer to ensure that we are meeting the expectations of the employer. Kristy Ott is pleased with Robby's ability to adapt to new assignments and to work independently. Robby is also dependable, reporting to work as scheduled.

Afiyo said, "I enjoy making a difference. It is my reward to see them placed successfully in a job." Afiyo comes to Prospectus Berco with five years' experience in the field and has ACRE (Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators) Certification for job coaching. She has also completed her CPWIC Certification so she can provide Work Incentive Counseling and Benefits

Counseling for the individuals she serves with Prospectus Berco.

Prospectus Berco has a well-rounded Employment Services program that offers a variety of training programs to help individuals develop the skills they need to achieve their employment goals. Afiyo said that teaching "soft skills" is just as important as work performance. She will assist individuals with writing a resume and cover letter and prepare people for the interview process and coach them on how to interact with co-workers and supervisors, all of which are necessary skills for successful employment. Afiyo will also be working with individuals to perform Community Based Work Assessments to determine their skill level and what functions they can do and what areas they need to have more training to meet their employment goals.

Afiyo welcomes anyone who is interested in Supported Employment

Services to contact her at [aawouya@prospectusberco.org](mailto:aawouya@prospectusberco.org), or by telephone at 484-331-4728, or 610-372-4637, ext. 402. She will assist individuals through the OVR process and answer any questions they may have about the program.

Prospectus Berco would like to thank Kristy Ott, Vice President KKBS Facility Services, for partnering with Prospectus Berco in this initiative to provide employment opportunities for our consumers. Together we are making a difference in the life of a person with a disability living in our community!

If you can't hire a hundred, hire one. Businesses who would like to learn more about our Employment Services and Vocational Program should contact Ginnie Haggerty, Vocational Services Director at 610-372-4637, ext. 401, or email [gaggerty@prospectusberco.org](mailto:gaggerty@prospectusberco.org).



## Touch is Essential

Direct Support Professionals, Gregory (left), Joanna (center), and Majid (right) had the privilege to represent Prospectus Berco for the "Touch is Essential" interactive art project. Local artist Bruce Becker created the exhibit to commemorate the dedication of essential workers and to remind us how important touch is to our social and emotional well-being. The display features over 200 handprints of local residents who worked throughout the pandemic. Each handprint was assigned a number so people can visit the website and read the unique story behind each impression.



## Holiday Fun

Vocational workers stole a play from Santa's playbook and took time to enjoy the festive holiday season. Employees made treats for program participants each day and helped participants create crafts, watch holiday-themed movies, and had a dance along (pictured left) each day of the week.



Pictured left is Lora Rivera, Vocational Supervisor, showing Hali how to create a craft as part of the Vocational Program's holiday celebration. The festive necklace light donned by participants were donated by our good friend Karen Bensinger; thank you for making the season brighter, Karen.



## Congratulations, Donna!

Donna Trexler, Compliance Director for Prospectus Berco, was inducted into the Berks County Basketball Hall of Fame earlier this year. Some of her many accomplishments include: scoring 1,704 points in high school and being named an All-Berks County player in her senior season. Congratulations, Donna! And well-earned!

# Partnership with Drexel

This fall Prospectus Berco was one of 50 community partners in Philadelphia and Berks County to work with Drexel University College of Medicine at Tower Health as part of its Health Advocacy Practicum to provide experiential learning for medical students so they have a better understanding of healthcare inequities and learn to be community health advocates. Charles Wen elected to study with the nursing team at Prospectus Berco and shadowed employees to learn about the human services industry, especially as it relates to working with individuals with intellectual disabilities. He met several hours a month from September through December. Charles said, "I am thankful for the wonderful experience that I've had with Prospectus." (Pictured left is Charles with Residential Supervisor Jeff Seyler, who demonstrated how medical records and documentation is recorded and maintained for program participants.)



# Moving More

Prospectus Berco held its Move More in Harmony Challenge once again and capped it off with a Walkathon at the Santander Arena. Congratulations to all of our winners and challenge participants. And a special thank you to Senator Judy Schwank and the Reading Royals for being a part of the event!



# Impacting Our Community

Prospectus Berco program participants are valuable members of our community and help many nonprofit organizations and businesses fulfill their missions. By volunteering and working throughout the community, we are able to fulfill important needs in the community, while helping individuals develop important skills.



Program Specialist, Rayisha, assists Nathan and Felicia with their volunteer assignment at the Hope Rescue Mission. They work together to tag and price clothing which will then be sold to benefit the Hope Recue Mission.



Vocational Program participants complete a variety of jobs for local businesses, helping them achieve their production goals. Victoria is covering chains with a protective sleeve for a local hardware store.



Dereck volunteers weekly at the ReStore, where he helps maintain a clean store and organize products for sale. Proceeds from ReStore support the mission of Habitat for Humanity.



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Member of:



NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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READING, PA

EVENTS



## **Prospectus Berco 28th Annual Golf Tournament**

**Monday, July 25, 2022**  
*(Rain Date August 1, 2022)*

**Moselem Springs Golf Club**

Mark your calendar so you don't miss this year's tournament.

We're looking for golfers and sponsors to join us for this fun event while raising money for a great organization. Our future, and the future of adults with developmental disabilities, shines bright thanks to supporters like you.

***Interested in making a difference as a Golfer or Sponsor? Visit our Golf Event Page on our website at [www.prospectusberco.org](http://www.prospectusberco.org), or contact Jessica Penchard at [jpenchard@prospectusberco.org](mailto:jpenchard@prospectusberco.org) for more information.***