

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Second Issue  
2019



PROSPECTUS BERCO

# Developments

*making a difference  
for people with disabilities*

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Be nice—sounds simple enough. So why are there people who don't practice this basic human interaction or at least do not consistently make being nice their standard of behavior? Really, it doesn't cost money, it doesn't take a lot of time, and it isn't difficult to do. Obviously, I don't have the answer to that question, but I can say that lives would be enhanced if we all chose to be nice to others no matter whom, no matter the circumstance. Nice is about remembering your manners; auditing your body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions; thinking before speaking; and treating others with the dignity and respect you expect in return. Truthfully, we often don't know what difficulties or possible heartaches others are dealing with and how meaningful a polite response, kind words, or helpful action will be. We do know, however, that being rude, critical, or inconsiderate will not be helpful in any way!

At Prospectus Berco we have a Code of Ethical Conduct which assists our employees in integrating our core values and principles into daily corporate culture. While we do not specify being nice as a core value, we do identify treating others with compassion, dignity, and respect—all qualities of being a nice person. It is by employees demonstrating these values along with the remaining eight core values of responsibility, integrity, fairness, justice, innovation, inspiration, aspiration, and teamwork in the performance of their jobs and interactions with others that we strive to maintain a corporate culture of ethical and professional conduct. Are we scoring 100% as far as all employees demonstrating these core values? Sadly, no, but day by day, person by person, we encourage and support each other in successfully living these standards of conduct. Naturally, being nice to people is not all that constitutes ethical conduct, but it is definitely a great place to start.

Sincerely,

*Jody H. Wagner*

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### Mission Statement:

*Prospectus Berco inspires people with special needs to lead meaningful lives by providing innovative supports.*



## 3rd Annual *Art Show*

A team from the Residential Services Department organized and hosted the 3rd Annual Art Show held on Wednesday, August 14, 2019, in the Event Room at Kutztown Road. With an “Under the Sea” theme, guests were transported to a tropical island and enjoyed various forms of artwork that featured sea life, palm trees, mermaids, and more.

Talented artists, which included program participants and employees from Prospectus Berco, showcased and sold

their creative artwork. Raffles, food, and a photo booth rounded out the event. Thanks to Christine Brendle and her managers, including Shannon Johnson, Jeff Seyler, Harry Prutzman, Kelly Espada, Lorraine Sanchez, and Neisha Ruiz; \$650 was raised for the Helping Hand Fund. This fund assists program participants with unmet financial needs (i.e. medical, dental, recreational).

This year’s Art Show went “swimmingly,” and we cannot wait to see what next year’s show theme will be.



*Christine Brendle, Residential Director; Ardell; and Shannon Johnson, Residential Supervisor take a break from their duties to pose for the camera. Thanks for a great event.*

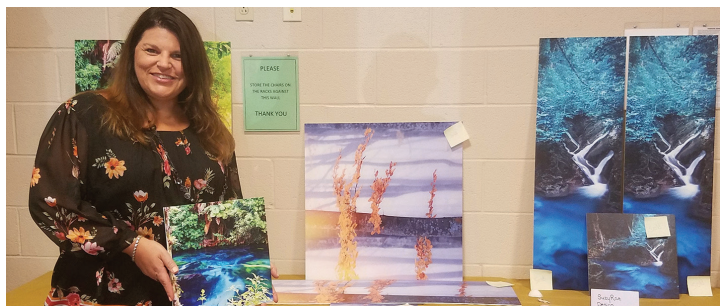


*Matt ventures close to the waterfall to get his photo taken.*



*Above: The Event Room at Kutztown Road was turned into a nautical paradise.*

*Below: Suzy Lysczek displays some of her art work which she contributed to the 3rd Annual Art Show.*



*Just look at the world around you  
Right here on the ocean floor  
Such wonderful things surround you  
What more is you lookin' for*



## In the Spotlight Dale Derr

We have been honored to have Dale Derr sit on the Board of Directors for the past six years. As quoted in a recent article in the Reading Eagle, “Dale embodies true integrity.” Dale retired as the Berks County Veterans Affairs Director in June and was praised at his retirement dinner for his years of service and dedication.

Growing up in Kutztown, Dale enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve serving from 1976-79. He served on active duty from 1980 through 2000 after being commissioned into the Air Force, retiring as a lieutenant colonel. Before accepting the Veterans Affairs Director position in 2010, he continued in the service field by working for the Berks County Court as a court administrator and for nonprofit disability and aging service organizations.

Dale and his wife Susan have three children: Navy Lt.

Cmdr. Alison Derr Maruca; Marine Capt. James Derr; and Victoria Derr who works as a Vocational Production Worker at Prospectus Berco. Dale and Victoria presented at the 40th Anniversary Open House, and we were pleased to hear their story of Vicki’s abilities and strengths as a young woman with an intellectual disability.

Having served for six years, Dale will now be rotating off the Board having served as Chair of the Property Committee and a member of the Development Committee. We wish him the best and thank him for his years of service and dedication to our organization and to the entire community.



*Dale and Vicki Derr share their family story at the 40th Anniversary Open House in May of 2017.*





*Steve celebrates his Captain America themed birthday party with Shantia Lewis, Residential Program Manager. In our eyes, Direct Support Professionals are Super Heroes!*

Before the passage of this year's State budget in June, a campaign was launched to urge legislators to include monies in the budget to increase the wages of direct support professionals. PAR (Pennsylvania Advocacy and Resources for Autism and Intellectual Disability) advocated for all of us to become involved in a legislative push to **#FixTheDSPCrisis**

Writing letters and meeting with legislators, PAR solicited

the State to fund a \$120 million rate increase to increase DSP wages, benefits, and training. The State did increase service line items for Intellectual Disability/Autism for annualization

and for the Waiting List for individuals needing services but did not include a rate increase for DSP wages.

- ✓ Over 55,000 DSPs work in Pennsylvania
- ✓ The average DSP wage was \$12.38
- ✓ DSP turnover rate was 38%
- ✓ The percentage of open DSP positions was 20.4% in 2018

Prospectus Berco strives to employ and retain qualified, caring, and dependable workers in our organization, but turnover due to low wages happens far too often. During the week of September 8 through September 14, we celebrated National DSP week to honor the dedicated and innovative direct support workforce who is the heart and soul of supports for people with disabilities. This fiscal year we will share with you ways to help before the State budget is passed in June of 2020 in increasing wages and securing a livable wage for direct support professionals.

## IN MEMORY

**We honor the memory of dear friends who recently passed away.**

**JOSE GONZALEZ** – Mr. Gonzalez passed away on April 18, 2019, at the Reading Hospital. He was the head of the Maintenance Department at Prospectus Berco for 15 years, retiring in 2003. His son, Joey Gonzalez, proudly follows in his footsteps and serves as the Administrator of Maintenance at Prospectus Berco. Mr. Gonzalez is remembered fondly by all who knew him at Prospectus Berco and was a wonderful role model for his family and friends.

**ALICE LEA** – We mourn the passing of Alice Lea who died on June 1, 2019. Alice worked at Prospectus Berco in the

Residential Program and retired in 2011. With more than 25 years as a direct support professional, she began her career at Prospectus Berco as a Residential Advisor with a promotion to Residential Supervisor. Alice enjoyed traveling and sharing her travel adventures whenever possible with community home residents. We appreciated her service and dedication.

A donation to celebrate a special event in the life of an individual or to honor the memory of a loved one is a beautiful and thoughtful way to commemorate their life. If you want to celebrate someone's birthday, anniversary, graduation, etc., or the memory of a loved one, please mail your check to Prospectus Berco at 840 William Lane, Reading, PA 19604 and include your wishes.



## Charitable Giving is Alive & Well

The impact of the tax law on charitable giving with fewer people itemizing their taxes is a hot topic, and data is still being analyzed on the effect of charitable giving to nonprofits. It's important to remember that charitable deductions are not the same as charitable giving. The good news is many people will continue to give without considering the tax benefits because they believe in the mission of the nonprofit and are passionate about it.

The QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DEDUCTION FOR IRA'S is still in effect and a great way to support the nonprofit of your

choice as well as save on taxes. If you are age 70 ½ or older, you can make a tax-free charitable contribution up to \$100,000 per year (\$200,000 for a married couple filing jointly) directly from your IRA to an eligible 501 (c) (3) nonprofit of your choice. Qualified charitable contributions must be made by December 31 each year to exclude that amount from taxable income.

The advantages are a QCD will count toward satisfying your required minimum distributions for that year. Second, the distribution will not be included in your taxable income and may lower your tax liability. With fewer tax filers able to itemize due to the tax law changes, the QCD still offers you a full exclusion of your charitable contribution from taxes. Please consult your tax advisor prior to December 31 of this year to see if this deduction may benefit you.



# 25th Annual Golf Tournament

The “second time around” proved to be a winner having postponed the tournament from the original date of July 22 to August 12 due to weather conditions. The day turned out to be spectacular as we enjoyed a competitive but pleasurable tournament.

Thank you to the 2019 Golf Committee that did a fabulous job under the chairmanship of Peter Rowley and includes Michael Billera-Smith, Steve Bobick, Marlin Bower, Debbie Dallago, Chris DeAntonio, Liz Egner, Kristen Fisk, Sara Gdowik, Susan Kolb, Mark Maggs, Melanie Manwiller, Jennifer Matten, Rhonda Mayer, Laura Murga, Susan Stalneckner, Jody Wagner, John Watkins, and Mark Zebrowski.



All the golfers navigate toward the Snack Stand to enjoy some cool drinks and tasty snacks.

A shout out to our FIVE SUPPORTING SPONSORS whose sponsorships guarantee success!

## SUPPORTING SPONSORS

- Carpenter Technology Corporation
- East Penn Manufacturing Co., Inc
- Maggs & Associates
- Santander
- Tompkins Insurance/VIST Bank

The above Supporting Sponsors are not alone in their efforts as we show our appreciation to the following fellow sponsors:

**GOLF CART SPONSOR** - Highmark Blue Shield

**PROMOTIONAL GIFT SPONSOR** - Visions Federal Credit Union

**25TH ANNIVERSARY GIFT SPONSOR** - Steve & Carmela Bobick

**POST TOURNAMENT SPONSOR** - Auman Funeral Home

**SNACK STAND SPONSORS** - Herbein + Co.; Rich's Automotive & Sales; Stevens & Lee/Financial Solutions; Stratix Systems; Sweet Street Desserts; and Wert Investment Consulting

**LUNCH SPONSORS** - Bachman's Roofing; Dolan Construction; Esterbrook Pharmacy; Fulton Bank; Highland Auto & Truck; Mosteller & Associates; and Singer Equipment Co.

**EXCLUSIVE SPONSORS** - Knies Insurance Group (Putting Green); Freedom Toyota (Circle of Gold); BB&T (Hole-In-One); Visions Benefits of America (Beverage Cart)

**HOLE SIGNS** - 3 Minute Car Wash; Altrusa International of Reading Berks; Beacon Container Corporation; Berks Fire Water Restorations; Berkshire Systems/SAH; Brickstreet Mutual Insurance Co.; Clover Farms Dairy; Comfort Pro, Inc.; CrossKeys Insurance; Custom Milling & Consulting; Liz Egner Group/RE/MAX; E.G. Smith; Gateway Ticketing Systems; Green Giant Home & Commercial; Kutztown Auto Company; Newcastle Lawn & Landscape; David Thomas-Northwestern Mutual; Penns Commons Dental Group, LTD; Philadelphia Insurance Companies; Riverview Bank; RPA Engineering; Sal's Landscaping; Schatz Electric; Smith Law Group; Statement Apparel, Inc.; Stratix Systems; The H&K Group; UGI Utilities, Inc.; Watkins Architect; Chris & Greg Werner-RE/MAX; West Reading-Wyomissing Rotary Club; Z-Weldco

**PATRONS** - Brad Scribner, Gary Faust, Carol Troxel, Arlene Watkins

Thank You **RAFFLE SPONSORS** who donated items and gift certificates to make up a terrific chance raffle with 27 packages: Adventure Aquarium, Austin Restaurant/Brickstone, Berks Arts Council, Berkshire Country Club, Blackwood Country Club, Board & Employee Cheer Donors, Brewer's Bar & Grill, Café Sweet Street, Canal Street Pub & Restaurant, Carpenter Technology, Chapel Hill Golf Course, Chatty Monks Brewery, Cheesecake Factory, Cloud Nine Café, Coastal Grille, Crayola Experience, Crowne Plaza, Dans at Green Hills, Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre, Kristen Fisk, Fox Theaters, Jim & Beth Gdowik, Godiva Chocolatier, Hitching Post Restaurant & Bar, Homewood Suites, Kasper Appliances, Manor Golf Course, Rhonda Mayer, McArdle's, Michael's Classic Limousine, Michelle Lee, DMD, Mister Car Wash, Moselem Springs Golf Club, Office Service Company, Ozgood's - Kutztown, Paradise by the Slice, PA Renaissance Faire, Philadelphia Eagles, Philadelphia Flyers, Philadelphia Phillies, QVC Studio Park, Raymour & Flanigan, Reading Fightin Phils, Reading IMAX, Reading Public Museum, Redner's Warehouse Markets, Redner's - Chef Tim, Saucony Creek Brewery & Pub, Schaylor Brewing Co., Shirley's Café & Tequila Bar, Sorrelli Jewelry, Sweet Street Desserts, Texas Roadhouse, The Pike Café, The Pour House, The Salt Lounge, Tom Sturgis Pretzels, Tuscan Sun Spa, Unique Pretzels, United Artists Salon & Spa, US Express Printing, Van Scoy Jewelers, Watkins Architect, Weis Markets, Yorgey's Dry Cleaning, Mark Zebrowski





Left to right: Amanda Gossard, Vocational Employment Specialist; Sarah, and Katie share with our guests the work which the Vocational Services Department can perform for their company or organization.



Left to right: Lynne Titus, Kristen Fisk, and Steve Bobick are ready to greet the golfers as they arrive for the 25th Annual Golf Tournament.



Left to right: Rachel Rowley, Pete Rowley, Mike Rowley, and Tony Sabolis take a moment to pose for a photo. Pete has served as the Chair of the Golf Committee for the past two years.

In our eyes, all the golfers who participated are winners for supporting Prospectus Berco. Below are the contest winners and top three foursomes:

**FIRST PLACE FOURSOME** – Riverview Bank Foursome of Dave Mason, David Laudeman, Ryan Laudeman, and Dylan Shollenberger

**SECOND PLACE FOURSOME** – David Thomas, Northwestern Mutual Foursome of Dave Thomas, John Kearon, Bill Whiteside, and Don DeBarr

**THIRD PLACE FOURSOME** – Brad Scribner Foursome of Brent Wiley, Dave Kimbley, Hugh McNeil, and Bryon Whitman

**CLOSEST TO THE PIN**

- #3 – Bryon Whitman 5’6”
- #5 – Pete Rowley 1’8”  
(So close for that Hole in One!)
- #13 – Craig Foster 4’4”

**LONGEST DRIVE #12**

- MEN – Chris Button
- WOMEN – Jane Glass

**STRAIGHTEST DRIVE #4**

- Pete Rowley

**CIRCLE OF GOLD**

- Jason Hornberger
- Ryan Laudeman

**PUTTING GREEN CONTEST** – A raffle was held in which one golfer received the T-3 three-hour golf experience for four golfers, and the remainder received consolation prizes.

- Grand Winner – Adam Bonebrake
- Jason Hornberger
- John Watkins
- Ryan Laudeman
- Dylan Shollenberger
- Joe Zidik
- Jeff Schatz
- Shawn Coyle
- Jeff Coleman





## An Inclusive Community



*Jamal knocks on the door of the next senior citizen who is about to receive a hot meal from the Meals on Wheels program.*

As shared in previous newsletters, programming requirements from the Federal and State governments have transitioned to an employment first and community participation model. Prospectus Berco needs to increase opportunities for program participants to partake in community activities and receive employment readiness training, job placement supports, and on-the-job support services.

Impacting the Day Programs, Vocational and Adult Training have risen to this challenge by providing more

community interaction with social, recreational, and employment activities. We have been very active and involved but in particular have two stories to share.

Two times a week a couple of Vocational workers assemble sandwiches at the Redner Warehouse Market's Wyomissing location under the direction of Chef Tim Twiford. Recently a special order for over 100 sliders needed to be filled, and the deli department was short staffed that day. Our workers were asked to help with the special order much to the satisfaction of Redner's

and the customer. The customer called the next day to compliment "our team" and express how wonderful the workers are. This compliment and the wonderful treatment they receive at Redner's makes our workers feel appreciated and part of the team.

The volunteer work which members of the Adult Training classrooms are performing for Berks Encore is equally appreciated. With approximately 65 volunteers from Prospectus Berco going out every week day, we have filled the need for drivers and volunteers on a daily basis to deliver Meals on Wheels. Lori Gerhart, Director of Marketing and Communications for Berks Encore stated in a recent Reading Eagle article, "It is a huge help for us to get the meals delivered." In addition to the meal deliveries, program participants also help wipe down tables in the Reading Senior Center and shop for groceries for senior citizens.



*Jim Althouse, Vocational Instructor, left; works with Mark, center; and Ashley, right; to prepare Italian sandwiches under the supervision of two deli employees at Redner's. The sandwiches fly off the shelves as soon as they are prepared.*

## Take Me Out to the Ballgame

The only thing more American than apple pie is a good old fashioned baseball game! On Saturday, April 13, Prospectus Berco hosted an informational table at the opening day of the Dream Team League. The Baseballtown Dream League was created to provide people with physical and mental disabilities an opportunity to play baseball. The Dream League Field, located at the Relevant Sports Complex on Old Pricetown Road in Temple, is a custom-designed, turf field that accommodates wheelchairs and other assistive devices while helping to prevent injuries.

On Sunday, May 19, we celebrated Prospectus Berco Day at the Reading Fightin Phils. Thanks to our sponsor, Boscov's Travel, we handed out more than 400 tickets to program participants, families, employees, and supporters to attend the afternoon game.



*Program participants, employees, board members, and supporters unfurl the American flag before the game begins as the fans sing the National Anthem.*

Jose did a fine job throwing in a ceremonial pitch before the start of the game. And during the 7th inning stretch, Andrew wowed the crowd with his rendition of Take Me Out to the Ball Game. One of the most touching moments is when we banded together to unfurl the American flag on the baseball field. Program participants, family members, employees, and board members stood together as one unit to honor our country as the fans sang the national anthem.



*Andrew receives a warm welcome from Mike Robinson, Executive Director of Community & Fan Relations for the Reading Fightin Phils, before going out to sing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."*



# It's Happening!



*Tara Simmons, owner of All Abilities Fitness Center, conducts an exercise and yoga class for residents and their friends at one of the Butternut Court homes.*



*Who knew exercise could be so fun? Michael and Rodney are enjoying every minute of exercising for upper body strength as Residential Advisor, Heaven Alvarado, offers encouragement.*



*Carmen, Felix, and Joyce take delight in assembling the bulletins for the Community United Church of Christ as part of community participation support.*



*Employee Appreciation Day was held for the Vocational Production Workers in August to thank them and recognize their excellent work habits and values. Workers took part in Bingo, games, having lunch, and of course, dancing! Sulayka Joaquin-Acevedo, Vocational Instructor, shares a laugh with workers taking part in the Penny Drop game.*



*Massimo Caloiero, owner of The Pour House American Grille, offered a complimentary Margarita Bar during the golf tournament. He also sponsored a Dine & Donate Night for Prospectus Berco on May 22 in which he donated 15% of all proceeds, including food and beverages, to Prospectus Berco. We raised \$500. Thank you for being a friend!*



*Joe's passion is fishing. Amy, Residential Advisor, made Joe's day by taking him fishing at a friend's pond in New Ringgold for blue gills and sunnies.*



*Bob gives Sgt. Keenan Albright the "thumbs up" signal as he was given a tour of the local National Guard headquarters.*



*Going to the prom was always a special event full of wonderful memories. Look at the smiles on the faces of Amy and Cameron as they partake in the Adult Training Prom Day.*



*Hats Off (or On!) to Clover Farms Dairy who donated hats to the Vocational Production Workers in appreciation of the work which they do in the packaging of Clover Farms Dairy products.*



## PROSPECTUS BERCO

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*making a difference for people with disabilities*

## Upcoming Events



### **Boscov's Friends Helping Friends Shopping Passes**

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Prospectus Berco will be selling \$5 shopping passes with our sales proceeds given to Prospectus Berco. Call Sue Stalnecker at 610-372-4637. Ext. 103 to purchase.

### **Halloween Party**

Sunday, October 27, 2019, from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

DoubleTree Hilton, Reading

Contact Michelle Alleyne at 610-372-4637, ext. 211

[malleyne@prospectusberco.org](mailto:malleyne@prospectusberco.org)

RSVP on or before October 18

### **In-Service Day**

Friday, November 1, 2019

Day Programs are closed

### **Blood Drive**

November 4 from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

To sign up, contact Joanne Reinert at 610-372-4637, ext. 200, or [jreinert@prospectusberco.org](mailto:jreinert@prospectusberco.org)

### **Leadership Berks**

#### **Nonprofit Board and Committee Reception**

Thursday, November 7, 2019 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Prospectus Berco at 1800 Kutztown Road, Reading Event Room

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

#### **Holiday Party**

Sunday, December 28, 2019, from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

DoubleTree Hilton, Reading