



Connections

The Newsletter of Bridge Disability Ministries

Fall, 2014

Building Bridges with our Executive Director, Brenne Schario

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Nadia Andrienas

Guardianship Assistant

Gerry Barney

Mobility Manager

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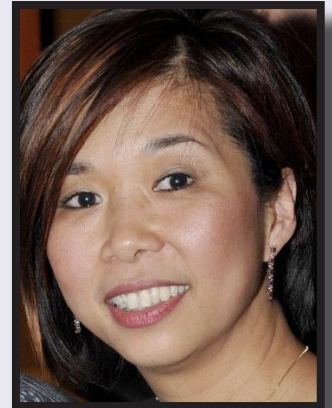
Our mobility center supervisor, Gerry Barney, shared about two women who recently came to the center looking to get their chairs repaired. Gerry told them that Bridge was not able to do the type of wheelchair repairs they hoped for; nor was there a staff member or volunteer that day that could help.

The two sweet gals were a bit disappointed but stayed a while to visit with Gerry, talking up a storm. They matter-of-factly noted that there was nowhere on their chairs to place their drink without having to balance it as they go. "I can fix that, we have cup holders here that I can outfit your chairs with," Gerry said. And it was the versatile kind that does not just hang on the handles but it gets clamped on. The ladies were thrilled! Gerry also fixed them up with trays for their chairs to make them even more mobile. As the morning went on and the stories flowed they were able to tighten up a bolt here and a screw there. The ladies then had to mosey on their way. They were smiling from ear to ear, absolutely happy with their new acquisitions. They didn't find exactly what they originally came for, but they left feeling cared for and loved!

This is the essence of Bridge: being there for those in need, making connections, finding a way. I wake up every morning thankful for the opportunity to be able to participate in God's work through Bridge. I close the day grateful for the many people who, unbeknownst to them, have blessed me, many times over what I gave them.

We continue to respond to high volumes of requests for assistance with durable medical equipment from individuals with disabilities, their families, and community groups. Not to mention the many more individuals who need a guardian but cannot obtain one, or need a spiritual care program but cannot reach one close enough to home or at a time they can attend – we have our work cut out for us!

Our ministries – Spiritual Care, Guardianship, Mobility, collectively serve over 3000 individuals, their caregivers and families who will be the ultimate beneficiaries of a highly successful Building Bridges fund-raiser. Bridge's Board of Directors and I remain committed to our friends of all abilities, and to the important purpose for which we were established 27 years ago. We invite you to join us in ensuring our friends are able to live, work, worship and develop friendships in their communities. Help us make Building Bridges a great success on October 18!



Give to others, and God will give to you. Indeed, you will receive a full measure, a generous helping, poured into your hands—all that you can hold. The measure you use for others is the one that God will use for you."

Luke 6:38

Being Present

by Linda Martin, Spiritual Care Programs & Volunteer Administrator

I recently sat down with Nadia Andrienas and talked to her about her history and the journey that brought her to Bridge. I learned that she has had many varied experiences in far-flung locations: Among them were receiving a BA in Cultural Anthropology at UW in Seattle, and attending Capernwray Bible School in England. When Nadia returned to the states from a stint teaching English at Thai Nguyen University in Vietnam, she cast about for her next adventure. She had returned to Kirkland where she grew up. There she had attended Inglewood Presbyterian Church where Bridge founder Henk Wapstra was once pastor. After circulating the news that she was looking for work, she learned of an opportunity at Bridge Disability Ministries and was intrigued. She was interested in a career in social work, and this sounded like it might be a good fit. So she applied and was hired as a Guardianship Assistant July, 2013.



To begin with, Nadia was primarily assisting Guardianship Agency Supervisor, Patty Croteau. But beginning in October 2013, she began to assume case management duties as well. These days she spends about $\frac{3}{4}$ of her time doing case management for 15 Bridge guardianship clients. About 80% of that time is spent visiting her clients, both at work and home, and taking them on community observation outings. These outings may consist of anything from going to a coffee shop to going for a walk. During their time together, she is looking to make sure her client is happy, healthy and safe, documenting any concerns with housing, employment, community access or health. Follow-up to address concerns may involve communicating with other staff, the client's house staff or program manager from their housing agency. In addition, she may also need to contact medical personnel, community access or job coaching staff, or housing agencies in her mission to meet the client's needs.

Nadia says one of the things she gets out of her job personally is learning to be present in the moment. Because her clients have developmental disabilities, they are not concerned about what is happening beyond their immediate environment. Being with them forces her to live in the moment as well, at least for a little while, and not worry about anything else. She finds time with them calming, and gains a sense of peace - a respite from her busy schedule and having a million things on her mind.

Her job at Bridge also furthers Nadia's professional goals. While working here she decided social work was a good field for her to work in because she likes the variety of her work, enjoying the direct service work with people, but also enjoying a break now and then to work in the office. She started grad school this fall, working towards a Master's degree in Social Work at UW, Tacoma. As a social worker she will have to work with a lot of different kinds of people to form a support team for people in need, and she is getting valuable practical experience here.

Nadia finds it satisfying to do important work in people's lives, and to advocate for people who cannot advocate for themselves. By visiting her clients she is able to learn about their personalities and communication styles, and can make recommendations for improvements in their care. When this effort results in increased quality of life for her clients - that is Nadia's reward.

I have shown you in all things that by working hard in this way we must help the weak, remembering the words that the Lord Jesus himself said, "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving."

Acts 20:35

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Bridge's programs, which would not exist without their efforts. If you are interested in our volunteer opportunities, and would like to learn more, please contact Linda: lindam@bridgemin.org or (425) 885-1006, ext. 118.

Thank you!

A Mobility Moment, *by Gerry Barney, Mobility Manager*

One morning when we were preparing to open the Mobility Center for the day, we heard a loud honking outside. Who would honk for our attention from the parking lot over an hour before we were open, we wondered? The answer was a man paralyzed from the middle of his back down, with one arm in a brace, but still able to drive his car through the use of hand controls. This is a man who has known of Bridge for some time, and once even did some volunteer work on phones for a while. What he needed was a sport wheelchair to replace his overly worn out old one. He was cheerful and determined. His early arrival made it easier to wait on him in the parking lot by bringing a selection of chairs out to his car for him to look at. After asking a good number of questions about their frames, wheels and seats, he settled on a titanium model, which we loaded into his car for him. It is difficult to imagine how he can operate the sport chair with his limitations, but the worn out chair in the back of his car is a testimony that he can - does it with vigor! After he went on his way, I reflected that it is sometimes the interruptions to our day that make it fulfilling.

Summer Fun in the Sun *by Linda Martin, Spiritual Care Programs Administrator*

Summer means outdoor fun for our friends with disabilities at Bridge Celebrations. To give you a taste, at our last event of the summer in August, a Summer Picnic Celebration at Game Farm Park in Auburn, we had a blast. Our host Sunshine Ministries rounded up a crew of volunteers that served up barbecued burgers with all the trimmings, and we enjoyed karaoke music to boot. Add warm, sunny weather and hanging out with friends into the mix and it was just about perfect. I do so love to see the people we serve enjoying a casual summer afternoon in the park, all smiles and enthusiasm, enjoying themselves among accepting people who enjoy them. Singing, dancing, laughing, praying together – and feeling blessed by the sun kissing their cheeks and the loving kindness around them. We at Bridge are blessed to have your support to make these treasured moments possible. Thank you.



Double Your Gift to Bridge Through Matching Gifts

Many companies will match the donations made by their employees/retirees to Bridge Ministries dollar for dollar. By completing your employer's gift matching form (some companies have their form online), you can double your contribution! If you are not sure your employer has a matching gift program, simply check with your Human Resources Department. Here are some of the companies with matching gifts programs:

Adobe Systems
Alaska Airlines
Allstate
Amgen
Bank of America
The Boeing Company

Costco Wholesale
GE
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JP Morgan Chase
Macy's
Microsoft
Regence Blueshield

Safeco
Starbucks
Symetra
UPS
United Way
University of Washington





Bridge Disability Ministries

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Bellevue, WA 98005-1956

Honoring People Living with Disabilities



What We Do:

- Spiritual Care Programs
- Guardianship & Case Management
- Mobility Medical Equipment
- Community Connections
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Disability Advocacy

www.bridgemin.org

Mobility Medical Equipment (Tu, Wed, Th: noon - 5pm)
(425) 885-1008, equipment@bridgemin.org

Spiritual Care, Guardianship & Administration
(425) 885-1006, bridge@bridgemin.org

Mark Your Calendars...

Sunday Evening Celebrations (4-6pm)

- October 26th Newport Presbyterian Church
4010 120th Ave SE, Bellevue, 98006
- November 9th St. Margaret's Episcopal Church
4228 Factoria Blvd SE, Bellevue, 98006
- December 6th St. John Vianney Catholic Church
12600 84th Ave NE, Kirkland, 98034
PLEASE NOTE: Saturday, 12:30 - 2:30pm

Our Mission

Because Bridge Disability Ministries honors the God-given dignity of people living with disabilities, we build relationships to alleviate isolation and enrich our churches and communities.

Time to RSVP!

for our

Annual Benefit Dinner & Auction

Saturday, October 18th, 5:30pm

Building Bridges

\$100 per ticket

Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue

Contact us right away!

(425) 885-1006, ext. 111 or events@bridgemin.org

WE CAN HELP

Parents & Guardians of people with Developmental Disabilities:
Our Guardianship Agency now offers private pay case management.
For more information call: (425) 885-1006 x102

Want to receive our next newsletter via e-mail or be removed from our mailing list? E-mail your request to bridge@bridgemin.org