

MOVE PEOPLE TOWARD JOBS!

PROGRESSIVE CONNECTIONS

THE PWAC NEWSLETTER



A LETTER FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

PWAC Community Members,

Not only is it my distinct honor to continue serving the Progressive Workshop of Armstrong County as its Board of Directors president for another term, but it is also my honor to begin my eleventh year as a member of this board that represents an organization that, for so many individuals, provides a sense of belonging, purpose, and unity. I am proud to be part of this amazing group of community-minded citizens that make up our Board. We are comprised of a group of people with diverse interests, knowledge, and talents, all of which we have continuously dedicated to supporting the operation, growth, and mission of PWAC.

Having been a member of the wider Armstrong County community for many years, I have watched PWAC grow from a sheltered workshop providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to a far-reaching agency that has greatly expanded its original services, creatively engaged with a growing number of clients and trainees, and continued to strengthen its partnership with the community in valuable ways. Today, PWAC offers several programs including Pre-Vocational services, Supportive Employment, Community Participation Supports services, adult education services, and Small Group Employment. All PWAC's programs and services are designed to facilitate meaningful interactions between clients, trainees, and members of the community. This often results in employment opportunities for those individuals that lead to positive real-world interactions, earned paychecks, and a sense of purpose and independence.

The communities of Armstrong County have been supportive of PWAC since its beginning, which is evidenced in the number of businesses, companies, schools, churches, and individuals who continue to employ PWAC's clients and trainees to work on important projects year after year. But even beyond that, the financial assistance that PWAC continues to receive from the generous people of Armstrong County every year is another reflection on the level of support and respect that the community has for PWAC and the work it does for the benefit of those it serves.

From myself and the entire Board of Directors, we are immensely grateful to you, as a member of the PWAC community, for your role in helping us to ensure the future success and growth of this organization. It is our great pleasure to continue strengthening PWAC's programs and services so that we may better serve our clients and trainees with your help and support.

Sincerely,

Lynn Ribley

President, PWAC Board of Directors

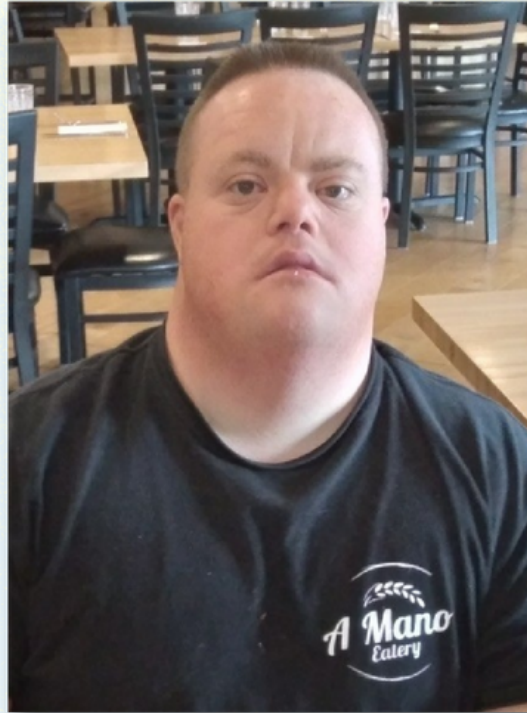
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TRAINEE SPOTLIGHT: MIKE MANTINI

Michael Mantini first came to PWAC on June 28, 2010. He started out working in PWAC's Pre-Vocational program where he enjoyed working with and light-heartedly teasing other individuals in the program. He is very fun-loving, outgoing, and jovial.

At the same time, Mike also worked at A'Mano Eatery, his family's local Italian restaurant located in Kittanning, as a part-time dishwasher. While in this position, he received assistance from a job coach through PWAC's Supportive Employment program.



In March 2018, Mike decided to stop working in PWAC's Pre-Vocational program so that he could focus on working at the restaurant, but he continues to receive job coaching assistance. He likes telling everyone that he "retired" from the workshop at PWAC!

Since making this change, Mike has continued to thrive at his job at the restaurant. He and his family have a great partnership. As time goes on, Mike continues to gain more independence in the workplace as his work skills at the restaurant grow.

Todd Mechling, Mike's job coach, said that "Mike is a friendly man who has a good rapport with the customers and staff at the restaurant. He always has a smile on his face and enjoys his job very much."

"Mike has been doing very well with his job responsibilities," said the assistant manager at A'Mano.

PWAC is very proud of Mike for finding employment in his community doing work that he enjoys so much. He does a great job and has come so far.

Great job, Mike!! We are proud of your accomplishments!

TRAINEE SPOTLIGHT: JUSTIN LUKE



Justin Luke started with PWAC on October 16, 2000. He worked in production as part of PWAC's Pre-Vocational program before advancing to Small Group Employment (SGE) where he worked for Progressive Commercial Cleaning. He continues to work two days a week for SGE. In addition to his workdays in SGE, Justin is also in PWAC's Supportive Employment program where he maintains community employment with assistance from a PWAC job coach. Justin first worked for CWM Environmental, a water management facility, where he helped to clean and maintain equipment until he was asked to leave his job due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

In July 2022, he began a new job working three or four days a week at Shop 'n Save where he bags groceries, collects carts, and completes other tasks within the store. Justin continues to receive job coaching assistance through PWAC's Supportive Employment program. His manager says he is a great worker.

"Justin is definitely cut out for community jobs," said Todd Mechling, Justin's PWAC job coach. "He's a very good worker."

Christin Pierce, Director of Community-Based Services at PWAC, and Bogie Goughler, Vice President of Production and Community Based Services at PWAC, both work with Justin each week in SGE.

"I was really impressed that Justin used his networking skills to get his job at Shop 'n Save. He got that job on his own," said Christin.

"Just as a person, Justin is one of the kindest people you'll ever know," said Bogie. "He loves everybody."

It is the mission of PWAC to work with clients and trainees until they are ready for employment in the community, and Justin has worked his way up through the Pre-Vocational and SGE programs to achieve community employment.

Great job, Justin!! PWAC is very proud of your work and dedication!



FEATURED PROGRAM: PROGRESSIVE WOOD WORKS

In 2021, PWAC opened Progressive Wood Works and established it as a Pre-Vocational program. Trainees who work for Progressive Wood Works produce wooden cutting boards, charcuterie boards, coasters, and other related wood products. In the woodshop, trainees learn to handle equipment, raw materials, and participate in each phase of the crafting process from start to finish.

The shop sells wooden stakes, firewood, and its crafted products to local community members and through online orders that can be shipped within the continental United States.



Our new football-shaped charcuterie board is perfect for all your football party needs, and our wooden coasters, cutting boards, and charcuterie boards in various sizes make excellent gifts for the upcoming holiday season!

Place your orders this fall at
www.pwacprogressivewoodworks.com!



FEATURED PROGRAM: PROGRESSIVE LAWN AND LANDSCAPING

Progressive Lawn and Landscaping was formally named and established as a business operated within PWAC's Small Group Employment program in 2018. Four lawn crews of trainees regularly travel to work sites throughout the community to complete lawn projects under staff supervision during the season from April to November. They provide numerous services, including lawn mowing, trimming, mulching, and leaf clean-up. They serve residential and commercial clients in Armstrong County and in parts of Indiana and Butler Counties, which means they care for the landscaping of many homes and businesses in the community and remain a widely sought-after and well-known service provider.



The fall foliage in October is always beautiful, but by November, those leaves leave quite a mess! Call 724-548-5664 to schedule your leaf clean-up this fall with Progressive Lawn and Landscaping!



STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK

SEPTEMBER 12-16



Every September, PWAC celebrates Staff Appreciation Week to turn its focus to the people who truly make the mission of PWAC come to life. Our staff are at the heart of the work we do, and their effort, enthusiasm, and care for PWAC's clients and trainees deserves to be celebrated every day! Thank you, PWAC staff!



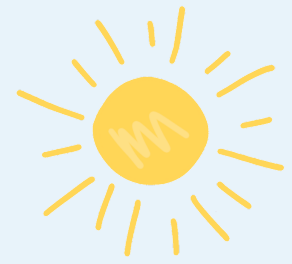
All staff members received small, fun gifts throughout the week, and the week ended with a pizza party and a visit from the ice cream truck!



"Thank you to each and every PWAC staff member!! Your dedication is amazing. Your hearts for service are apparent every day!! You all make it easy to lead such a great team!!!" - Michelle Reefer, CEO



LOOKING BACK: SUMMER EVENTS AT PWAC



PWAC received a total of \$28,362.04 in donations during the Armstrong County Community Foundation's Week of Giving in May!

PWAC hosted our first annual Grip It & Rip It Golf Scramble on Saturday, June 25! 96 golfers and 26 volunteers took part in the day and participated the basket auction that featured over 50 baskets of donated items! Be on the lookout for information about our next Golf Scramble on [Saturday, June 24, 2023!](#) View photos from the golf outing on Flickr at [https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzY5nj!](https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzY5nj)



We hosted our second annual Pool Party at the Belmont Complex in Kittanning on Friday, July 8! About 210 staff members, clients, trainees, friends, and family members enjoyed the summer evening by the pool with a pizza party. View photos from the pool party on Flickr at [https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAbVBo!](https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAbVBo)

Progressive Document Destruction participated in a paper shredding event on September 9 with PA State Representatives Abby Majors and Jason Silvis!



PWAC's clients enjoyed fun activities in the community all summer, including visiting local parks, fairs, zoos, and farms!

FALL AT PWAC



Fall is in full swing here at PWAC, which means our clients are excitedly filling the halls with all their autumn and Halloween-themed arts and crafts!



A group of clients from the Adult Achievement Center enjoyed a fun trip to the Spirit Halloween store!

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER



HAPPY "WORKIVERSARY"!

Congratulations to our staff members who will celebrate a work anniversary this fall! We appreciate all that you do!

SEPTEMBER

Mae Slease	9-2-2004
Ron Blystone	9-7-2021
Wanda Ellis	9-22-2015
Terri John	9-9-1999

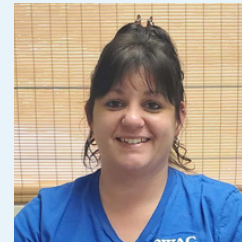


OCTOBER

Tera Peters	10-9-2017
Marilyn Laird	10-9-2018
Beckie Vallies	10-9-2020
Andre Savoie	10-18-2021
Kim Leone	10-23-2018
Chris Goldinger	10-23-2018
Jacquelyn Cannon	10-25-2021

NOVEMBER

Christin Pierce	11-16-2017
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We also welcomed some new staff members to the team this fall!

Stacy Patton	9-14-2022
Kristi Johnson	9-12-2022
Britta Toy	9-14-2022
Andy Walbert	10-19-2022
Tina Miller	10-24-2022
Kevin Piper	10-24-2022

THE PWAC TEAM

Our Board of Directors

Lynn Sibley (President)	Linda Kuruc	James Swast
Robb Watt (Vice President)	Jennifer Redick	Amy Ford
Chris Yanoff (Secretary)	Lee Walker	Jennifer Vensel
Sonie Mervis (Treasurer)	Gene Hughes	Nancy Kennedy
Ted Breuer (Emeritus)	Justin Snow	Chris Evans
LuAnne Frerotte		

Our Management

L. Michelle Reefer	Chief Executive Officer
Kim Smith	Chief Fiscal Officer
Jennifer Goughler	Vice President of Administration and Development
Kim C. Savoie	Vice President of Programs and Compliance
Bogie Goughler	Vice President of Production and Community Based Services
Pam Cromie	Director of Adult Achievement Center
Christin Pierce	Director of Community Based Services
Bob Reesman	Director of Operations
Kim Leone	Director of Benefits and Finance

Our Locations

Oak Avenue (Main Office)	Leonard M. Meneely Industrial Center
301 Oak Avenue	1340 North Water Street
Kittanning, PA 16201	Kittanning, PA 16201
Phone: 724-548-5664	Phone: 724-548-5664
Fax: 724-545-2088	Fax: 724-545-2088

Adult Achievement Center	PWAC Shelocta
368 Butler Road	9561 Route 422
Kittanning, PA 16201	Kittanning, PA 16201
Phone: 724-919-8899	Phone: 724-548-5664

STAY CONNECTED!



Be sure to visit us at www.progressiveworkshop.com and check us out on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Flickr! Email us at info@progressiveworkshop.com with referrals and general inquiries.



Move people toward jobs!