



Apropos...

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

I am pleased to announce that Batshaw will hold its first employee long service recognition events in November. These events will honour the commitment and contributions of our employees. November 20th to 24th will be Long Service Recognition Week.

During that week each division will hold a ceremony or ceremonies to present a framed certificate to all those employees who have reached the milestones of 7 and 15 years of service. (Length of service is calculated from the first day an employee was hired by one of the founding agencies, or Batshaw.) On Thursday evening November 23rd all those employees who have achieved the milestones of 20, 25, 30 and 35 years will be invited to a reception and dinner in their honour. At that time they will receive a framed certificate, and all employees who have achieved 25 years and more will receive a gift of appreciation.

To plan this event a master list of length of service had to be compiled. Did you know that the person with the longest service has over 37 years? In fact there are two such people, both involved in direct services to clients. There are 5 people with over 30 years all involved in clinical services. Another 11 employees will reach this milestone by next year. Of our approximately 1,100 employees there are over 70 with 25 years and more, over 200 with 20 years and more, and over 500 with 10 years and more!

The Long Service week and evening will become an annual fixture in the Batshaw calendar. It is one measure of the contribution made by our employees. Contributions are also measured by their impact on our clients, on co-workers and on the agency's ability to achieve its mission. By 2001 we will introduce means to recognize these dimensions as well.

MOUNTAINVIEW SCHOOL PROJECT CENTER

(Contributed by Jean-Claude Barbant, Program Manager in the division of Residential Treatment Services for Adolescents.)

The Montreal-based Mountainview School has had a developing mandate over the last few years. This school, also called the Project Center, used to be a school for the three Shawbridge Youth Centres group homes and it was run jointly by the Protestant School board of Greater Montreal and Shawbridge Youth Centres.

With the closing of the L'Acadie Project Center in 1995, the program moved into a former elementary school in the residential district of Cote St-Luc, leased by the PSBGM and renovated to fit the needs of the clientele. The school has eight well-lit classrooms, a computer lab, a very well equipped wood shop, a cooking class facility, cafeteria, full gymnasium and an outdoor playground.

The clients from Mountainview live in group homes, their own homes or in independent living. Most of the students have been referred to this alternative school program because they have not been able to meet the behavioral and/or academic expectations of the regular school system or the other alternative schools in the English-Montreal School Board.

Gaining acceptance in the local community was extremely difficult, but by working with local school board officials,

community leaders, station 15 police, teachers, our two Batshaw child care workers and students, we were able to turn public opinion around. A strict code of conduct is adhered to, both inside and outside the school to help ensure our continued welcome in the local community.

This year, the teaching and staff team is composed of a newly appointed principal, Gail Sommerville, head-teacher, Danny Olivenstein, and teachers Marcel, Harry, Alain and Lucinda. Last but not least, our two well-experienced child care workers Pat and Louto support this program on a daily basis.

It has become harder to meet the needs of our changing clientele who experience a range of emotional, social, behavioral and academic problems. For this reason, we have been meeting with the school board representatives in order to develop and enrich the program. We are still aiming to achieve this goal and we already have added a cooking program, being taught by Marcel, to the curriculum.

Both the English Montreal School Board and Batshaw have agreed to support and finance this integrated learning program, where not only cooking but budgeting, math, language, writing and organizational skills are taught within the program. It is clear that youth can become supportive individuals within their own system and that part of our mandate is to help them develop the necessary skills.

Addendum: From Madeleine Bérard, Program Manager, Family Preservation Programs, division of Youth Protection:

The Batshaw school based program Focus (described in the September *Apropos*) expresses its gratitude to the Project Centre teachers and staff. The ESBM is in the process of moving the Focus program, so temporary accommodations were required. The Project Centre has generously offered this to us at short notice, with exemplary hospitality.

BATSHAW CENTRAIDE CAMPAIGN

The Annual Batshaw Centraide campaign is under way. Centraide provides support to over 250 community organizations. Centraide is a network of thousands of people who give their time and money to improve the lives of the less fortunate. Many of the groups that receive funding from Centraide are familiar to us in our work with children and families: Lasalle Youth Centre, Suicide-Action Montreal, Head and Hands and NDG Black Community Association to name a few.

Contributing is simple with the payroll deduction system, you simply pledge an amount on the enclosed card, be it two or ten dollars per pay and it is deducted automatically. All Centraide contributions should be forwarded to the attention of Kim Kurtz, our campaign coordinator, at 6 Weredale Park. The Batshaw campaign takes place from October 16th to November 17th, I ask you to support this worthy cause.