

Winter 2019

# Newsletter

# EASTCO

Diversified Services, Inc.

**As we start** the New Year it is good to pause and review the year that was. 2018 was a great year with Eastco reaching the milestone of turning fifty! Congratulations Eastco! From 1968, when a gallon of regular gas cost 34 cents, a gallon of milk was three times more expensive, the year Eastco began as Gresham's first school for special needs students, to today! From that beginning Eastco has expanded and diversified but always focused on enhancing the quality of life for individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities in the Gresham area.

Mayor Shane Bemis when speaking at our Annual Awards Banquet, congratulated us and noted our accomplishments, of now providing Employment Services, seven group homes, supported living services and the Life Enhancement Activities Program. 2018 was

the year we doubled the number of persons in integrated, community based jobs to eight. The sheltered workshop was repurposed into offices, conference and training spaces. Cascade Corporation deepened it's partnership with us by establishing their crew of workers as a Small Group Employment site. Our Residential Administrators, under Jessica Huggins, Residential Director, while continuing to deal with a serious staffing crisis, still provided quality support to twenty-nine individuals.

The Board of Directors, over all the years, in all that Eastco has accomplished, has been there to lend support, encouragement and direction. We begin our next half century with a solid foundation of services, with the Board, management and staff dedicated and ready to carry Eastco into the future.

Tom Wsyuph  
Executive Director

## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Eastco has celebrated our fiftieth year since the establishment of the Me Re center by Barbara Place for her daughter Claudia. Since that time we have grown to operate seven group homes, five supported living sites, a supported employment program and our life enhancement program. We are growing ever still!



Thank you to everyone who donated to our yearly fund drive!



*Give With a Purpose*

While we may not have met our financial goal, every donation helps Eastco do what we do!

If you missed our drive, don't worry! We accept donations year round at [eastcods.org](http://eastcods.org)



For over fourteen years Marg, as Fiscal Mgr, was the driving force behind upgrading and fine tuning the accounting system, policies and financial statements. Marg was first asked to help implement Eastco's new accounting software; something clicked and she never left, well, until now. Everyone one wishes her well in her retirement. While Eastco will miss Marg, the grandchildren are smiling.

# SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT



If you visit the Gresham Library on weekday afternoons you might notice a quiet but industrious gentleman attending to his janitorial duties. Andrew was just recently hired as a Janitor by Relay Resources and his jobsite is the Gresham

Library. This position is really a dream job for Andrew, who was a frequent library visitor when he used to work a block away at Eastco's Screen Printing Store. Andrew's many years of cleaning experience working as a member of Eastco's various Janitorial Enclaves more than qualified him for the position. Relay Resources was impressed by Andrew's Resume and offered him the position after his Interview. Andrew now takes pride in keeping the library he loves to visit clean and sanitary.

Kaelyne Mowell

Lead Employment Specialist

## LEAP-ing Ahead



2018 brought many changes to the LEAP program. Three of the workshop staff joined the LEAP team last April which made for new challenges and also many rewards as they already knew many of the folks we serve. This month we welcomed new staff member Sheryl. She is a wonderful addition to our team and we are happy to have her on board. Stop in to meet Sheryl and say hello!

Some of the fun things we have been doing in LEAP over the past few months include going to OMSI exhibits, visiting the Pittock Mansion, the World of Speed museum & the Festival of Trees. We watched a production of The Little Mermaid, went bowling and had a scavenger hunt. One of the holiday highlights was an evening tour of Christmas light displays. And to top it all off, Santa stopped in for an indoor snowball fight!

There is more to come and new events are planned for 2019. Let the fun begin!

Mary Dixon



LEAP Coordinator

## EASTCO IS HIRING!

Direct Care

Supported Living Professionals

In-Home Care

We are looking for compassionate and responsible individuals!

Apply online at [eastcods.org](http://eastcods.org) or in person at 215 SW Wallula St. Monday—Friday between 8am–3pm

## On the Up and Up

Twelve months ago all seven of Eastco's residential group homes had hit an all time low as they were experiencing what was being referred to as a "staffing crisis". With six full-time and two part-time openings Eastco's staff and residential administrators were losing hope. Thankfully, with everyone's hard work, dedication, and drive we were able to make it out of what felt like quicksand and onto solid ground.

Now, after just completing our most recent New Hire Orientation, we can thankfully say that we are ONLY one (yes one!) full-time employee away from being fully staffed. Residentially, we have not been fully staffed in two — almost three — years. The times are truly a-changin'.

Jessica Huggins  
Residential Director

# GROUP HOMES

