



RANCH EHRLO SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Safety Leadership Award

Ranch Ehrlo CEO and president Andrea Brittin was awarded the 2016 Safety Centered Leadership Award from the Saskatchewan Health and Safety Association (SHSA).



Andrea Brittin and George Marshall

The award is the highest honour bestowed by the SHSA and is given to individuals who, through their leadership, have made an impact on the safety culture in Saskatchewan.

At the end of 2015, Brittin – and the rest of the agency – committed to making Ranch Ehrlo Society a safer place to work. The agency has been working diligently with the SHSA to do so. Since the enhanced focus on safety began, we have reduced our total

injuries by an impressive 25 per cent. More serious, time-loss injuries have been reduced by over 50 per cent.

“For an agency your size, this is a phenomenal improvement,” said George Marshall, SHSA CEO.

“Making progress on reducing injuries in the workplace cannot be done by one person alone. It takes everyone talking, thinking, and being vigilant about safety,” Brittin said while accepting the award. “So I share this award with everyone at Ranch Ehrlo Society – all 800 plus staff!”

“At the end of the day, our goal is improved safety for all our staff and we know that our increased focus on safety is paying off! We also know that we are not done, and the only right number of workplace related injuries is ZERO,” she concluded.

Grant for counselling

Thanks to a grant of \$50,000 to Ehrlo Counselling Services from the Anonymous Donor Designated Fund at the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation more people will have access to mental health services. The funds will be



Regina firefighters stopped by a Ehrlo Early Learning Centre

put toward face-to-face counselling, crisis management, and prevention programs in the community for families who do not have the financial means to afford such services.

Ranch Ehrlo has been a South Saskatchewan Community Foundation partner for a number of years and gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the SSCF Anonymous Donor Designated Fund.

New vice-president



Ranch Ehrlo is pleased to welcome Judy Bidyk to the executive team at Ranch Ehrlo. She will be taking on the role of vice-president of human resources.

Bidyk comes to the agency from Supreme Office Products Ltd., where she was the vice-president of HR for the past seven years. She has over 17 years of senior human resources experience and has led a large organization through several key HR initiatives. Bidyk also has experience leading a company through times of rapid growth and change.

The agency has also hired a new residential director and an education manager. Trevor Gates has been hired as the new director of residential treatment and Michelle Schwabe will assume the program manager position at the Learning Centre.

Gates has a lengthy career in the human service field, most recently as the manager of community services, CLSD at the Ministry of Social Services. He has a Master of Arts in Sociology and a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Political Science.

Schwabe has worked at the Ranch for the past 10 years. She started her agency career as a teacher in the development

classroom at Schaller Education Centre and most recently as a teacher in the Transition Centre in Regina.

Baby born in Ranch home

March 19th was a pretty special birthday in the Family Treatment Program (FTP). That morning, Geri* a client in the program, welcomed her first child. Geri didn't even make it to the hospital; her son was born right in the unit with a midwife, two doulas-in-training, and FTP therapist Shanae Harvey assisting – a first for the program!

Geri began feeling contractions very early in the morning. She and Shanae went to the hospital but were sent home. Soon after, Geri felt the need to push.

“The midwife looked and said, ‘no – we’re having a baby, right here and right now.’”
-Family Treatment Program therapist Shanae Harvey

“When the midwife returned we were still just thinking that Geri was in the early stages of labour,” Harvey said. “But the midwife looked and said, ‘no – we’re having a baby, right here and right now.’”

Geri was concerned, feeling as though she needed to go to the hospital to ensure her baby's safety, but there just wasn't time.

“I'd say 15 minutes after the midwife arrived, there was a baby born in our family treatment house – right on the living room floor,” Harvey said.

Geri's progress in treatment has really taken off since the birth of her son as well, Harvey said.

“I've noticed a big change. Now that mom has baby, it's almost like priorities have now shifted – treatment goals are really understood. She really just wants to create the best life for herself and her baby.”

**name changed to protect the privacy of client*

Tools to change the world

Fourteen students from Ellen Gunn Education Centre in Corman Park had the opportunity to visit Saskatoon for WE Day Saskatchewan, an event that brings together world-renowned speakers and performers with thousands of young people to celebrate and inspire change.

The students began their journey to WE Day by raising money to purchase education supplies and a goat for a family in Esinoni, Kenya;



something students are required to do to earn a ticket to the festivities. They held a bake sale, making an impressive \$150.

“The bake sale was awesome and the youth that took part did excellent work in helping us to meet our goals,” said agency educator Jason Geisel, who accompanied the youth to the assembly.



Among the 25 motivational performers and speakers present, students had the opportunity to hear from Canadian country music artist Brett Kissell, Canadian author and mental health advocate Margaret Trudeau, Saskatchewan Roughriders Dan Clark and Nic Demski, and national AFN Chief (and former Ranch Ehrlo board member) Perry Bellegarde.

“It’s a long day, full of motivational speeches, concerns, and eye-opening information about poverty,” Geisel explained. “Our youth were somewhat surprised by the level of excitement in the building, but they quickly got involved in the festivities.”

Child Advocate connects with youth



Youth from Ranch Ehrlo’s Regina group homes had the opportunity to connect with the staff of Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth. Three informal sessions were held where youth learned about their rights and responsibilities and the difference between needs and wants while in care, with much of the information coming in the form of interactive games.

“We thought these sessions were the best way to reach as many youth at once as possible,” explained advocate Joanne Denis.

The Advocate’s office works on behalf of children and youth in care. According to the Advocate’s office, advocacy on behalf of a child or youth is typically initiated at the request of a young person in care – which requires children or youth in care to know exactly what their rights are, as well as their responsibilities.

“We thought these sessions were the best way to reach as many youth at once as possible.”
-Advocate Joanne Denis

When a client feels that their rights are not being met, they have the option to reach out to the Advocate’s office for help.

After the sessions, youth enjoyed a pizza party and had the opportunity to speak one-on-one with a staff member from the Advocate’s office to get any individual questions or concerns addressed.

Mural to celebrate Canada



Paper Crane Community Arts was selected by VIBE Arts to take part in their Canada 150 mural project. Each mural panel will visually represent reasons the youth love Canada. The panels, 60 in total, are being produced by youth in every province and territory in free workshops facilitated by local professional artists in schools, shelters, social service agencies, hospitals, detention centers and libraries. The artwork will be on display this summer in Toronto, and digitally in airports across the country!

Bringing CARE to the Ranch

Ranch Ehrlo has achieved a reputation locally and nationally for service excellence. The way it has achieved this reputation is by staying current on best practice and

continually striving to improve services. With that in mind, the agency has recently begun working to implement the CARE model to the existing framework. This is a model that is very congruent with current practice at Ranch Ehrlo. The agency already implemented a component of the CARE model which is Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) approach to behavior management.

Children And Residential Experiences (CARE): Creating Conditions for Change is a program model, based out of Cornell University, for improving services for children in out-of-home care. The agency will be planning with representatives from Cornell University over the spring and summer to develop a plan to begin implementation in the late fall.

Learning from peers



Students had the opportunity to hear from four youth from M. E. LaZerte High School in Edmonton about the work they've done with the Circle of Courage. The Circle of Courage is a model of positive youth development based on the universal principle that

to be emotionally healthy all youth need a sense of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity.

The visiting students spoke about their lives. They openly share these stories, believing that connection is one of the most important parts of the Circle of Courage model. For some, the model helped them to adjust to growing up in foster and group homes. For others, it allowed them to let go of the anger they carried from negative childhood experiences. For all, it helped them to understand that there is always a place they belong.

“We have stories, we have a past – and I’m sure a lot of you guys have pasts as well. I’ve seen some ugly stuff in my life,” said visiting youth Tyree. “It’s all about moving past it and not letting it ruin your life. You can’t be living in the past your whole life; you have to do things now so you can have a better life in the future.”

Success with art



Former client Wetade discovered an interest in art while at the Ranch. Now home and doing well, Wetade has continued on with his art!

Licensing



Each of our group homes is required to be re-licensed each year to ensure they meet regulations established to provide the highest quality of health and safety to our clients.

Generous youth



A GIANT THANK YOU to the Southey Marlins Pee Wee hockey team for the amazing equipment donation! This team went around their area collecting hockey gear and wanted to donate it to us to be used in the OHL so that everyone can have a chance to play hockey

TCI training for families



Nick Schenher, a unit manager and a Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) instructor, leads foster families in the Treatment Foster Care program through a refresher course. All caregivers in the program are provided with essential training, clinical and consultative support, and respite services including 24/7 on-call services.

Voting for soup



Teachers and students recently competed in a soup cook-off at Schaller school. This year’s competition had a unique spin: each entry came from a different country.