

VISITATION HOME NEWS

Living Together as Family



Autumn 2009

THE SUMMER BLOSSOMS OF FRIENDSHIP

Dear Friends,

As we welcome the cool, clear mornings and crisp leaves of Autumn, the fond memories of summer fun spent with special friends will forever make our hearts smile. We thank all of our college summer staff/interns who shared their time and talent with us at our Day Program. Activities such as lunches in the park, a visit to the State House and to our wonderful Senator Bill Baroni, seashore excursions, shrine visits, bowling games and movies, lots of birthday celebrations, and tearful good-byes made the Summer session of 2009 both exciting and memorable for each of us. We were so blessed with an "International contingent" with interns, past and present, from Germany, Mexico, Croatia and now an expert teacher from Ireland. Although they have returned to their home countries, and we continue our life's journey apart, we offer our gratitude for the friendships made and memories that will last a lifetime. We hope you will enjoy the photos and stories contained in this newsletter. Mary Lou Cimini, Director

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Residents Margaret and Michael (l to r) play a baseball game with Chris Ross (r)

YOU JUST CAN'T HELP BUT SMILE

Christopher Ross, a student from St. Francis University in Pennsylvania worked at the Day Program this summer. He felt that his experience at VH was a worthwhile one.

"It was such a great experience," he said via text message. "I loved working with the people with disabilities. They were the greatest people to be around. I could be tired or in a bad mood and just working with them put a smile on my face."

CROATIAN GIRLS MAKE A WELCOME, SURPRISE VISIT

Monika Pesorda, (center) a beautiful young woman from Zagreb, Croatia, spent a summer internship at Visitation Home in 2006. This past summer she came with four of her girlfriends from Croatia to spend the summer in New York working with the poor in the South Bronx. The girls made a surprise visit and spent a couple of days visiting our residents and Day Program. Everyone was thrilled to see Monika and, of course her beautiful friends!



Visitation Home is a Catholic Community (open to all) where people with developmental disabilities and those without live together as family called by the truth of the Gospel principle that human life is sacred at every stage and in every situation. We recognize our responsibility to grow in a spirit of openness, simplicity and love through meaningful relationships. It is through these relationships that we discover each other's gifts and the inherent dignity of each individual.



We enjoyed a tour of the State House in Trenton and were able to see our favorite Senator, Bill Baroni. Christine's smile speaks volumes about the love we all have for him! He is always so generous and kind to us.

MARY, a senior at St. John's University in New York, also participated



this summer for school credits. Mary was a great asset to the

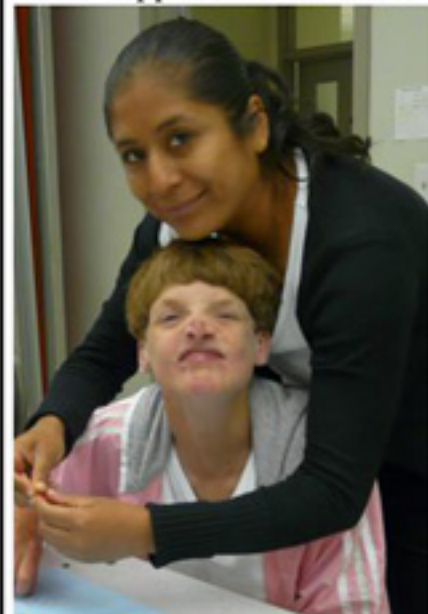
program. "I'm so blessed to even have had this experience," she said over the phone.

During her time at VH, she taught in the "Centers" and anywhere else she felt needed.

While there, she had one particular experience with a resident, Tommy, who was working on trying to draw his letters, specifically the letter "s". When he finally did manage to draw one with her help, she said it felt like she had accomplished something important! Though it seemed like a simple thing, she had an immense feeling of accomplishment.

IRMA, MEXICO CITY, MEXICO volunteered this summer living in the girls' residence and working in the Day Program. Irma felt that her time here was one of the "experiences that simply conquer the soul."

"This happens in Visitation Home because



Irma and Kelly

their doors are opened to one of the most vulnerable groups of the human race: they are the people with intellectual incapacity," she said. Visitation Home offers its residents and students the opportunity to be a part of a family, she said. "More than that, they offer a true option of life to each of the members."

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JUSTIN (left) who worked with us this past summer, was one of our most outgoing staff members.

He was a person who was extremely, "fun to work with," said Barbara, a resident at VH. He would do "snaps" whenever someone had a success. He would make everybody snap their fingers for them." We would laugh so hard!"



Justin and Steven

"Justin is a leader. He pretty much took over our problem solving center," said Mary Lou Cimini. "He organized and set up all of our outdoor activities and the game type of things we all did." Another resident, Michael T. did algebra problems with him, something they both enjoyed."

"He taught him the Greek alphabet (the benefits of being in a fraternity) and drew them on the board for them. Everyone just loved doing what they

do best—have fun together!"

ANGELA, WURZBURG, GERMANY

Angela (center) is a student from Wurzburg, Germany who fulfilled her three weeks of required study at Visitation Home.

"From the beginning ... I had the feeling that I was a member of this family," she said in an email. "I



(l to r) Kathy Angela and Mary Lou (r)

rejoiced in working with the handicapped men and women. They could show me that it is important to be glad and thank

ful about the simple things in life. She also said, now that she is back in Germany, how much this experience meant to her.

"I recognize how greatly they have become familiar to me and how much I miss them," she said in her email. I know that I "will often remember this good time at Visitation Home and I hope I will get the chance to see everybody again."