



STARS Commons Ribbon Cutting

We cut the ribbon and re-named the Cholla Cafeteria the STARS Commons on Monday May 14th. The new space provides opportunities for our participants to exercise, relax and eat at community tables. Participants and staff love the space.

It was great to welcome our families, supporters and Scottsdale Council people to our campus and celebrate as a community. Thanks to all who attended and supported the project.



Osborn DTA Visited City Hall In April

By Annette Griffin | Osborn DTA Instructor



The participants walked into the building and their eyes lit up like it was Christmas. The security guard walked over and inquired as to whether this was STARS' first visit. Steven replied, "Yes!!" and pointed to the Mayor's seat! The security guard saw the interest and offered to seat our

participants in the council and mayor's seats. The reaction was priceless. As a DTA instructor, I felt like a proud mother! The participants got a short tour of the room and an understanding of how it feels to be a decision maker. They learned the difference between where the leaders sit and where the public sits and that one group expresses their opinions and the other group makes the decisions. It was a great learning experience and outing for participants and staff.

DTA On The Go!

By Felisha Jackson | DTA Instructor

DTA classrooms have been on the go! April also included a trip to Butterfly Wonderland which is an indoor butterfly greenhouse which houses thousands of butterflies. The participants watched a 3 D video on the life cycle of the butterfly. The participants enjoyed it, were interested and full of questions!

After the movie, the participants viewed butterfly cocoons, asked questions of the docents and walked through the greenhouse. They loved seeing the different colors, shapes and sizes of the butterflies. Most of the participants liked a butterfly landing on their shoulder - but not everyone! They also enjoyed a pond in the greenhouse which was stocked with coral fish. The group sat for a long time "fish and butterfly watching."

Several participants had cameras and took some great pictures. When we got back to the classrooms, we discussed the experience and what they liked. The overall response was that they loved being in the butterflies' habitat. This was a great experience for STARS because many participants didn't know about the variety of butterflies. It was so educational!



Spring In Full Swing

By Suzette Gibson - Volunteer Coordinator

Spring of 2018 has been an exciting time for everyone here at STARS, preparing for our Grand Opening of the "STARS Commons", we would like to thank everyone that had their hand in making this project possible.

This Spring STARS welcomes the Scottsdale Committee College Volunteers, each student is required to give 6, 12 or 30 hours to volunteer time. We would like to thank all those students that decided to give their time to STARS, our participants always enjoy their visits and enthusiasm.

We would also like to thank NCL for their generous Valentines gift of cupcakes for both facilities and cookies for our Spring Dance. Our participants enjoyed every single morsel of the delicious cakes and cookies. We would like to welcome and thank Jessica Smithson and Danielle Deutsch our volunteer Yoga instructors, whom our participants are learning new Yoga and stretching exercises.

Good times was had by all at the Recognition-Spring Dance, awards were passed out, good music was played by D.J. Elliot and Big A, crafts were made, thanks to NCL and delicious food for all. After the awards were giving out, everyone danced the night away.

Don Carlos

By Jules Hyde - Community Based Vocational Program Manager



I would like to share a story about our participant Don Carlos Wilhite. He started with us 4 years ago in the Petsmart enclave. He was great with the work, but he was challenged there because of his condition to where he must clear his throat and cough a lot, as well as his hygiene. Not conducive to working in a kitchen setting. We thought that an office setting may be the more appropriate placement for him. So, he and his team and ourselves decided that he would try his hand at our admin enclave, where he helped with front office work at our STARS Osborn campus as well as helped the city sort their mail.

There DC was able to work on his hygiene and throat clearing challenges as well as become a very productive office assistant. D.C. spent the next two years making the hour commute to his position in the admin enclave. Proving his dedication and honing his work skills. Unfortunately, the city mail sorting machines were old, and the city decided to go with another direction when assessing their mail needs. Which disbanded the admin enclave altogether. At that point we recognized that D.C. had overcome his challenges with hygiene and such. At the time we had an open position at our PCC enclave. But for D.C. to attend that enclave he would need to use the city transit. Instead of being deterred, he rose the challenge, and figured out the best route to and from the work site using the light rail system. In the PCC enclave D.C. further honed his skills with the team and was given the opportunity to work around food again. This was very exciting for D.C. as food is one of his favorite things to work with. D.C. has been with the PCC enclave for just over a year, and as of this week is starting the application process with the Adventura catering team. We believe he will find continued success and more independence then ever .



Namaste

Every week our DTA participants are doing gentle yoga with a volunteer instructor. It's an opportunity for them to breathe, center their minds and do some gentle stretching and bending. It's good for the body and the mind. STARS participants greatly look forward to the instructor's visits.



Above & Beyond

SUMMER CAMPAIGN

DONATE TODAY

The Above and Beyond Summer Campaign is in full swing. Please look for the brochure in the mail and visit STARS website to make your donation. Your support allows us to continue to offer art, music, cooking and movement classes at STARS.

On The Horizon



Fiesta - Mark your calendars for Fiesta Al Fresco 2018 - October 13th. We will gather once again at Singh Meadows in Tempe to celebrate STARS' accomplishments and enjoy a delicious meal together. Tickets are \$150 each and can be purchased today online. Sponsorships are available - please contact Anne Gray, Director of Advancement at agray@starsaz.org.

Dave's Corner

Greetings STARS supporters!

In reflecting on the accomplishments of the STARS leadership team during my third year as CEO, there is one particularly significant achievement I'd like to share with you.

Following an employee survey last fall, it was highlighted that our DTA program (day treatment and training for adults) needed a refresh. The DTA program is the cornerstone of STARS and the purpose for the agency's founding, and our direct support instructors provided plenty of feedback indicating program fatigue.

While strategizing the refresh, Henriette Content-Tavor, STARS Youth program manager, stepped forward to express her interest in providing change leadership. Henriette's achievements during her six years leading the Youth program made her a shoe-in for promotion to DTA & Youth program manager.

Since October, Henriette's leadership has been driving positive change. With one supervisory position already established, a second has been added to ensure daily supervision of direct support instructors at each campus. Two new case managers have been hired to ensure that each participant's individual support plan is appropriately and effectively managed. Recently hired instructors are bringing new energy to the program. And, of far greater importance, our participants are responding favorably!

Henriette often suggests STARS is "becoming professional" and I heartily agree. If you have a thoughtful comment regarding our refreshed DTA program, I invite you to share it directly with Henriette at hcontent-tavor@starsaz.org.

Enjoy your summer!

Dave