

Working Progress

OCTOBER 2005

NVS Client Success Story—Leah’s Story



I am a 38 year old female. I was born in Tacoma, WA, June 22nd, 1967. My name is Lynette Leah Larsen.

I grew up in a single parent family. Things were tough, and at 13 I started delivering newspapers to help my mom out. I worked throughout my teen years in food services and attended school.

After graduation from high school I went to a business school and received a certificate as a legal secretary. In 1988 I began working for the Boeing Company.

My Multiple Sclerosis diagnosis came to me on December 18th of 1989. It was given to me on the phone. I was 22 years old. I collapsed to the floor and thought, "Oh my God, my life is over!"

Things were very difficult for the first five years as I tried to come to terms with my condition. My vision was badly impaired. I was on a great deal of medication as the doctors tried to relieve my symptoms. I continued to work at Boeing thru the most difficult and challenging time of my life. I had good health insurance and a reason to get up every day. I blessedly do not have a lot of memories from those devastating, painful years.

I had to move home several times. In 1995 thru 1996, I lived with my mom and attended Pierce College. I received an Associates and Arts and Sciences degree in June of 1996. After that I moved to Bellingham to go to Western Washington University. I became so ill from the financial and emotional stress that my neurologist had me withdraw from school in January of 1998.

I moved back to Tacoma with my mom. After almost 9 years of illness I began receiving Social Security Disability benefits in September of 1998. For several years I didn't work. My health improved somewhat. I attended the Vocational Rehabilitation Program at Harborview Medical Center, which led to my current job at the switchboard at Harborview Medical Center. Thanks to Dr. Dave Clemmons' and Dr. Robert Fraser's support and guidance, I felt strong enough to reenter the work world. It takes a lot of energy, but I feel I am contributing to society.

My advice to anyone dealing with any type of chronic illness, which is difficult and painful, is to never give up. Medicine continues to improve, new people come into our lives, there are opportunities out there for growth and hope. And never forget that there are many people who really do care for you no matter how bad your health gets, and let those people in to help you through it. Multiple sclerosis has taught me that I am much more than just a body. I am really a very special and lovely person.

Photo by David C. Clemmons, Ph.D., C.R.C. Photo and statement used with former client's permission.

Client Success Story	1
Fall Function—Story	2
Thank YOU	2
Board of Directors	3
Honored Associates	3
Board Recruiting	3
News Watch	4

New Federal Grant for FREE Job Services

(See News Watch - Page 4).

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Thank YOU—Fall Recognition & Support Event 2005

Neurological Vocational Services (NVS) held its annual Fall Recognition & Support Event on Friday, September 16, 2005. Local artist Koryn Rolstad was the hostess, and the event was held in her unique, beautiful loft in Belltown. As sunset filled the home with light, guests listened to jazz pianist Victor Janusz who played from his new CD, "Cosmo Street." The buffet was complimented by beverages donated by Dry Soda Co. and wines donated by Board members and then purchased by attendees to support NVS fundraising efforts.

Towards the end of the evening, Dr. Robert Fraser, Executive Director of NVS, gave a short speech thanking all attendees for their support of NVS, and awarded Hussein T. Mohamoud a certificate for his achievements. Hussein is originally from Somalia: despite the language barrier and a neurological disability, he has made a great deal of progress since working with NVS.

Noted author Garth Stein read from his novel How Evan Broke His Head and Other Secrets. The novel explores a man's relationship with his newly-discovered adolescent son as he copes with epilepsy. Garth and his publisher, Soho Press, donated 30 signed copies of his book to attendees, our hostess, and those who made donations but were unable to attend, including Dick Anderson of System Three Resin and Bill Rosen of Alaskan Copper and Brass. In addition to the Garth Stein novels, several raffle items were won by attendees, including gift certificates to Salty's, Marco's Supper Club, El Gaucho and Mt. Si golf course; a Nana Kuo ceramic vase; Prism Design's Nexum kite; Peter Potterfield's book The High Himalayas; a Skyscraper Tour from Seattle Architecture Foundation, and a wine class provided by the Seattle Wine School.

Special thanks to our hostess Koryn Rolstad, novelist Garth Stein, pianist Victor Janusz, NVS volunteers, the donors of the wonderful prizes and all attendees who continue to support the NVS organization!

Melissa Bare, NVS Board Member

Thank YOU—NVS Supporters

Hostess: Koryn Rolstad
Koryn Rolstad Studios
www.korynrolstadstudios.com
Author: Garth Stein, How Evan Broke His Head and Other Secrets
www.garthstein.com
Music: Victor Janusz
www.victorjanusz.com
Books - 30 donated:
Soho Press, Inc. - New York City
Kathy Daneman & Ailen Lujó
www.sohopress.com

Client Awards:

Barbara M. Geijsbeek
Hussein T. Mohamoud

Donors/Guests:

Alaskan Copper & Brass Company
Bill Rosen
www.alascop.com
Darlene Allenthorp
Melissa Bare
Dave Clemmons
Jon Digel
Patricia Doyle
Robin DuBrin
Dick England
Jean Fennessy
Julia Field
Bob Fraser
Fred Hutchinson CRC Shipping & Receiving Crew
Bill Gibson
Joan Gibbons
Nora Gibson
Carol Hiley
Jayne Hintze

Doug Howe
Mari Kawamura
David Koepnick
Irene Majnarich
Kathryn Majnarich
Judy McClellan
Don McClelland
Gerry Michael
Janet Michael
Michael Murphy
Robin Murphy
Chris Nefcy
OSC Vocational Systems
Peggy Ostrander
Rick Ostrander
Judith Parker
Cheryl A. Parmele
Carl Peterson
June Peterson
Pennie Pickering
Bill Poole
Clara Poole
Nancy Raymond
Chad Scheff
Kari Scheff
Bill Serrahn
Bill Stafford
Toni Stafford
Andrea Stein
Marvin Stein
Yolanda Stein
Karin Stormo
John Sullivan
Carol A. Sund
System Three Resins
Dick Anderson
www.systemthree.com
Peggy Williams

Beverage Donations:

The Dry Soda Company
www.drysoda.com

Raffle Donations:

El Gaucho - Gift Certificate
www.elgaucho.com
WINNER: JOHN SULLIVAN

Marco's Supper Club - Gift Certificate
www.marco supperclub.com
WINNER: PEGGY WILLIAMS

Mount Si Golf Course - Pro Shop Credit & Restaurant Gift Certificate
www.mtsigolf.com
WINNER: JUDY MCCLELLAN

Nana Kuo Pottery - Ceramic Vase
www.nanakuo.com
WINNER: CHERYL A. PARMELE

Peter Potterfield - The High Himalayas
www.peterpotterfield.com
WINNER: CHERYL A. PARMELE

Prism Designs - Nexus Kite
www.prismkites.com
WINNER: CHAD SCHEFF

Salty's On Alki
2 Saturday Brunch Gift Certificates
www.saltys.com
WINNER: PEGGY OSTRANDER

Seattle Architecture Foundation
2 passes for "Seattle Skyscrapers Tour"
www.seattlearchitecture.org
WINNER: CAROL A. SUND

Seattle Wine School
seattlewineoutlet.com
WINNER: CARL PETERSON

NVS Board of Directors—2005

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Elaine Jones	Steve Critchlow
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Richard Cook	Jerry Galloway
Oma McLaughlin	Grace Webb

NVS thanks these outstanding former officers, directors, and staff for their leadership and commitment to our organization and clients. Without you, NVS and the last 30 years would have been just a dream.

NVS Recruiting New Board Members

Each year, the NVS staff helps more clients regain independence through employment; the need for NVS vocational services grows each year.

The non-profit NVS Board of Directors needs to grow as well: NVS Staff cannot provide these vital services without the support of a committed, dynamic and diverse Board of Directors. In recent years, the Board has been instrumental in determining policies, supporting fund-raising events, and gaining recognition for NVS. Last year, for example, NVS was recognized as the one of the best charities in America by the Local Independent Charities of America. (More information on this award is available at our site: <http://www.nrsrehab.org>)

The Board of Directors wants to do more. To do more, we need more Board members. We are looking for people with sound business acumen who want to make a difference. Experience in hiring, fund raising or marketing is helpful. Participation is fundamental: NVS Board Members speak up and ask questions; they commit time, energy, and passion to our mission:

**Helping People With Neurological Disabilities Regain Independence Through Employment:
One Person, One Job At a Time.**

Consider committing your passion to one of the best charities in America. Call NVS at **206.744.9130** for directions to our next monthly meeting. Join us—find out for yourself what all the passion and energy is about at NVS.

Neurological Vocational Services

**Helping People with Neurological Disabilities Regain Independence:
One Person, One Job at a Time**

NVS News Watch

PWI Grant

We are pleased to announce that NVS has just been awarded a Project With Industry (PWI) grant by the federal government. This grant is an essential piece of the funding we need to provide no-fee job development services for our job-ready clients. This grant recognizes that job development services are crucial for people who want to “regain independence through employment” as NVS job-ready clients do.

Our clients who are not yet “job-ready” will continue to receive vocational evaluations, community-based assessments, and selective placements with intensive job coaching. These efforts are often funded by state vocational rehabilitation, insurance and other external agencies.

In addition to federal funding from the PWI grant and state vocational rehabilitation funding, the NVS Board of Directors provides funding for job-related expenses (postage for resumes, L&I insurance for non-paid job try-outs, parking for the Job Club, etc.) that are not met by any federal or state programs.

NVS provides no-fee job placement for people with neurological conditions (epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury, stroke, neuromuscular disorders, brain tumor, Asperger’s syndrome, and similar conditions). Special consideration will be given those unemployed for six months or more. Both part-time and full-time jobs can be developed.

Referral Process for Project with Industry

The referral process for participants in the Project With Industry is straight-forward.

Call (206) 744-9130, or e-mail: dkhmc@u.washington.edu.

Or just walk in

Best in America Seal

NVS is proud to announce that we have received the “Best in America” seal of approval from Independent Charities of America (ICA) and Local Independent Charities of America (LICA). Both organizations are well-known for the rigorous standards their members must meet. Many donors look for third-party endorsements such as the Best in America seal to choose charities for their donations.

Of the 50,000 + charities participating in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), only about 1500 meet the strict criteria of ICA and LICA. Workplace donors are encouraged to “look for the seal” when deciding where to contribute. Only 3% of CFC participating charities will meet the criteria and display the Best in America seal.

Neurological Vocational Services is one of those chosen few. Please look for us at <http://www.bestcfc.org> and at <http://www.lic.org>

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■ NVS is a 501(c) (3) non-profit agency.
■ NVS belongs to the Combined Fund Campaign,
■ Local Independent Charities & United Way.
■ Tax ID # 91-1412467.