



The ALL-STAR Newsletter

November 2020

Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Issue 26

Jefferson County BDD

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Duo Enjoying the Sweet Smell of Success

People with disabilities are striving to make their way in this world by working and living more independent lives among mainstream society. National Disability Employment Awareness Month, was observed in October and this year's theme shines a light on efforts to increase access and opportunity.

One local business is doing just that. Upland South Candles employs two individuals who help create the company's candles, and because of that they are enjoying the sweet smell of success.

Jack Lee Fluharty III and Mackenzie "Mack" Owen work nine hours per week mixing, pouring, scenting and stocking cases of waxed candles for wholesale suppliers and businesses throughout the Tri-State area. Jack is the son of company co-owner Michelle and Jack Lee Fluharty II of Steubenville while Mack is the daughter of Doug and Lisa Owen of Toronto, and both are touted by the company as "dependable, fun-loving, conscientious workers that put their hearts into each candle they make."

Michelle Fluharty and Rose Minch started the business four years ago after a family member suffered a severe medical condition which forbade the use of chemicals at home. They researched and discovered that many candles used dyes, paraffin wax and fragrances that contained toxic chemicals and could have negative health effects. As a result, Upland South Candles was formed to develop safer, more natural products made with 100-percent soy wax, chemical-free fragrances and natural cotton wicks for cleaner use. Shelves are lined with jars and wax melts in 20 different scents including A Dozen Roses and Coffee House while accessories are also available for sale.

Minch said Jack became in-



Jack Lee Fluharty III and Mackenzie "Mack" Owen busily prepare a supply of fragrant products for Upland South Candles of New Cumberland. They are being highlighted for their efforts in the workplace for National Disability Employment Awareness Month held in October.

volved after the company had to meet a large order and she was unavailable to help. He rose to the challenge and has been working at the company for more than two years. When Upland South sought more help, they turned to the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities' Community Employment Services.

CES Specialist Renee Pastre-Hanlin said Jack had been among her clients in the past and she was able to provide further assistance by referring Mack in 2019. The duo already knew each other as students in the Transition to Work program at Jefferson County Joint Vocational School and now work side by side to supply candle lovers' demands. Pastre-Hanlin was pleased to see them excel in the workplace.

"Because we worked with Jack for so long, [Michelle] reached

out to us. I immediately thought of Mack and it was the perfect match," she commented. "The business has grown and they have grown tremendously."

Ironically, COVID-19 has made a positive impact on the workers by allowing them to spend one day working at home, where they prepare jars with labels and wicks, and four hours at the company worksite pouring the wax and readying the finished products for shipment.

"They are more productive and focused and get a lot more poured in a shorter amount of time, plus they can work at home at their own pace," Minch said. "It's worked out well."

Meanwhile, Jack and Mack said they enjoy their jobs and the rewards that come with it.

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"It takes a lot of work," Jack said. "You have to work hard to make them."

He added that he enjoys getting a paycheck, which he uses on personal expenses such as purchasing groceries and movies to watch on television.

Mack admits she is not a morning person, but it was nice to go to work.

"I like pouring candles. They always smell great," she said, adding that she even uses them at home.

She uses her pay to attend WWE events and personal expenses and said she really likes getting compliments from customers.

Candles are available in medium, large and Farmhouse sizes with wax melts available. They can be found at Smith Oil locations, Knotty by Nature in Carrollton, Prodigal Daughter in Steubenville and Packer's Farm Market in Harrisville, among other sites, and non-profit fundraisers are also offered. Products may be shipped for an \$8 flat rate or free for orders over \$100. For more information, go to UplandSouthCandles.com.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, this is the nation's 75th observance of NDEAM and it culminates the department's commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Each October, NDEAM celebrates America's workers with disabilities and reminds employers of the importance of inclusive hiring practices. In 1945, Congress declared the first week of October "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was dropped to include individuals with all types of disabilities. Congress expanded the week to a month in 1988, and changed the commemoration to National Disability Employment Awareness Month. With its 2001 establishment, ODEP assumed responsibility for NDEAM. The agency's efforts include selection of NDEAM's annual theme, announced earlier in the year to enable organizations nationwide to plan their own observances. Employers of any size, in any industry – as well as community organizations, advocacy groups and schools – are encouraged to participate.

November 2020



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| 1 Van Ride (Shaffer A); Decorate for Thanksgiving (B); Movie (C) | 2 Storytime w Superintendent (SBP); Wii Bowling (A&C); Jeffco Center (B) | 3 EI Mtg. (EN/CF); Resident's Choice (A); Movie (B); Crafts (C) | 4 Simon Day (SBP); Prime Time Sr. Center Council/Family Engagement (EN/CF); Movie (A); Music (B); JC Center (C) | 5 Simon Day (SBP); Craft Night (A); Joke Night (B); Resident's Choice (C) | 6 PBIS Team (SBP); People First of Ohio/FCFC/SET (EN/CF); Walk Gym (A); Sundaes (B); Board Games (C) | 7 Make Treats (A); Snack on Patio (C) |
| 8 Van Ride (A); Game Night (B) | 9 Project TREE (EN/CF); Wii Games (A); Craft Night (B); Wii Just Dance (C) | 10 Human Rights (SBP); BDD Lead Team / EI Train/Resilience & Social Equity (EN/CF); Bingo (A); Resident's Choice (B&C) | 11 Veterans Day-Program Closed (SBP); Movie Night (A); Jeffco Center (C) | 12 Simon Day (SBP); Craft Night (A); Movie Night (C) | 13 Behavioral Team (SBP); New Horizons PD (EN/CF); In-house Exercise (A); World Kindness Day (B); Make Cookies (C) | 14 Craft Night (A); Make Treat (B); Ride & Snack (C) |
| 15 Van Ride (A); Thanksgiving Crafts (B&C) | 16 Workforce Training & Ed Comm (EN/CF); ii Games (A); Ride (B); Ice Cream Social (C) | 17 Turkey Judging (SBP); EI Teaming (EN/CF); Coloring (A); JC Center (B&C) | 18 Staff Support/Simon Day SBP; QPR Training (EN/CF); Movie (A); Snacks & Movie (B); Resident's Choice (C) | 19 Watson/Simon Day/JCBDD Mtg. (SBP); Regional CREG/MEORC/DODD (EN/CF); Crafts (A); Staff's Choice (B); Wii Games (C) | 20 Curriculum Team (SBP); Coleman Pro Group Adv Council/New Horizons PD (EN/CF); Walk Gym (A); Wii Just Dance (C) | 21 Holiday Cookies (A); Music (B); Walk on Grounds (C) |
| 22 Ride (A&B) | 23 Wii Games (A); Resident's Council (B); Resident's Choice (C) | 24 Safety Mtg. (SBP); EI Teaming (EN/CF); Resident's Choice (A); TG Pie (B); Movie (C) | 25 Thanksgiving Break-Program Closed to Nov. 30 (SBP); Christmas Movie (A); Make TG Treats (B) | 26 Happy Thanksgiving! | 27 Decorate for Christmas (A); Thanksgiving Lazy Day (B) | 28 Craft Night (A); Get Ready for Christmas (C) |
| 29 Ride (A); Decorate for Xmas (B); Resident's Council (C) | 30 Wii Games (A); Board Games (C) | | | | | |