

# Organization provides work choices

by Patricia Roy

Community Resources

**C**ommunity Connections Inc. is a not-for-profit organization in Summerside which helps people with intellectual disabilities. "We work with 90 clients and their families," says **Frank Costa**, Executive Director. "About 75 to 80 of our clients are employed in some capacity, and 43 use the organization's residential services."

He added that close to 35 clients use the building for one reason or another every day. The organization also provides day time respite care for clients with disabilities.

## The staff

The organization has 40 employees. "Three staff handle the day-to-day administrative work and do not work directly with clients," says Frank. "About four people work in the production department. They are skilled in carpentry and/or aspects of woodworking and refinishing furniture."

"We have close to 30 Human Services staff who are employed part- or full-time. They work in our group home and in a residential services setting. Human Services staff have training from the two-year community college program."

## Expansion means more staff

Frank says new staff is needed every time a new client comes in. "We are planning to construct a new building to increase our residential services. We will be looking for more staff with Human Services training."

## Work opportunities for clients

The Human Services staff help clients learn employability skills and coach them on the job. "Some become independent, and we continue to monitor them at work," says Frank. "Being employed helps build skills while providing a service to the community and to the employer."

The organization also operates a furniture refinishing and woodworking shop. "This shop is used more as a back-up for the clients in case work can not be found outside the sheltered environment," says Frank. "We would rather see clients working in the community. Our clients work in retail, the fast food industry, and at the Tax Centre. We basically try to find employment to suit each person's interest."

He added that part-time work is preferable to seasonal work. They like to provide consistent work to insure the clients have time to learn the skills. "There are exceptions to the seasonal aspect. Our clients helped out the Canada Games this past summer. They assembled 6,000 kits which were distributed to athletes, coaches and trainers."



from left: Frank Costa, Executive Director of Community Connections Inc. with Travis Perry, one of the organization's 90 clients.

For more information, call **Frank Costa** at 436-7576 or visit [www.communityconnectsinc.com](http://www.communityconnectsinc.com).

To apply to work at **Community Connections Inc.**, drop off a résumé to the office at 701 Water Street West, Summerside or e-mail [commcon@pei.aibn.com](mailto:commcon@pei.aibn.com)



# Bakery expands in Souris

by Stella Shepard

Community Resources

**T**he delicious aroma of freshly baked rolls greets customers at the bakery at **Harbourview Training Center Inc.** Earlier this year, the center had a major expansion, which included a larger bakery. The spic-and-span, spacious new bakery bustles with daily activity. Harbourview clients busily prepare 117 hot lunch orders daily for a nearby school, plus many other orders.

Harbourview Training Center provides a broad range of support services to clients with an intellectual disability. Staff offer skills enhancement programs and assist and support clients to gain meaningful employment in the community. As well, the center provides learning environments such as the bakery for individual skill development.

## Bakery employment

"The bakery expansion provides more opportunity to expand the business," says **Judy Hennessey**, Executive Director.

"The bakery employs six clients who are responsible for taking orders, baking, cooking, labelling, packaging, delivering, and invoicing. The clients have walk-in customers, prepare specialized orders, and have shelf space at a the Souris Co-op.

"The bakery business has grown since it first started in 1975. Orders continue to increase because the public and local businesses recognize the value of the service the clients provide.

"Our clients' self-confidence has greatly developed through their work experience in the kitchen. More business means more work experience for the clients."



from left: Bethany Mooney, Megan Laybolt and Roxanne King are busy baking fresh rolls in the new bakery expansion at Harbourview Training Inc.

## Other improvements

Besides the new bakery, the expansion at Harbourview included:

- relocation of a new day program
- a new locker room
- two new large accessible washrooms
- a new spacious lounge area
- a new barrier-free shower room

"We are very pleased with the expansions and the relocations of the programs in the building," says Judy. "At our grand opening this past summer, the families of clients, members of the community, and federal and provincial dignitaries attended. The clients proudly provided tours of the centre that day. They continue to offer public tours."

## Programs, activities and products offered

- Full-time bakery
- School hot lunch program
- Catering program
- Learning made fun
- Youth-based summer program
- Furniture refinishing
- Custom workshop orders
- Skills enhancement program
- Beautification program
- Seasonal work projects
- Seasonal dairy bar

"The clients, staff and Board of Directors are very grateful for the generous community support we receive," says Judy. "Community support is the reason why we are so successful."

"A number of the clients work outside of the programs offered at the center. Local businesses value the service the clients provide. Being active in the community fosters the client's self-confidence while building their employability skills."

## Phase Two

The Board of Directors is already planning the next step for further development at the centre. They plan to bring the workshop division to the same floor level as the bakery.

For more information about **Harbourview Training Center Inc.**, visit [www.harbourviewtrainingcenter.ca](http://www.harbourviewtrainingcenter.ca) or contact **Judy Hennessey** at 687-3032

