



MIDLAND

MAS MATTERS

A Quarterly Newsletter for Midland Adult Services



The program participants enjoyed a "Spooktacular" night at their annual Halloween costume party.

They went all out dressed in so many different characters that you could not recognize who was who!

Can you name everyone in their costume?



From the desk of Shawn M. McInerney President/CEO



Dear Families,

I hope this message finds you doing well and in good health.

As we approach the season of thanks, I want to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude for your continued support of Midland. Our organization provides critically important services and supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We are thankful for your continued partnership and trust, which is core to the services and quality outcomes we provide. These outcomes lead to being part of an inclusive and supportive community.

I am also taking this time to further convey a message of thanks to our dedicated staff, whose passion and hard work are the driving force behind Midland's success. Their unwavering devotion to the individuals we serve is central to the core of our mission.

Your input on the types of services we provide and how these services are delivered is important to us. Over the coming weeks, Midland will be seeking input for the development of a new Strategic Plan. This will include a report on the status of current objectives. We will also be seeking input on the development of new objectives, which will be incorporated into the plan. We welcome and value your input.

Next year will mark Midland's 65th year in existence. Together, we continue to achieve meaningful strides that improve the lives of students, education, and related services. Likewise, Midland's adult programs continue to be a work in progress as we strive to enhance the lives of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in a variety of ways, including Employment, Day Habilitation, and Residential services and supports.



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**THANK YOU,
Top Safety, Wawa, Fiddlers Elbow, and The Ryland Inn**

#NDEAM
dol.gov/odep

**Access to
Good Jobs for All**
National Disability Employment Awareness Month

October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). This year's theme was "Advancing Access to Good Jobs for All." Access to Good Jobs for All NDEAM is not just a month; it's a movement raising awareness about disability employment issues and celebrating the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities and the businesses that hire and value a diverse workforce. Midland is proud to partner with many companies in the local area, committed to this vital cause.

Midland Supported
Employment &
Residential Participant
Jonathan L.

Jonathan has a long list of everything he loves about Midland:

- My Job at Top Safety
- My Years The Work Center
- The Residential & Employment Staff
- Visiting Other Residential Homes
- Alumni Association
- Learning Job & Life Skills
- My Relationships and Friendships
- MAS Production Plays
- Career Exploration at Panera Bread
- NYE Party at my First Group Home
- My New Supervised Apartment



Three program participants share what being a part of Midland's employment services programs means to them.

Midland Patricia Murphy
Work Center Employee
Beth P.

Beth's favorite saying is:
"Go work; make money; pay bills."



Midland Supported
Employment &
Residential Participant
Matt T.

- What Matt Loves About his Life at Midland:
- My friends and staff at Hockenbury
 - Working at the Job Center and playing keyboard at lunch
 - My exercise and music classes after work
 - Special Olympics bowling
 - Activities with MAS friends and alumni



Each of these three individuals have been part of the Midland family for over twenty years.

Employment Services News

At Midland Employment Services, we are dedicated to creating meaningful employment opportunities by partnering with local businesses. Whether you need skilled support in the food industry, crew labor, custodial maintenance, hospitality services, packaging, or related fields, we have qualified individuals ready to assist. Plus, we have a fully equipped production facility to meet your operational needs. Let's work together to meet your business goals while making a positive impact in our community. Contact Bill Liberatore or Eric Ware at (908) 722-7727 to learn more about how we can help.



CONTRACT WORK



Midland Employment Services has been providing high quality contract services to corporate and non-profit client organizations since 1984.

Free transportation in the Branchburg area



Advantages of contracting with Midland
Businesses contracting with Midland know they are assured of quality work at competitive prices. Midland also picks up your jobs and delivers your finished materials and does it inside guaranteed turn-around times.

What kind of work can we do?

- Mailings
- Hand Assembly
- Disassembly
- Primary/Secondary Packaging
- Shrink Wrapping
- Polybagging
- Fulfillment
- Folding/Collating
- Pressure Sensitive Labeling
- Heat Sealing
- Pricing
- Shredding
- Curative Work
- Cosmetic Packaging
- Pharmaceutical Packaging

And Much More...

Midland employs more than 60 individuals with disabilities giving them a unique opportunity to engage in their community in a meaningful way.

“Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well you’re needed by someone.” - Martina Navratilova



Sunya Williams-Okwuego



MY BACKGROUND

I have a B.A. in Psychology and a Minor in Health. I also have an M.A. in Psychology, Option: Human Behavior and Organizational Psychology.

Sunya shares, "Early in my career, I enjoyed helping others and watching them succeed. After furthering my education and working with several organizations, I learned more about supporting individuals to meet their goals and needs".

FUN FACTS FAVORITES

SOUP: Matzo Ball

MEAL: Corn, beef and Cabbage

COLOR: Blue

SEASON: Winter, particularly snow

LOVE: Sunrise, Sea air, Cooking

SPORT: Football

TEAM: The Pittsburgh Steelers

ACTOR: Adam Sandler

MOVIES: 85% of all his movies 😊

MY MOTTO

"I'm in it for the love of the game."

ABOUT ME

Since joining Midland in 2012 as a Direct Support Professional, Sunya has been committed to the agency's mission. This dedication was recognized in 2019 when she was promoted to Manager at Case Road, where she managed a Midland Group Home. In 2022, she was further promoted to Residential Coordinator. "I love what I do, and I get a chance to support the individuals, but also manage the affairs of the group homes and ensure all work follows the agency's goal/mission," Sunya shares.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY

"Sunya is very good at reading people. She uses that to provide the coaching necessary for DSPs and Managers to expand their knowledge and build the skills they need to succeed and advance their careers", says Stacey Gravina, Director of Residential Services.

DID YOU KNOW?

Midland has an Alumni Association

that is an exceptional organization with extraordinary members.

The purpose of this association is to provide social and recreational functions for its members. This organization offers opportunities to continue learning, practicing, and enjoying social interactions with their peers at the school with regularly themed dances with a DJ and other fun events. Currently, there are almost 200 active members.

For more information or to join email Stacey Carr at carr@midlandnj.org

Midland Alumni Association 2024 Calendar of Events

Date/Time

Friday, October 25th
7:00-9:00PM

Friday, November 15th
7:00-9:00PM

Friday, December 13th
7:00-9:00PM

Event

Costume Party Dance
DJ Jeanmarie

Bingo Night

Holiday Cheer Dance
DJ Jeanmarie

All activities are held at the Midland School



SUPPORTING RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT MIDLAND

Midland is committed to ensuring that every individual has their rights recognized and respected. In the United States, every individual with disabilities is afforded the same rights as any other neurotypical adult. Unfortunately, individuals with disabilities have endured a long history of having these rights ignored or disregarded. Thankfully, issues with social practices continue to evolve and improve. However, more work needs to be done. This is one of Midland's core values, and we intend to stay at the forefront of supporting and advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Information and education are pivotal to empowerment. In both our Employment and Explorers programs, our staff facilitate classes on the topic of individual rights. Our dedicated Community Specialists and Job Coaches lead classes designed to help individuals understand and exercise their rights in a range of settings, such as the workplace and the broader community. We also teach that each right comes with an associated responsibility for the individual.

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhance our efforts, we welcome presentations from Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ), a free legal aid service that advocates for the rights of adults with disabilities. DRNJ lawyers and advocates have visited our programs several times to deliver insightful presentations on the topic of empowerment and individual rights. Their expertise ensures everyone stays informed about current laws and best practices, enriching both our participants' and staff's understanding of disability rights.

Our commitment to supporting the rights of individuals with disabilities extends to our staff, who play an important role in upholding the rights of those we serve and support. Every staff member with a direct care role undergoes initial onboarding training that includes an overview of individual rights.

Additionally, at our annual in-service staff training, we reinforce these principles with a dedicated class. This ongoing education ensures our team is well-equipped to support and advocate for the rights of individuals in our programs.

In 2023, Midland established its own Human Rights Committee, a significant milestone in our advocacy efforts. Composed of professionals and members of the community, the committee meets to discuss specific cases where a potential rights restriction is requested. The committee carefully balances the individual's rights with the needs of the individual for safety and well-being. Only in extreme circumstances are rights restrictions permitted, primarily due to the need to better ensure for the health and safety of an individual. In those very limited circumstances, the restriction is subject to continuous ongoing review, at least annually, to ensure the restriction is still necessary and that there are no less restrictive alternatives available.

Despite significant progress, many adults with disabilities still face discrimination in the workplace. Barriers such as misconceptions about capabilities and a lack of accessible workplaces can limit opportunities for meaningful employment outcomes. Midland is committed to changing this dynamic. We actively reach out to employers and provide information and education on the values of hiring individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the immense value that individuals with disabilities can bring to the workforce. Our goal is to break down stigmas, promote inclusive hiring practices, and help businesses enrich their teams with diverse talents and perspectives.

If you know of any employer that is expanding their business and may be interested in hiring persons with disabilities, please contact either Bill Liberator, Eric Ware, or Irene Francis.

We would welcome an opportunity to discuss ways that we can partner together.

Meet the new Team members working at The Ryland Inn



On September 18th, The Ryland Inn welcomed two new team members, Darren and Dan to work in the kitchen and dining room.



As part-time employees, Darren and Daniel will work Wednesdays and Thursdays with the supervision of Employment Specialist, Nina. Darren and Daniel assist the Chefs with various food preparations and will be helping with jobs in the dining room. We are so excited and proud of these Individuals working hard, learning new skills, and earning a paycheck.

*A new service is coming
for Midland Residential
Residents only.*

In-Home therapy services

In September, Midland began working with a company called Homecare Therapeutics to provide physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy to our individuals who could benefit from these services.

The mission of Homecare Therapeutics is “to enhance the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, geriatric adults and children by equipping them with the necessary tools to learn, develop, and maintain the skills required for maximum independence and safety in their home, school, and community settings.”

Homecare Therapeutics provides assessments and recommendations for therapy services and performs these services in a habilitative capacity, meaning that these services are ongoing with no end date. They are an approved NJ-DDD Medicaid provider; therefore, therapy services are covered in the individual's budget, requiring no out-of-pocket expenses.

The clinical coordinator of Homecare Therapeutics came to the Midland homes and assessed all individuals. She has provided her recommendations which are being forwarded to guardians for review and input. Once services have been agreed upon, we will move forward with securing prescriptions for the recommended services and will work with the guardian(s) and Support Coordinator to get the services approved and started.

Midland believes that this will provide enhanced care to our residents and allow them to maintain their skills and physical abilities. Families and guardians have been providing positive feedback and are looking forward to this opportunity for their loved ones.

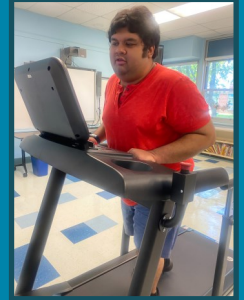
You can learn more about Homecare Therapeutics here:

<https://www.homecaretherapeutics.com>

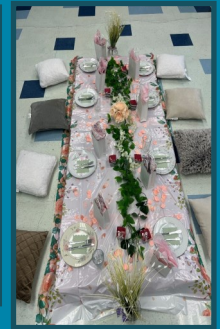
Explores News

Exciting things are happening over at Explores! During the summer months, the program participants took care of the garden at the Community Garden. They planted peppers, tomatoes, and zucchini this year and had an excellent harvest.

We have new treadmills thanks to The Midland Foundation and our generous donors, and we are excited to get into a new form of movement while in the program.



A "Gals Day In" and a "Guy's Day In" was enjoyed by all the program participants. The Gals enjoyed having Chinese food and taking home a facial kit from Mary Kay. The Guys got together for a sports-themed day filled with pizza, boneless wings, chips, and root beer floats, and we even enjoyed some temporary tattoos!



Our program participants are involved in the decisions by advocating where in the community they would like to go. We enjoy getting out into the community and going out to outings. They certainly love going out on outings that involve food!



Our outings have been as diverse as our community. We've visited Melick's Town Farm Stand, Sonic, the Community Garden, Bridgewater Mall, and the Movie Theater, just to name a few. Each outing has been a unique and enriching experience for our participants.

Join us for a magical evening to support Midland!

On Sunday, November 24, The Midland Foundation will host "Magic at the Museum with Midland and PNC" featuring the outstanding stand-up, magic, comedy mentalism, and ventriloquism entertainment of John Pizzi.

Admission includes a pre-show cocktail hour with hors d'oeuvres and a post-show dinner reception. Guests enjoy an open bar and the opportunity to browse museum exhibits throughout the evening.

For more information & tickets, visit the website below:

<https://www.midlandnj.org/events/midland-goes-to-the-museum-with-midland-pnc/>

Magic at the Museum with Midland
and PNC
featuring comedian
John Pizzi

- Sunday, November 24
- Morris Museum
- Doors Open 5:30 PM

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Basket Bash

AT THE MIDLAND SCHOOL

**SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 23**

DOORS OPEN AT 12:00 NOON
INCREDIBLE PRIZES, 50/50, GIFT CARD APRON AND MORE!

TICKETS WILL GO ON SALE IN THE NEW YEAR. STAY TUNED!

94 Readington Road
North Branch, NJ



SAVE THE DATE!

MOVE FOR MIDLAND

Celebrating
10
YEARS

May 31, 2025
3:00 - 5:30 PM



Nurse's Corner

Michele Casey, RN



Staying Healthy During Cold & Flu Season

Flu season typically occurs from October to May each year. The common cold and influenza are two different illnesses, with the flu presenting more severe symptoms than the common cold. These symptoms typically include fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuff nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, and fatigue.

There are many things that can be done to stay safe during flu season, including:

Preventing the spread of germs:

- Handwashing

- Cleaning surfaces

- Keeping your hands away from your face as much as possible

- Avoiding close contact with people

- Using a mask and hand sanitizer

- Avoiding crowds as much as possible

- Staying home when sick

Boosting your immune system:

- Eating healthy

- Exercising regularly

- Staying hydrated

- Getting adequate sleep

- Getting the flu vaccine

- Decreasing stress

Taking care of yourself is the best way to stay healthy and prevent the spread of germs!!!



Mindset in the Workplace

FIXED MINDSET

VS

GROWTH MINDSET

Avoids challenges

Shy away from things you don't know

Unable to handle criticism or feedback

Gives up easily

Believes failure is the limit of ability

My abilities are unchanging

When frustrated, gives up



Challenges help me grow

I can learn anything I want to do

Views feedback and criticism as an opportunity for growth

Resilient to adversity and strong mental fortitude

My abilities can develop and grow

Looks for the positive in every situation



When you have a growth mindset, you believe you can gain the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed, which makes every challenge a learning opportunity.

Given the numerous challenges employees face, a growth mindset can be a powerful tool as you work toward your career goals.

“We’re always a work in progress, never perfect and ever evolving.”

The concept of growth and fixed mindsets was coined by psychologist Carol Dweck in her 2006 book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*.

- Diane Arbus

Open Positions with Midland

- Teacher Aide/ Personal Aide, School
- Community Specialist, Explores
- Job Coach, Employment Center
- Support Counselor, Residential
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Residential



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