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Exceptional News

Winter 2004

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Special 30th Anniversary Edition

YRC Morphs into YEI!

In 1976, in a belated attempt to “get with the nineties,” the Board of Directors underwent the renaming process of a famous Prescott entity, the Yavapai Rehabilitation Center, founded in 1974. “When ‘community-placed’ clients of ours were being referred to as ‘Rehabs,’ by well intended ‘civilians,’” Brad recalls, “it became obvious that the time had come to create a new image.”

Rebranding an established entity such as the YRC was a daunting task. But marketing experts from our locally-based Northern Arizona S.C.O.R.E. Chapter,

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Spectacular Growth Highlights 3 Decades of Service to Area's Disabled

“Yavapai Rehabilitation Center” was founded in January, 1974 by a Board of Directors comprised of parents, special educators, and business leaders who were determined to find a place in our local economy and community for their neighbors with disabilities. For the people of Prescott, Arizona, the institutionalization of special needs people, then housed at the Arizona Training Program at Coolidge, deceptively known as the “Children’s Colony,” was an unacceptable alternative for our exceptional neighbors.

The Rehab Center was established in the old Kelly Building on the corner of Granite and Willis Streets in downtown Prescott (now the offices of Catholic Social Services and Samantha’s Alterations).

At the time of incorporation, fifteen people a day attended the program of “noncompetitive employment.” Partnerships with Prescott-based Aquarium Pump Supply and Global Electronics (now Allied Signal) formed the basis of the employment-based program.

In the year of our inception, 1974, production and sales totaled \$3800. In 2004, YEI! looks back on thirty years of continued service to our neighbors with disabilities, and will do upwards of \$350,000, in production and sales. This translates directly into wages earned by people with disabilities integrated into

our work force. In the meantime, in partnership with Prescott Charities, Inc., facilities in Prescott and Prescott Valley were erected, expanded and completely paid off in record time. And, within those considerable facilities, a program has been established (and continuously refined and updated) to meet the ever-changing needs of our clientele and been recognized by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (C.A.R.F.), as one of the premier organizations in the country.

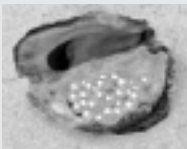
The “wall of fame” at both Washington Avenue and Antelope Point Industry’s sites, depicts honors from four Arizona governors and a number of regional and national organizations who have recognized the unique contribution of YEI! over the last three decades. (See sidebar for how YRC became YEI!)

Today, a staff of thirty work with 150 individuals from high school age through their seventies. Employment options include thirty local job sites as well as the extensive production facilities operated by YEI! In addition, YEI-Hoos who benefit from the year-round support of the tri-city area, give back to their home town, not only through the taxes they pay on the wages they earn, but also through their regular atten-

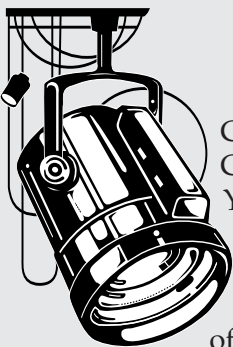
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Join us for Pearl Jam!

- Jan. 30
- 5:30 pm
- API



Staff Spotlight: Meet Leslie Crum – Our Latest Acquisition



Hi there, folks! My name is Leslie Crum and I am the new Employment Coordinator here at wonderful Yavapai Exceptional Industries (Washington Avenue Facility).

Let me first tell you a little about my life before I saw the light of Prescott, Arizona. I was born in British Columbia, Canada. My family moved to Phoenix in 1977. My husband has put up with me for over 10 years now. We have two little angels (??), Sandra Mae is 9 years old and Sarah Jean is 7. We also have a son who is 7 1/2 months old, weighs 2.5 lbs. and is 14 inches long. His name is Sonny (also known as our ferret).



Leslie on the job at the Washington Avenue facility. Photo Rob Colcord.

Wanting to get out of the big city and wanting to be closer to my husband's family, we moved to Spring Valley, AZ which is about 33 miles east of Prescott, in March of 2002.

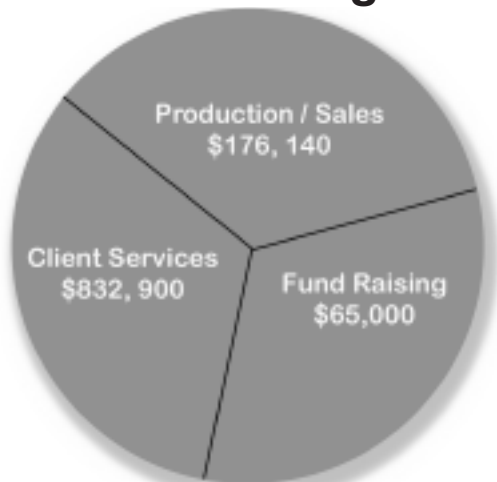
I started working for another agency in the Prescott area shortly after moving here when I came in contact with YEI/API. There was one main thing I noticed about the staff at YEI compared to where I worked: everyone was happy and smiling! Something had to be wrong with that. Here was an organization that really cared about their clients. Boy was that concept! And I am happy to say that YEI! stole me away. Now for the first time I actually wake up and look forward to the day.

Since I have been at YEI!, I have had the pleasure of helping place four people in jobs in the community! I have also started the "Spring Valley Carpool," with Erica, an instructor at both sites

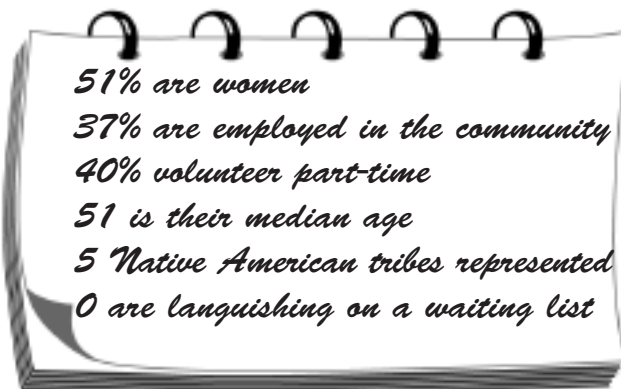


Leslie oversees Kara-biner hard at work at the Great American Steak Company. Photo Rob Colcord.

2002 - 2003 at-a-glance



YEI! Guys: Who are they?



Alumni Corner

Over the past thirty years, hundreds of our area's most talented and enthusiastic people have come through as staff people. All of them have left their mark on our organization, and of course, on our people's lives. So often their reason for leaving has been advanced degree work, working for the state in other social service areas, or to go on and start their own families. It has been our pleasure to know and work with every one of our alumni. Here are a few glimpses back:

- Founding staff member of Yavapai Training Center, **Candy Lohite**, is hooked up with first "client planner," **Clay Reinhardt**, now Dr. Clay Reinhardt of Redwood, California, having met under Brad's supervision.
- **Mark Wetten** moved to Prescott from Tempe in 1976 to become the original Production Supervisor at the Yavapai Rehab Center. Mark is now president of Wetten Brothers Construction. (Great job on the Chapel at Fain Park!) His beautiful daughter **Corrinne** is presently a Production Assistant here while attending Yavapai College.
- **Kenny Earnst** still meets and greets customers at Fry's in Prescott, now six years on the job.
- **Clara Parker**, is going on 7 years' employment at Wendy's in Frontier Village.
- **Dr. Marshall Kane**, original Production Manager and heavy hand in the construction of the Washington Avenue Facility is now a school psychologist for Humboldt Unified School District after having earlier served as Director of Special Education for both Prescott Unified School District #1 and H.U.S.D.
- **Debbie, Jeannie, Sue, Diane, and Cat** served in staff positions in Developmental Disabilities for the state of Arizona, following their service to YEI!
- **Mary Dubrowski** guided the center through its first accreditation process and now directs a huge nonprofit organization in Western Massachusetts. Yes, and she finally married a doctor!
- **Dave Bennett** returned to his native Colorado to teach Industrial Arts/Technology in the public school system, and spoil his grandkids.



Every day is Halloween at YEI! But ON Halloween, Rita, Aaron, Brandy, Cynthia, and Ed go all out! Photo Brad.

Happy 30th YEI!

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dance at the YEI! "Community Contribution Corps," wherein they volunteer at such diverse activities as senior centers, animal husbandry, environmental stewardship, and with programs serving youth.

The 30th anniversary indicating "pearls" has led to the celebration "Pearl Jam," held at the Antelope Point

facility on Friday, January 30, when a slide show of notoriously bad haircuts was shown, and the YEI friends and family reflected on the contributions made by this great organization to our community.

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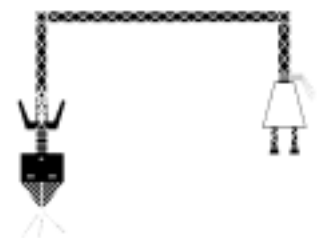
graphic artists from Yavapai College, and staff and volunteers assessed over sixty applicants in our "Star Search" to find a new name.

The executive planning committee convened one day at the Plaza Cafe. Then board president Larry Strom had been considering the name "Yavapai Center for Exceptional Industries." In spelling out the acronym for this name, he then happened to fold the napkin on which he was writing.

The resultant YEI! came forth on Larry's coffee-stained napkin.

YEI! was immediately recognizable as the Navajo name for patron saint or deity, the Navajo version of the Kachina. With the attendant exclamation point, it becomes pronounced as "yeah," as in "Yeah Team!!" Our diverse service population has become known as "Yei-hoos."

The YEI! logo, featuring the Navajo "spirit of healing and protection" was developed sourcing Clara Lee Tanner's definitive text on the subject (wasn't Brad an under grad at the U of A in Dr. Tanner's class???)



C.A.R.F.'s a-comin'!

Yavapai Exceptional Industries is proud to have been nationally accredited continuously since 1978 by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (C.A.R.F.)

As one of the highest level organizations in the country, the Commission determines that YEI! undergo a site review every three years. 2004 is our lucky year! Come early Spring, YEI! will be scrutinized with a fine-toothed comb by program consultants of the Commission, nationally headquartered in Tucson, Arizona.

We have a distinct advantage in preparing for this exhaustive experience: our own Miss Linda Smith, Director of Employee Development, was singled out by C.A.R.F. and trained as a site surveyor. Linda has trav-

eled the country evaluating other programs on behalf of the Commission (and stealing their best ideas for us!)

The three-month ramp up to the survey allows the staff and Board to polish the brass and "coil the line" while applying ever-changing standards for excellence to the ever-changing landscape of our clients and community. The C.A.R.F. process gives all of us a chance to step up, renewing our commitment to excellence. It is our ultimate "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval," so as enthusiastically as we might want to describe our program and its impact, you, dear readers, do not have to take our word for it, but be assured as donors, parents, and supporters, that YEI! is in fact operating on all eight cylinders.



Jessie and Brad look to the future: it's so bright, they need shades!

Remembered, Revered, and Ne'er Forgotten

As we go to press, YEI! has been renewed as an eligible organization for the Arizona State Tax Credit gift program!

As a nonprofit charitable organization, providing services to people to alleviate unemployment, YEI! met the standards of the Arizona Secretary of State, thereby allowing donors to take advantage of this tax credit incentive through gifts of up to \$250 per year. Call Rebecca at headquarters for more information: 445-0991. So, as you make your year end plans, remember your buddies at YEI!

Many of our neighbors are commemorating our 30th anniversary with gifts in multiples of 30!



Yavapai Exceptional Industries

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