

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Michelle Yadoo
Communications Manager
516-922-4100, ext. 231

7 November 2016

Mill Neck Services Celebrates Forward-thinking Employers

Several staff of Mill Neck Services (MNS) recently attended the 31st annual celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Observed each October, NDEAM salutes the contributions of workers with disabilities and educates businesses about the value of a diverse workforce. The event recognizes businesses with proven track records of providing job opportunities for individuals with disabilities. These businesses, which are nominated by various organizations, are presented with NDEAM awards during the commemorative event.

This year, MNS was pleased to nominate CWIH, a provider of casters, wheels and other products for delivery and material handling, as well as, Le Pain Quotidien, a European-style cafe at Roosevelt Field Mall, and Kliger-Weiss Infosystems, Inc. (KWI), which offers a number of technologies for specialty retailers, including systems for merchandising and loss prevention. The three companies were recognized during a breakfast presentation at Carlyle on the Green in Farmingdale, New York.

Elaborating on this year's honorees, Marta Reeger, Coordinator of Employment Services for MNS, said, "CWIH is exceptional at ensuring the integration of all employees, by instilling a sense of teamwork where each person, regardless of very different communication style, strengths and weaknesses, all work together to support each other. We are very pleased to honor CWIH with this nomination and thank them for being a valued business partner." She noted that Le Pain Quotidien is also an ideal partner for MNS and "epitomizes the spirit of NDEAM." In nominating KWI, Reeger spoke of the company's understanding of how essential is the ability to communicate effectively and for this, MNS is very

-more-

appreciative. She thanked KWI for “the wonderful opportunity which you provided our client Rino, who was seeking that crucial first post-graduation entry-level position. Like many individuals who have a disability, Rino was facing barriers beyond that of others with the same level of IT training.”

The KWI employee Reeger referred to is Rino DeGuida, a Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf alumnus who attended this year’s NDEAM event. Beginning as a KWI intern assigned to the Install Team, DeGuida rapidly learned the technical requirements and processes of the job. He continued to excel in his training and his contributions were applauded by his peers when the KWI team nominated him for Employee of the Month in December 2015. At the time of his recognition, DeGuida’s supervisor, Deanna Cannella, said, “From the moment Rino joined the Install team, his drive to learn and positive attitude has been contagious. Rino started here at KWI during a busy time of the year and exemplified what it meant to be a team player. Without hesitation, he quickly learned and took on tasks (and more tasks!) with great focus, while seeing them through from start to finish.”

DeGuida acknowledged the honor, thanking everyone for giving him the support, patience and encouragement to succeed. He added that he enjoys working with everyone at KWI and with their support and inspiration, wishes to continue doing so.

The inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the workplace has been recognized for the past 71 years, with NDEAM dating back to 1945, when Congress declared the first week in October, “National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week.” Today, while the event’s title has evolved, NDEAM continues to reflect on the important role disability plays in workforce diversity. To facilitate planning of events each year, a new theme is incorporated, with “Inclusion Works” chosen as the 2016 theme. The process of selecting NDEAM honorees begins in June, with local ACCES-VR (Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation) offices gathering employer nominations from various agencies. The nominations are then reviewed by the New York State Department of Education, which oversees ACCESS-VR.

Mill Neck Services continually advocates for job candidates who are Deaf, hard of hearing or have other disabilities, especially since the rate of unemployment for people with disabilities is significantly higher than for the general population. For participants in the Supported Employment Program, the MNS Employment Services Team runs a job club, Network to Success (NTS), which meets regularly at the Town of Oyster Bay One-Stop Employment Center in Hicksville and at a satellite facility in downtown Manhattan.

Established in 1986, Mill Neck Services (MNS) has placed more than 1,000 Deaf, hard of hearing or otherwise disabled workers in over 400 businesses operating on Long Island. To find out how the qualified candidates in the Steps to Success Program at MNS can help your business, please contact Marta Reeger, Coordinator of Employment Services at mreeger@millneck.org or 516-922-3818, ext. 315. Mill Neck Services is part of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, which also includes Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf, founded by Lutheran Friends of the Deaf in 1947. For more information, please call 516-922-4100 or visit www.millneck.org.



At the recent NDEAM awards presentation, Lissa Wong of CWIH, employer recipient of a 2016 award, is seen with MNS staff members, Loretta Murray, Gabrielle Pollard, Lorraine Wright (L to R, back), along with Marta Reeger and Chris Oddo (front).

Kliger-Weiss Infosystems, Inc. (KWI) employee Rino DeGuida presents an Employer Recognition certificate to Sheri Lyons, KWI's Chief of Staff.





The Mill Neck Services team (L to R), Erika Christenson, Donna Sullivan, Lorraine Wright, Marta Reeger, Loretta Murray and Gabrielle Pollard, at the recent NDEAM Awards event.

###