

**Our Mission:**  
*"We research, develop and deliver learning systems for people with disabilities and those who support them."*

**Our Vision:**  
*"People with disabilities are visible, valued members of our community."*

High Sierra Industries/  
WARC  
555 Reactor Way  
Reno, NV 89502

Phone:  
(775) 829-7400

Fax:  
(775) 829-7403

E-mail:  
jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com  
andy.geisel@hsireno.com

*HSI WARC are not-for-profit, 501(C) (3) agencies that provide jobs, employment, day and community based training, and residential supports to people with intellectual and physical disabilities.*

Tax ID#  
88-0139145

We're on the Web!  
www.hsireno.org



## From the CEO's Desk



It's summer in Reno and in during these warmer days, we often feel a desire to add to our regular schedules of work and family, a myriad of other fun things into already packed schedules! Activities like vacations, short ones and longer ones, trips to beautiful Lake Tahoe, a walk through the classic cars and or a picnic at the river, the list is endless! There just aren't enough hours in the day to do it all. Well it's like that for us here at HSI-WARC as well! In addition to the great programs and services we offer every day, we are getting busier in the

Production/ manufacturing area while being crunched for space (because of the building addition going on). AND just when we thought the plate was full, we are bringing back the X-treme Ability Challenge (XAC) and Open House that was once an annual event.

As many of you know, the XAC is our biggest fundraiser (emphasis on "fun") of the year and this year is it happening Saturday, Aug. 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We are very excited to announce our first Platinum Sponsor: Hometown Health and that as of this writing we have 27 teams signed up! We still have openings for more teams AND sponsorships. KTVN Channel 2 did a feature story on XAC a few years ago, and the piece really shows what the XAC is all about. (Link to the [VIDEO](#).) Since we first staged the X-Treme Ability Challenge in 2001, it is an event that places people with disabilities in a strong and empowering position. Although people that participate in the XAC get to experience what it's like to have a physical disability for only a few minutes almost everyone comes away with a healthy respect for people with disabilities and their skills and ABILITIES. The XAC is about everyone coming to have fun, to have a barbecue lunch, and because lots of people wear the very unique, tie died XAC t-shirt, there's a equality that happens and a feeling that we are working to establish for a lifetime. It all adds up to one very special day.

As mentioned, construction on the addition to the Reactor building is projected to be completed around Thanksgiving! We've been looking forward to this for a few years, and it's gratifying to see the finish line on the horizon. Looking at the delays from a positive perspective, we've been able to increase the Outdoor Recreation Area to 4,150 sq. ft. considerably larger than the one originally planned. Whew, lot's going on and those are just the highlights. So we'll have a lot to be thankful for as we head into the fall and winter holiday seasons. I hope as many of you as possible will join us for the XAC and Open House, and wish you all a wonderful, safe and happy rest of the summer, filled with productive activities and fun. -LaVonne

**THEY SAID IT ...  
Praise for HSI!**

HSI received this wonderful comment to a post on social media:

“Our community is so blessed to have HSI, LaVonne Brooks, and the wonderful staff there. Thank you for your care and keep up the good work.”

–Eva Harmon,  
via Facebook

## **XAC Races are ALMOST HERE!**

Is your team set? Have you registered yet? If not, there's still time to sign up Northern Nevada! HSI proudly presents the 2016 X-treme Ability Challenge Races & Annual Open House, August 20, 2016, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 555 Reactor Way! Northern Nevada businesses and organizations, here's your opportunity to show off your "X-treme Abilities" and help HSI in our biggest fundraiser of the year! The competition is fun and exciting ... and if you're not careful, you might learn something! The team to finish the course with the



fastest time wins! Prizes will be awarded! Each participant receives a unique and highly prized X-treme Ability Challenge t-shirt and everyone gets to enjoy not only the spirit of the event, but also a super Raffle and Barbecue Lunch for them and a guest!

The XAC Races are a unique way to get a sense of what life is like for some of our persons served and appreciate what we do for them as part of our community. To become a Sponsor and donate Raffle items, contact Jimmy Breslin at 775-846-8008 or email [jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com](mailto:jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com).



*The wheelchair challenge is part of the XAC course?  
Let's see how you roll!*

Each participant receives a unique and highly prized X-treme Ability Challenge t-shirt and everyone gets to enjoy not only the spirit of the event, but also a super



*Jerome keeps things tuned up!*

served up good times to more than 150 who attended. HSI staffers Louie and Ernie manned the grill, while Jerome provided some classic rock and roll on guitar.

Of course, we couldn't dish up a proper picnic without help from our community partners: Circus Circus, who provided the food and supplies, and Model Dairy, who provided the ice cream and refrigerated truck! Thanks to both of these wonderful businesses for their continuing support!

## **Serving up fun!**

Every summer, High Sierra Industries hosts a special Picnic outing for our persons served and our staff. In June, everyone headed to beautiful Rancho San Rafael Park, where HSI



*Serving up fun!*

## Happy Anniversary, Brandy!

Congratulations from all of us at HSI to staff member Brandy Thomsen (right), who celebrated 25 years with the organization in June!

Brandy is part of the administrative support team at HSI, and says the thing she likes most about working at HSI is the wide variety of projects she gets to help out with.



## iChoose Update

Our iChoose Day Habilitation program is also hitting new strides ... and hitting the road! Now that spring weather is here, many of our persons served have been participating in several outings, where they can still work on goals for Art, Movement, Community interaction and other skill building plans in interesting



*iChoose makes a difference: HSI-WARC was recognized for Volunteer work at the Food Bank!*

off-premises settings. During spring, iChoose really cranked up the heat on how many habilitation plans the team was running. According to QIDP Bret Jorgensen, "During January and February, we were doing about half as many each day compared to now!" In May the team ran 2,919 habilitation plans, and in June expanded that to 2,936 habilitation plans.

In both months there were 21 service days, which means the iChoose department averaged nearly 150 habilitation plans a day! That number nearly doubles what the

program had been doing in the earlier months of the year.

If you'd like to help support the Chart Mart portion of the iChoose program, see the "How Can I Help?" section of the newsletter. For more information on the iChoose program and to schedule a tour, contact Devon Trube at 775-829-7400, ext. 114, or email and [devon.trube@hsireno.com](mailto:devon.trube@hsireno.com) and visit [www.hsireno.org](http://www.hsireno.org).

## HSI is all about HOPE ...

HSI had a presence at The JUSTin HOPE Spring Forward for Autism Event, which was held at UNR this past April. The weather was cold, but the turnout was heartwarming. We were proud to be participants in the Justin Hope Foundation Spring Forward for Autism event on Sunday, April 24! HSI's Ryan O'Donnell was there and grabbed a great panorama shot of the site!



Proceeds from the 5K Walk/Run race and exhibitors benefit local families dealing with autism and other neurological disorders. HSI is proud to be part of the helping and healing process in our community!

## **iWork has the power!**

HSI-WARC's iWork program has been working overtime (literally), cranking out quality product after quality product! According to Colleen Miller, the division has more work than it knows what to do with, and that has given her crew the chance to bank a few extra hours! One project they've been working on is building a brand new, more complex power supply for GTECH, which will go into slot machines! And,



remember those 70,000 lottery machines from our last newsletter? Colleen and her crew have recently been contracted to do turnkey work building "bursters" for those as well. iWork is actually so busy, they're considering adding a swing shift to keep up with all the projects they have in the works! In related news, HSI recently renewed its contract for janitorial services with the Bureau of Land Management.

## **Men's Wearhouse Suit Drive**

High Sierra Industries was chosen as the Reno area nonprofit partner of Men's Wearhouse during this year's National Suit Drive. The month-long event during July was a HUGE success, and benefits at-risk men as they transition into the workforce. HSI is the recipient of this year's donations of men's professional clothing that will be gathered at Reno Men's Wearhouse locations.

As a thank you, those who donated suits received 50% off retail items on their next purchase, courtesy of Men's Wearhouse. All contributions are tax deductible and will be distributed throughout the local community. We thank the community on behalf our persons served, and hope to part of an even bigger, more successful drive next year!

For more information, visit [www.nationalsuitdrive.com](http://www.nationalsuitdrive.com).

## HSI goes to Washington!

HSI-WARC President/CEO LaVonne Brooks (on right) and Government Relations Officer Ron Smith (center) met with US Senator Dean Heller (R-Nevada, between Ron & LaVonne) and staff during a trip to Washington DC. LaVonne and Ron accompanied a contingent from RTC, and while in our Nation's Capitol also sat in on several legislative meetings with staff from the offices of Congressman Mark Amodei (R-NV) and outgoing Senator Harry Reid (D-NV)! The objective, Smith said, was to meet with people from similar organizations, exchange ideas and discuss issues. "It gave us a chance to bring Northern Nevada to the center of government," Ron said. "We realized that, throughout the country, we share a lot of the same concerns for our population, and we're all in this together."



*Ron Smith and LaVonne Brooks with Senator Heller and staff*

## Our friends from Belarus!

High Sierra Industries went international this past April, hosting a delegation from Belarus! Part of a multi-agency effort, the delegation was here to learn about how we work with our population and share similar information from



*Disabilities know no borders! Cnacuońo (or "Spasibo," which means "Thank you"), Belarus*

their country. While in Reno, the group met with Vocational Rehabilitation for presentations by Voc Rehab, the Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Washoe County School District and VOICE Program. HSI hosted the delegation for lunch, and presentations by BCBA's Mark Malady and Ryan O'Donnell, and HSI President/CEO LaVonne Brooks. HSI presented the group with Nevada-themed packages of Kimmie Candy, and the group presented us with thank you gifts and souvenirs from Belarus!

## Hire us!

Thanks to all the employers that work with our iWork and CDA programs. We'd love to talk to you about opportunities to hire and support our persons served. Contact Jimmy Breslin at 775-846-8008 or email [jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com](mailto:jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com).

## Donations to UCP

In January, HSI-WARC closed our Sutro Thrift Store operation. We are accepting donations on behalf of United Cerebral Palsy and have bins set up at both of our buildings, (505-B Energy Way and 555 Reactor). You may also donate directly to them at their Thrift Store, 2150 Oddie Blvd (phone 775-825-7774). Contact the UCP office, 6100 Neil Rd #201 (phone 775-322-6555) or visit [www.ucpnv.org](http://www.ucpnv.org) for more info and hours.

## Community contact!

Help get our persons with intellectual disabilities involved in the Reno area community with tickets and certificates to community events (in sets of 4, please), i.e. bowling, movies, sports (Wolfpack, Aces), plays ... anything! This gets them out and participating in local civic events, and allows us to send up to three persons served and a staff member. We appreciate your support! Contact Jimmy Breslin at 775-846-8008 or email [jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com](mailto:jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com).

## Capital Campaign Update

We're looking forward to completion of the new addition to our Reactor Way building later this year. We are also pleased to report the amount we need to recover is now down to \$380,000. If you would like more information on how you can help with this important part of HSI and its mission, contact Jimmy Breslin at 775-846-8008 or email [jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com](mailto:jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com).

## Visit us!

We love showing off what we do at HSI! If you haven't visited in a while, call us today to schedule a tour! We'd love to see you! Contact Jimmy Breslin at 775-846-8008 or email [jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com](mailto:jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com).

## How can I help?

Your tax-deductible contributions help us advance and promote programs with a variety of needs such as iChoose, iWork, iLive and CDA. One example of how your donations help: through Precision Teaching, our iChoose persons served learn life skills that boost their self-confidence, independence and knowledge, and earn points to make purchase in our Chart Mart in-house store. We need cash donations to stock the best quality items that are most relevant to our persons served. Employers, we would welcome the opportunity to talk with you about placement of our persons served with your company through our CDA-NV™ job development program. For more information on how you can be an important part of HSI and its mission, contact Jimmy Breslin at 775-846-8008 or email [jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com](mailto:jimmy.breslin@hsireno.com).