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WORK ETHIC HELPS HUDSON PARTICIPANT FIND, KEEP NEW JOB

Kyle Johnson had experience baling hay on his uncle's farm, where he was paid by the load. Now, his work ethic is shining through at Walmart in Hudson, where ProAct has given him short term support.

Dawn Larson, zone manager for store operations, said Johnson is very focused on his work and tries to complete his tasks with absolute perfection. "I love working with him. He's always happy, a nice kid."

Johnson maintains products on shelves and moves carts from the lot to the store, cleans up spills, and pulls boxes for recycling. He said there's a lot of responsibility in the workplace. To complement his day to day job, he's taken computer-based training, as well. "I learn fast," said Johnson.

After attending life skills classes twice



New courtesy associate Kyle Johnson's work involves carts, product checks, organization and cleanup at Walmart in Hudson, Wis. The recent high school grad receives training from ProAct.

a week at ProAct's Life Opportunities program in Hudson, Johnson filled out an online application at the store and was hired as a courtesy associate within a week, explains job developer and job coach Kailey Singleton.

interactions, she soon found that he was stepping out of his "comfort zone," saying hello to customers and interacting. And, he stays on tasks. When he finishes with carts, Johnson goes right to the grocery aisles to straighten products. "When he started, he really blew us all away, like he had been doing it (the job) for years," said Singleton.

He's also learned service skills, namely to never argue with a customer. If a situation becomes difficult, it's best to take five minutes away. Singleton said if someone isn't nice to him in the parking lot, he takes it very well. Johnson also doesn't argue with claims that he's taken ownership of his job duties.

"I have to say he's a totally different person when he's at work, smiling from ear to ear," said Singleton. "And, you can tell that he's really proud of himself for the job and he loves doing it."

Johnson's strong work ethic shines, and while Singleton thought he might struggle with customer



BILLBOARDS BECOME FASHION BAGS & MORE



Jessica Ackerman cleans billboard material at Relan. In various thicknesses, the product is the base material for tote bags, portfolio folders, miniature pouches and other products.

Billboards and banners use a large amount of vinyl "fabric" that typically ends up in landfills but one Inver Grove Heights startup company is changing all that, with some assistance from ProAct.



The sign material, which averages 40 feet in width, is rolled out, cleaned and cut into useful patterns to be made into totes, folders, purses and carriers of all shapes and sizes. The material of varying weights is emblazoned with colorful patterns that give each product a unique appearance and feel.

The company was established in 1995, before sustainability came into vogue. Under new ownership since August 2011, the company is now run by designer Della Simpson and advertising specialist Tom

See Relan bag, page 2

CELEBRATING MEMORIES, LOVED ONES AND LOOKING AHEAD TO NEW YEAR

The holidays are a time to reconnect with family and friends, to remember and reminisce about those no longer with us and to rejuvenate our lives to start afresh in the new year.

Many of us look forward to celebrating the traditions that have defined our families,

some for decades. At ProAct, we're thankful for the support and encouragement we've received. Quite frankly, we wouldn't be as successful without our valuable



partners. We appreciate each and every one of you, and we look forward to working together in 2013.

Happy Holidays.

FOUR EMPLOYERS RECOGNIZED FOR STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

Three of four ProAct Employer of the Year awards for 2012 went to animal related businesses as the nonprofit added a new award category, Vocational Partner, to further stress its emphasis on work.

Honors went to IMV Technologies U.S.A. in Maple Grove, Chuck & Don's Pet Food Outlet in Eagan, Eagan-based Peanut's Place and Asset Marketing Services in Burnsville.

"Employers are at the heart of our mission, which is to provide training and job opportunities for people with disabilities," said ProAct President and CEO Steven Ditschler. "We value their partnership, and the solid relationships that have been established."

Winners were selected from four categories: Business Partner, Community Employment, Supported Employment and Vocational Partner. Each was heralded at ProAct's 40th Annual Awards Dinner, which featured KSTP News Anchor Megan Newquist, and a crowd of about 550 at the Prom Center in Oakdale.

IMV Technologies USA

For ProAct's top Business Partner, IMV Technologies USA, individuals with a wide range of abilities wear protective clothing as they carry out their tasks, which also provides a clean environment

for IMV products. The company also trusts ProAct to cover quality assurance functions, explains Greg Pechman, ProAct sales manager. IMV's Eric Salonen, who serves in supply



Above, Asset Marketing Services' Amy Wenstrom, left, celebrates the company's award with ProAct Employment Manager Catherine McCoy and KSTP News Anchor Megan Newquist. Below, ProAct Sales Manager Greg Pechman presents an employer award to Eric Salonen and Angela De Mirjyn with IMV Technologies U.S.A. at a major recognition banquet.



chain and operations in Maple Grove, said the company's animal breeding products require a sterile environment and it found an efficient packaging solution in ProAct. "They are a very impressive organization with a good staff who are very enthusiastic about the work they do for their clients. We felt immediately that it was a good fit," Salonen said.

Asset Marketing Services

The winner for Community Employment was Asset Marketing Services in Burnsville. ProAct crews inspect and package multiple products, which require great attention to detail, said Amy Wenstrom, Asset's director of inbound fulfillment.

"We are really excited and honored ... we feel like we have such a great partnership with them," she said. Work with Asset began in 2011 and has since expanded, but remains flexible to company needs. "We couldn't ask for anything better as far as that goes," Wenstrom said. "They definitely react to anything I throw at them. If I need additional help or need to back off, they will adjust accordingly."

Individuals from ProAct have become part of the team, and Wenstrom has been very impressed with work performed by ProAct Site Supervisor Carmella Taylor, who serves as an intermediary between the ProAct workers she monitors and the company. Asset Marketing also utilizes a team of individuals from ProAct for cleaning services.

See Employers of the Year, page 2

Outreach returns to YMCA



Job developer Kyle Adams and Case Manager Sarah Kopp answer questions and introduce attendees to ProAct at Red WinGives, the rivertown's large nonprofit gathering at the YMCA. Adams called for volunteers for a blindfolded peanut butter sandwich exercise to demonstrate disabilities. As one of 37 booths, the effort was in conjunction with the statewide Give to the Max Day. It raised more than \$201,000 for area nonprofits. (More photos on page 3)

From the President...

The pace of activity has been high at ProAct as we moved through the fall to the holidays and the start of a new year, and the outlook is that we will have a vigorous 2013.

As we move forward, increasing employment opportunities will continue to be a high priority at ProAct because of its central role in serving our mission. The ability to achieve rewarding employment opens the door to the future for most of the people we serve and we are committed to the mission. We are reaching out further into the community to locate jobs, and our expansion of the "customized employment" approach is beginning to bring rewards.

One initiative launched earlier in the year is being stepped up, as the "Message in a Bottle" recycling program expands to cover more locations in the south metro area. Partnering with the Recycling Association of Minnesota, the Minnesota Beverage Association and Minnesota Waste Wise, ProAct participants collect, sort and sell bottles, cans and other recyclable materials from gas stations, and other community businesses. The expansion will bring a significant number of new jobs in this area.

ProAct's board of directors and senior staff members continue to explore additional ways in which the organization can meet needs. While seeking to ensure that our

services are aligned with both current and future needs, ProAct will remain true to its mission of serving people with disabilities and other challenges.

From another successful ProAct Golf Classic in August, where the weather was admirable and spirits were high, we moved to our other major annual events, our client recognition banquets. Participants and family members from the Eagan and Hudson locations filled the Prom Center in



Oakdale for their affair, while Red Wing and Zumbrota participants celebrated at Treasure Island. These are always most rewarding events.

As 2012 comes to a close and the New Year begins, we look to the future with high energy and a determination to excel at meeting the needs of the people we serve.

Thank you for your support during the year and my very best wishes for the holidays and for a happy and rewarding new year.

Steve Ditschler

RECOGNIZING, CELEBRATING, THRIVING

ProAct's annual recognition banquets are major events, where consumers and their

families and friends join with staff to honor the achievements of participants with disabilities. The festive events feature inspiring programs, dinner and dancing and are staged on Friday evenings.

Eagan and Hudson participants and their families traveled to Prom Center in Oakdale, while Treasure Island Resort and Casino hosted the Red Wing and Zumbrota celebrants.



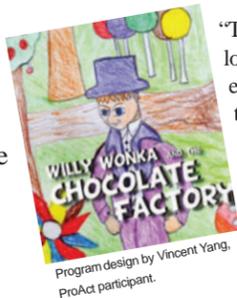
Eagan/Hudson



WILLY WONKA MUSICAL SETS STAGE FOR MORE COMMUNITY PERFORMANCES

A cast of 18 actors took part in presenting ProAct's first musical, "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory," in Apple Valley. And, not only did they need to be fearless on stage and carry a tune, the players had to make host of decisions along the way.

"I have learned to not ever underestimate their abilities... because they will rise up (to the challenge)," said Case Manager Matt Briggs.



Program design by Vincent Yang, ProAct participant.

"They are so motivated by this... they love doing this." Briggs speaks from experience. He has a college degree in theater arts and since he was six has performed in 25 to 30 shows. What was different here? Unlike his own acting experience, few in this group were nervous on stage.

Guided by two staff members, the play was chosen by an acting class and participants auditioned for the role of their choice. Two months into the six month process, both staff members dropped out and Jen Markley, day training and habilitation program coordinator, guided and coordinated the team as Briggs and Human Service Technician Eva Owen were put in place. Weekly meetings continued as roles were learned and music memorized in morning rehearsals. Costumes, props and sets were

designed and created in the afternoon. The class studied the play by watching two Willie Wonka movies and reading the script together.

Owen co-directed with Briggs and was the stage manager, a challenge since the play required an unusually large number of props and set changes. Adding to the complexity, both staff members became understudies about three months into rehearsals.

The staging was at the Falcon Ridge Middle School auditorium, with an audience of about 200. Special treats and ProAct craft items were sold, adding to the experience.



Staff and participants sold crafts and treats to audience members after the play production.

Moving to the next challenge, the next play is scheduled for April and is being written by the acting class. In a staff ratio of one to 10, the new play is set in a high school and known fairy tale characters present an advocacy message. The group also plans to publicize the event to the broader community to attract a larger audience.

Get to know us

Admission Information

Eagan, Hudson-
Sue Lowe 651-289-3151
Red Wing, Zumbrota-
Pamela Veith 651-327-5613

Need Employees?

Eagan- Catherine McCoy
651-289-3170 (groups)
Eagan- Heather Deutschlaender
651-289-3163 (individuals)
Hudson- Teresa Ducheneaux
715-410-4216
Red Wing- Kyle Adams
651-327-5622

Production Services

Eagan- Dave Cavalier 651-289-3158
Greg Pechman 651-289-3157
Red Wing-
Jim Bohmbach 651-327-5615
Paul Mummert 651-327-5620

Donation Opportunities

Sheena Henry 651-289-3149

ProAct's Four Locations

3195 Neil Armstrong Blvd., Eagan, MN 55121
204 Mississippi Ave., Red Wing, MN 55066
224 S. Main St., Zumbrota, MN 55992
1202 Beaudry Blvd., Hudson, WI 54016



ProAct is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for employment planning, employee development, and organizational and community employment.



Programs funded in part by The Greater Twin Cities United Way, United Way of Goodhue, Wabasha & Pierce Counties and United Way of Hastings.



ProAct, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with 40 years of experience.

Employers of the Year, from page 1

Chuck & Don's Pet Food Outlet

In the Supported Employment category, Chuck & Don's Pet Food Outlet has worked closely with its employee, Shannon Stone, who has received follow-up support from ProAct. Stone cleans the Eagan store, and has additional responsibilities that include working with cats that were rescued. Store Manager Jenny Griffin has shown a unique ability to look beyond Stone's limitations and to utilize her strengths in productive ways, said Day Training and Habilitation Program Coordinator Jennifer Markley.



Chuck & Don's Pet Food Warehouse employee Shannon Stone accepts a ProAct Employer of the Year Award from KSTP's Megan Newquist.

Griffin said Chuck & Don's involves people with disabilities and helps build up communities, and people in general. "It's always been near and dear to my heart and I love working for a company that thinks this way," she said. "Working with Shannon is an absolute joy; she brings joy to the whole team."

Peanut's Place

The fourth Employer Award winner, Peanut's Place in Eagan, fills a new "Vocational Partner" category. The animal boarding and grooming service hosts job candidates from ProAct who gain work experience. ProAct individuals are most often working when owner Roberta Venaglia is on duty. She said they free her up to do work in the front office and



ProAct's Jennifer Malm, left, presents an award to Peanut's Place staff members Sandie Heuer and Carol Jackson.

perform other duties.

"They're spending the time with the dogs," she said. "It's a good plus for everybody," she said.

Additionally, the flexibility to bring job candidates for assessments most anytime has made Peanut's Place a valuable partner, explains ProAct Vocational Coordinator Heather Deutschlaender. "They have been very welcoming to us," she said.

Staff members get along well with individuals from ProAct, Venaglia explained, adding that one of the participants even went on to get involved with the grooming part of the business.

Relan, from page 1

Schaepfi. Motivated by the green movement, they focus on the millions of square feet of billboard fabric deposited in landfills, and creating a second life for the material.

They approach companies that are both heavy billboard advertisers and have a commitment to the environment. Verizon, beer companies and art museums and zoos were some of the first customers. Some had warehoused their old billboards, not wanting to bring them to a landfill



ProAct workers prepare large billboards for production at an Inver Grove Heights warehouse. Relan serves large billboard customers, including Verizon and Coors.

but not having another use for the material.

As the company is gaining a foothold, ProAct's main job is to clean and dry the billboards to get them ready for cutting into product patterns. The material is laid out on the warehouse floor and each side is scrubbed, with

workers down on all fours.

Local partnerships are important to Relan and hiring people with disabilities makes good business sense to the company owners. "We can not be more pleased to partner with ProAct," said Schaepfi. Relan also partners with local

crafters in the St. Paul Hmong community for product sewing. The plan is to replicate this business model on both coasts and to get a smaller "carbon footprint" by reducing the shipping distances for the heavy billboard material.

ProAct Board of Directors:

Chuck DeNet, Paul Kramp, Mary Ellen Leary, Larry Lehman, Jim Louwagie, Teri McCloughan, Dr. Barbara Rebhuhn, Marty Stapleton, DeDe Wanzek and Jon Wilbrecht.

CLEANING UP ON BEVERAGES: MORE STORES

Seizing a new opportunity to work for people with disabilities, ProAct signed on as a key driver for the “Message in a Bottle” recycling program last summer and the program is now poised to expand.

The valuable service that collects bottles and cans from south metro convenience stores now enters its second phase, spreading its reach to about 16 more merchants, enroute to a quarter-million containers a year.

ProAct has been the reclamation engine behind the program, with multiple pickups each



Clockwise from top left, Tim Guille and Tom Kunkel sort bottles and cans for recycling at ProAct in Eagan. Bob Fideldy collects containers and installs new liners at a Kwik Trip store in Apple Valley.



week, in-house sorting and delivery to Coca Cola in Eagan, which compresses the material in bales for delivery to recyclers. The goal is to add four to eight people to the processing crew in the coming months, explains Jennifer Cavalier, recycling coordinator and work floor coordinator. Plastic bottles outnumber aluminum cans four to one.

ProAct is exploring additional recycling work, beginning with its own use of stretch wrap. Using its own baler, the nonprofit can prep 300 to 500 pound bales to deliver direct to recyclers, Cavalier explains. It’s considering a material pickup service for area companies, as well.

PROACT MOURNS PASSING OF BOARD MEMBER

Former ProAct board member Michael Nanne was well known for his achievements, despite a disability in his younger years that resulted from a car accident.

Dr. Nanne lost his battle with brain cancer in late September. He is survived by his wife, Sheila, four children, his parents, nieces, nephews, extended family and many friends.

Dr. Nanne ran a dental practice in Burnsville and had worked in



Dr. Nanne was well known to those who followed Gopher and Wild hockey.

concussion management and with mild traumatic brain injuries, a field that parallels ProAct’s Adult Day Services department in Eagan. He also served as the team dentist for the Minnesota Wild hockey team.

In a 2010 interview with People Achieving, Nanne said he was continually striving to rise above his physical disabilities and to find ways to both compete and succeed in life. He will be missed.

CHANGING LIVES VIA JOB MATCHES

She’s a star in the job placement community among people with disabilities, with an unmistakable ability to customize her approach based on a person’s needs.

Beginning almost seven years ago, ProAct vocational specialist Deb Ulrich in Eagan started laying a groundwork of business connections. These would help her place people with disabilities in jobs across the south metro area.

“I thrive on challenges,” said Ulrich, who strongly believes that each person has skills that are needed by someone. The difficulty lies in finding that someone, she explains. Ulrich’s persistence as an advocate is unrelenting. She also does her homework.

Pre-qualifying people for positions, she assembles job candidate information from multiple sources, including the state vocational rehab department, family members and case managers.

Informational interviews draw out a candidate’s previous job histories and challenges. This thorough approach and work with a person’s “team” give the best chance of making a job match.

Armed with this knowledge, she then emphasizes a person’s strengths with potential employers, and stresses supports like job coaching, training and follow up. Ulrich can also explain the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. And, some new hires ask her to join them at orientation meetings, which further builds

her employer knowledge and helps with job coaching. When the job offers come, she gets as excited as her clients, and then does all she can to make the placement successful. “I am very visible,” Ulrich said. “I check in with employers often and always encourage them to call me with concerns. I let them know that we appreciate them for providing the opportunity.” Some even decide to partner directly with ProAct for job tryouts and assessments for people with disabilities.

Many people with disabilities have great obstacles to employment, but have overcome



Vocational specialist Deb Ulrich, right, reviewed interviewing skills with client Caleb Hudspeth. He applied for multiple jobs and was hired by Walmart in Apple Valley, where Ulrich met him for new employee orientation.

them and remain positive and motivated. “This, in turn, sparks my motivation,” she said. People can feel it when someone believes in them and this can help to inspire a greater job search effort, Ulrich explains. She sees each person’s potential, and that’s part of providing the best service possible.

That emphasis is one that’s felt throughout her office, where four full-time job placement staff are on the same mission. All are available to meet with employers and provide assistance.

AN EXPERIENCE WORTH REPEATING

Some of the best teachers have an insatiable desire for learning, an urge that’s almost contagious with their students. ProAct in Hudson may have found one such teacher in the making.

University of Wisconsin-River Falls student Chris Bonde first came to ProAct’s Life Opportunities to complete 10 hours of field experience observation. He started to mirror a staff member on his first day, instead of sitting on the sidelines to take notes. The goal for the secondary ed math student was to better understand the learning styles of special ed students.

When his 10 hours were up, Bonde, kept coming back, helping with classes, and interacting with participants.

The former Navy submariner discovered math as an interest after an accident with a tractor-trailer. He suffered a head injury and aphasia, or a hindrance in his ability to speak or understand spoken language. In physical therapy, Bonde was given a list of about 100 basic math problems that took him 20 minutes to complete. After therapy, he could do them in just 2 to 3 minutes.



Chris Bonde jumps in with Hudson participants, teaching a class and interacting at length.

“Math is around you every day,” Bonde tells his students, some of whom are doubtful of its importance. The former Red Wing high school tutor and substitute teacher can easily spend an hour rattling off his experiences, and his math affections. “Give me any math class and I’ll be a happy camper,” said Bonde.

People with disabilities also have strengths, says Bonde, a resident and native of Red Wing. His first exposure to people with disabilities was with his 8-year-old nephew, who had a stroke when he was born.

He’s found a great variety of people at the Hudson facility and Bonde was most surprised to see how well they interact socially, much like a family. There’s a great deal of independence, as well as a little dependence, he explains.

He plans to put his education into practice when he starts student teaching in the fall of 2014.

Could your business recycle more?

ProAct may be able to help. Contact Jennifer Cavalier, 651-686-0405, jcavalier@proactinc.org



PROACT BRIEFS:

Volunteer finds fulfillment in historical society work

Preserving the heritage of Dakota County residents long gone, Jennifer Fuller is on task, week after week, as a volunteer at the Dakota County Historical Society in South St. Paul.

In a records room at the Lawshe Memorial Museum and Research Library, Fuller sorts through old obituaries, separating and filing them. Directed by a smiling



Jennifer Fuller, who works on different jobs for pay at ProAct, found an excellent outlet for her talents at the Lawshe Memorial Museum and Research Library in South St. Paul.

librarian who seemed more than pleased to have her, Fuller walks to the facility from her home nearby.

The 20-year ProAct participant found the opportunity while riding around the neighborhood with her case manager,



Charlotte Eastin. The idea was to get out of the house, meet some new people and have fun. “Jenny is a very hard worker,”

Eastin explained, and serves on enclave crews at Anagram, Asset Marketing and Apothecary.

Her reliability and trustworthiness are admirable. The museum logbook records her 18 volunteer visits and how many hours she worked. The librarian told Eastin that she wants to keep Fuller involved and will always have work for her to do.

Foundation supports even more fitness in Red Wing



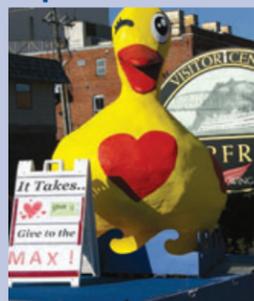
ProAct Case Manager Sarah Kopp, right, has worked closely with the ULLR Foundation to make fitness a greater focus.

The Bloomington-based ULLR Foundation and one of its members, Nancy Keyes, together donated \$2,700 in recent months for fitness equipment and stackable chairs in an expanding fitness room at ProAct in Red Wing.

The equipment added includes a manual treadmill, strength resistance training machines and a recumbent bike. “They do great things there and we are proud to be a part of it!” said Keyes.

The ULLR Foundation is the philanthropic division of the ULLR Ski, Bike & Social Club. Its mission is to raise money to provide equipment and promote participation in skiing, biking, and other sports for physically and mentally challenged individuals of all ages.

Red WinGives brings added exposure for valued services



Downtown Red Wing spread its love for nonprofits with a ‘hearty’ duck outside the YMCA. ProAct job developer Kyle Adams, bottom right, took volunteers through a blindfolded exercise to teach them about disabilities.



877-245-0405 toll free

Maximizing Individual Potential for Greater Self-Sufficiency



Welcome to People Achieving,

an inside look at the activities and programs of ProAct, Inc., serving people with disabilities in and around the Twin Cities, in communities along the Mississippi and in southeastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin.

Comments welcome, alternative formats available— Upon request, this publication is available in alternate languages and formats. Comments are welcome. Contact Sheena Henry at 651-289-3149, shenry@proactinc.org.



Help Us Launch a Career

1. Let candidates work for free-

job try-outs allow us to watch clients work to determine skill and interest levels. Is it a good job fit? They get the experience and you get the work done. How can you lose?

2. Give an informational interview-

our candidates need experience in informational interviews to become better acquainted with expected skills and attitudes, business types and career paths.

3. Easy Hire-

you get to know the skills and attitude of our candidates. You learn if they can be the right employee for your company.



Eagan: 651-289-3163 or heatherd@proactinc.org - **Red Wing:** 651-327-5622 or kadams@proactinc.org - **Hudson:** 715-410-4216 - ksingleton@proactinc.org

ON THE JOB, GIVING TIME, SKILLS, SHOTS

With these folks, 'It's in the mail'



The Capitol Direct facility uses ProAct consumers for mailing services. From left are Heather Schaefer, Terry Hemstock and Sophie Newman.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK



Watch for updates and "like us" after searching for ProAct, Inc. on facebook.com.

Small town, big effort



Individuals from ProAct in Red Wing set up candle bags for the 24th Annual Mississippi Shuffle cancer walk. It raised more than \$150,000 for the American Cancer Society.



Local ingredients, recipe



Red Wing participants learned cooking skills by making chili from ProAct garden vegetables. From left are Glen Chapman, Matt Olson, Bob Davis and Dalyn Bruemmer.

Creative golf sponsor benefits program, Staples wins



ProAct Golf Classic supporter and prize sponsor Rich Bordas, above left, designed a golf shots competition with cash payouts to benefit ProAct programs. The winning team for the 2012 event at Hastings Country Club was Staples Financial. From left are Art and Kris Staples, Trevor Johnson and Mike Rustad.

FUTURE FOCUSED: RED WING'S PAUL KRAMP

ProAct board member Paul Kramp keeps a pulse on the Red Wing community, and has a legacy with ProAct dating back to 1996, in Eagan.

A banker by trade, he moved to the river city the next year, where he serves on the Red Wing School Board. People here know and watch out for each other, he said. "You go to the store, and you might run into four people you know, and take a half an hour to buy that gallon of milk," said Kramp. "You get caught up with neighbors, what's going on in the community."

As president for the Southeast Region of Alliance Bank, Kramp contributes his financial expertise to ProAct's group of leaders. He's been impressed by the organization's stability, successful programs and strength of management. The caring nature of the staff and their dedication are coupled with the community's perception that ProAct is a good place to work and be involved with, Kramp explains.

As funding changes and challenging economic times have prompted ProAct to talk about joint ventures and added funding sources, Kramp has advised caution, while recognizing that the nonprofit cannot rely

completely on current sources of income. Joint ventures involve risks and competition, and while ProAct's mission is very broad, it's important to be careful when looking at anything outside of that mission, he explains.

With the board, the diverse group tends to keep everyone grounded with a mix of different perspectives, according to Kramp. The organization's experienced management staff has brought great stability, as well, and Kramp is interested in nurturing and growing a succession team to keep ProAct strong in the coming decades.

As far as the big question of employment for people with disabilities, Kramp said Red Wing doesn't have the number of service opportunities found in the metro area. Manufacturing has been a strength here, but automation has been the trend for years nationally, and has limited ProAct's opportunities.

"One thing I notice about ProAct is that we never seem to be satisfied with meeting expectations," said Kramp. "We want to exceed expectations ... to be rated the best that we can be."



Board member and bank president Paul Kramp in Red Wing is interested in ProAct's long term stability.