

- **On the job at MU's Campus Dining**
- **New van delivers independence**
- **Sometimes dreams come true**

# Investing in ACT's future

ACT is ready for the future. A 3.5-inch diskette duplication machine and degausser have been added to the on-site production operation to expand production and employment.

"It diversifies our production," says Don Lafferty, director of facility based services. "We're always looking for ways to employ more people."



*A third duplication line expands ACT's computer diskette output.*

The new additions include a used 10-unit diskette duplication machine and a magnetic tape or diskette degausser. The duplication machine will allow ACT to produce as many as 40,000 disks per day. The used duplicator equipment, a Trace 3020 line, costs about five cents on the dollar compared to new prices. Having the added line:

- Serves as a back-up for GreenDisk production, the recycled-disk marketer that represents 70 percent of ACT's production.
- Allows ACT to diversify into an untapped

service — diskette duplication. While Lafferty's goal is to see all three lines

working two shifts a day, he knows that is an ambitious goal. Falling prices on used duplicators, however, enticed ACT to add the capacity.

GreenDisk, too, projects an increase in the sale of disks from its current level of about 200,000 per

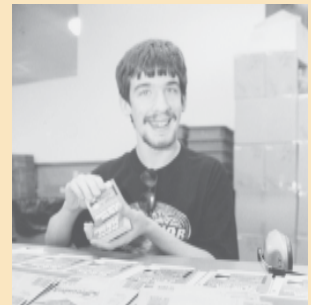
month. Their longer-term sales projection is for 300,000 disks per month.

For ACT, increases in sales mean more jobs for individuals with disabilities. Currently 44 individuals with disabilities are employed in two shifts to meet demand. Adding 100,000 more disks a month plus additional duplication jobs could mean several new positions, Lafferty explains.

Employment of disabled individuals has nearly doubled since the first line was added in 1995.

ACT also is adding duplication jobs through a national contact that bids out duplication jobs for business clients.

## Dennis Woodward



### Fastest disk-packer in the west

Dennis Woodward is setting new productivity records. He's increased his production rate 50 percent as an affirmative industry employee.

Dennis keeps gaining on the "normal" rate which is benchmarked at 100 percent. A few months ago he was at 49 percent and today is at 74 and 75 percent. As a result, his pay has increased accordingly to about 75 percent of the prevailing wage, now \$6.55.

He works three days a week packaging erased and newly labeled diskettes in groups of 10. He also assembles each stack of 10 for GreenDisk packs, including a special flyer in the tan, recycled-paper package.

A Hickman High School graduate, Dennis brought more than his strong work ethic to ACT when he came on board in January. He also brought a wooden stacker for groups of 10 diskettes. The original jig was built for Dennis by a Hickman High School industrial technology class. Five copies of the original jig were copied by ACT to help other individuals.

## Day Program explores Missouri River

The Mighty Missouri beckons ACT's Day Program members. This summer, the participants began taking day trips to numerous river towns within an easy drive of Columbia.

The participants, about six on a trip, saw the river, felt rock-embedded chronoids and learned about the history of many of the river towns.

They even discovered Bluffport, a location north of Boonville that is not even a town and is only known by locals.

The trips were the brainchild of training specialists Steve Terrell and Ed Ricciotti. Terrell lives near Boonville and is drawn by the river. Ricciotti, who has loved geological history ever since college, wanted to answer mysteries about the river embedded in rock. "I showed them why the rock sediment in the area is too old to reveal any evidence of dinosaurs."

The modern day explorers went to many towns including Rocheport, Boonville, Hartsburg, Easley and Wooldridge. "We get out whenever there's a view," says Terrell. The participants also met residents of Boonville and other towns. This fall they'll continue with a trip to historic Glasgow.

*On the job at*

# MU'S CAMPUS D



Beth Brokamp

*It's a madhouse at the Main Street Cafe. It's the noon rush at this University of Missouri-Columbia medical complex restaurant, but it doesn't faze Beth Brokamp a bit. Beth, who works as part of ACT's Supported Employment Program, is in a dead run every minute of her five-hour shifts.*



Annette Robinson

She flies around tables, bussing, wiping down and resetting four- or eight -place settings each time. Her tiny frame whirs around tables with silverware stuffed under one arm and a damp cloth in her other hand. Her eyes dart from side to side searching for new dining room challenges to conquer. An uncleared table lures her and instantly clean up begins. Lunch rush is equivalent to the 50-yard dash and Beth wins it every time.

"I like my job," says Beth who has worked at the Main Street Cafe for four months. "I work hard."

She adds that she likes all her co-employees despite the gentle ribbing she gets "because I'm so short. I also like it because my job coach — Demetrice Bell — is always nice to me." She adds she "is a big MU football fan," and that her work schedule allows her

The partnership thrives because Campus Dining believes in hiring people with disabilities.

Elliot Pope, Campus Dining director of marketing, says the relationship, "gives our department a link to the community. ACT allows us to interact with the Columbia community and not be isolated on the university campus.

"Often on a college campus we hear a lot about cultural diversity. I think the employees we receive through ACT are just another segment of society we should interact with. It's good for these students to see these employees. It's an eye-opener for many of them."

### Hesitation melts away

Hesitation melts instantly when students, managers and other staff meet the warm smiles, firmly fixed eyes, and solid hand-



Angie Minner, left, and Marian Zellner

## It's a wonderful match.

*Lisa McDaniels, Bingham Dining Hall manager*

to attend the Tigers' home games.

Beth "is refreshing," adds Debbie Wren, assistant manager of the cafe. "She makes you laugh and all of the staff really like her. She's sweet and very helpful just out here doing her job."

### A facet of diversity

Beth is not the only success story at MU. "It's one of the best partnerships we have," explains Ray Handy, ACT's Supported Employment director. Over the past three years Campus Dining Services has hired about a dozen program participants.

shakes of ACT participants.

"The customers love to interact with him," says Lisa McDaniels, manager of the Bingham Dining Hall, about Jeff Meissert. The avid MU sports fan is seldom seen without his MU cap inside and outside of the dining hall. "They love to talk to him about the Tigers. He'll go up to them and shake their hand. They're always talking about his hat. It's a wonderful match."

It's also a match that makes bottom-line sense for Campus Dining managers like Nancy Monteer. The Rollins Dining Hall



# DINING



Top: Jeff Meissert and Lisa McDaniels; above, Jason Boyd at the Brady Commons Pizza Hut.

manager is grateful for two-year employee, Annette Robinson.

“One of the greatest benefits is knowing she will be here every day. Her attendance is excellent—very punctual. The dependability and reliability of these ACT clients outweighs everything.” The same is true for Supported Employment participants working in numerous mid-Missouri locations.

Monteer now chuckles about a student asking, ‘how can you make that poor disabled person work like that?’ “Once people are here and they know Annette they see how much she enjoys her job. She enjoys being in the hub.”

Few could be more persuasive than Marian Zellner, assistant manager of the Brady Commons Food Court. She can’t find enough superlatives to describe Angie Minner who has been at Brady for one year.

“We could use a lot more Angies. We have to ask Angie to slow down. She’s reached all kinds of achievements.”

“I would encourage employers to employ people with disabilities,” adds Lisa McDaniels. “They bring such a brightness and positive atmosphere. They’ll always give you a smile. You’ll always get a smile from an ACT participant.”

## New logo selected

*This year marks the 25th anniversary of ACT. This new logo reflects the caring and innovation ACT demonstrates every day.*



Alternative Community Training

## New van delivers independence

A shiny new van is on the streets of mid-Missouri giving ACT clients freedom and independence like never before.

Now instead of living life on public transportation’s schedule, the ACT van can pick up and deliver dozens of clients on schedules that work for them. Weekend outings also are a reality.

Two generous benefactors provided complete funds for the van. The benefactors were the Allen P. & Josephine B. Green Foundation, Mexico, MO; and an anonymous donor.

The A.P. Green Foundation donated \$25,000 toward the entire \$31,915 cost. The balance was funded by the anonymous donor. The van is completely equipped to handle as many as two wheelchairs, three additional passengers and a driver.

The most novel feature is that individuals using a wheelchair can sit up front in the passenger’s area. The location is special to those in wheelchairs because until now seating and viewing were available only from the



ACT’s new van allows Joey Machens and others to ride with a front-seat perspective.

back of the van. A drive to Dairy Queen or work now is a completely new sensation.

The all-white vehicle is a 2000 Ford Econoline and was purchased from Joe Machens Ford. Conversion was provided by DW Auto.

Currently ACT supports 11 individuals who use wheelchairs. Before the new van, ACT did not have appropriate transportation to accommodate such individuals.

## NEWS briefs

- Walk into ACT’s main office and you’ll see **Rhommally Forbes** hard at work at her desk. The new office manager began this August. She comes from Washington, D.C. where she worked at Capital University of Integrative Medicine, an alternative medicine university. Forbes also is a free-lance writer with a children’s book *The Bear Family Saves Our Home* listed on Amazon.com. She also writes book reviews for the magazine *Art and Understanding* as well as other freelance jobs when they come along.
- **Carrie Griffith** is the new program manager for Supported Living services.
- Recently added to ACT as full-time training specialists are **Michelle Miller** and **Troy Brown**.
- **Mark Hassemer**, ACT executive director, is the 2000-01 president of the Rotary Club of Columbia-Northwest. Hassemer has been a member of the 130-member club for 17 years and has held numerous

positions. This year the club expects to launch a new literacy project with the Columbia Public Schools and the adult learning program. Projects, locally and internationally, drive Hassemer. He also enjoys visiting “outstanding individuals every week.”

**Bowling team takes shape.** Members of ACT’s Day Program are ready to bowl! They’ve already helped design their own custom-made T-shirts. Once staff levels permit such a venture later this fall, ACT’s first regular bowling activity will begin.

**Want to earn \$100?** Get a head start on Christmas cash this year. Earn a cool \$100 for referring a qualified applicant who is hired by ACT and works at least 16 hours over a six-month period. The only catch is that you can’t have staff recruitment/hiring in your job description. So hurry. Recruit a friend today. Offer is good only until October 31!

# Dream homes

*Sometime dreams come true.*

*So it has been for four ACT supported living clients, who moved into completely new houses during the past year.*

For Beth Goff and Christy Craig the transition means a large three-bedroom home built with 100 percent accessibility and other key issues in mind. Built in south Columbia, the home is near Christian Fellowship, a church Beth attends.

Lined with sidewalks, it's perfect for fresh-air outings through the neighborhood. Inside, hard surfaces and carpet, a door-opening remote control and other state-of-the-art features make the home ideal.

Impressionist prints, selected by Beth, line nearly every wall. And "all my favorite things that make me happy," fill Beth's bright room.

An arbor-covered patio lets in lots of sunlight into the spacious living room. Such a cheery environment matches the personalities of both Beth and Christy, adds Kelly Rojas, a third-year University of Missouri-Columbia occupational therapy student. "They're great to work with. The house is wonderful and Beth is one of my best teachers."

*Beth Goff, left, Christy Craig and Radar enjoy their new house designed and built by Beth's parents. The home was constructed by helpful neighbor and general contractor David Ellis.*



## A place called home

For Larry Benedict and Jimmy Noel home is where staff member Sharla Hyler hangs her hat. She's provided live-in support to Jimmy since 1991 and Larry for the past seven years.

This year Sharla and her husband, June, moved to a new two-level home in north Columbia so Larry and Jimmy soon found themselves in new quarters.

Their own basement-level space is equipped just the way Larry and Jimmy like—from their own kitchen to a comfortable living room with lots of shelves and a large TV.

"Larry wants his coffee first thing in the morning. He loves the kitchen," says Sharla. With their own kitchen, they have more initiative to keep it up. They have a greater sense

of ownership."

"I like living down here," says Larry, who works four days a week as a second-shift machine operator at ACT's tape and diskette operation.

Jimmy echoes his approval with a big smile. The location, near Columbia's Lange Middle School, allows Jimmy to see lots of kids and traffic every morning and afternoon. "Jimmy loves kids," says Sharla, "and he loves looking out his big window."

A dishwasher at Denny's for the past nine and one-half years, Jimmy also lines his room with crafts he's made at Central Methodist



*Jimmy Noel, left, and Larry Benedict share a well-equipped basement apartment with staff member Sharla Hyler and her husband, June.*

College where he often attends an art-related class. The class soon will be studying architecture, "so I'll be going to the library for architecture books pretty soon," Sharla says.

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