

# STATE GAZETTE

## Tennessee Rehabilitation Center holds annual luncheon

Saturday, November 20, 2010



Dr. Larry Blakeburn, pastor of Cumberland Presbyterian Church, was the featured speaker at the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center of Dyersburg's Disability Awareness Luncheon on Tuesday, Oct. 26. Blakeburn's talk centered on the attitude needed to lead a successful life - an attitude clients of the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center show each day in their commitment to succeed and put their best foot forward.



Michael Rose, Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Dyersburg's Client of the Year, was honored at the facility's 2010 Disability Awareness Luncheon.

The self-help market is flooded with books designed to teach people how to lead successful lives. Books and articles filled with sayings and strategies reminding those facing challenges to keep getting up, never give up and keep moving toward their goal.

Local residents and business leaders attending the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center's 2010 Disability Awareness Luncheon on Oct. 26 were treated to many of these strategies in an inspirational keynote address by Cumberland Presbyterian pastor Dr. Larry A. Blakeburn. The point was then driven home with a few short words from TRC Client and featured speaker Kelly Phillips.

Phillips, who sustained a traumatic brain injury in a car accident in April 2005, requested the opportunity to address residents attending the TRC's annual luncheon. Introduced by TRC Manager Ronda Baker, Phillips' short speech was a sharp reminder of the power of a positive

attitude.

"A person with a disability is more a determined worker because people have told them that they can't do it and they want to prove they can," said Phillips, who said she believed that there were areas in her life where she would never be able to improve until she became a TRC client. "Jennifer, a lady in speech, told me at my academic level, I could go to college."

"That's just an example of what we are all about here," said Baker. "Sometimes the TRC is just a stepping stone. Kelly now attends the TRC Center in Smyrna. She goes to college and does volunteer work. We are helping clients to reach their potential. That's what keeps the staff coming to work every day."

"I never miss a chance to do a little bit of education on what we do," said TRC Regional Supervisor Ken Arnold. "We are a part of Region 8, with centers in Dyersburg, Union City, Paris, Camden and Clarksville. Each facility has goals provided for them and the Dyersburg facility met all their goals. And they were the only (Region 8) center to do that."



Tennessee Rehabilitation Center client and featured speaker Kelly Phillips provided a refreshing perspective on the determination and work ethic needed to overcome disabilities like the brain injury she received in a serious car accident in 2005.

Awards presented at the luncheon included Client of the Year to Michael Rose; Employer of the Year to Food Rite of Newbern; and the Community Support Award to ERMCO.

Rose, described as a "man of few words", was recognized for his strong work ethic and willingness to fill in for others in his job at Food Mart in Newbern. He was also commended for his promptness - arriving to work on time or early, even though he walks to work the majority of the time.

"We are just very proud of him," said Rose's sisters Juanita Good and Carolyn Adams after the luncheon.

Food Rite of Newbern's Assistant Manager Fred Newman accepted the Employer of the Year Award on behalf of manager Nathan Barber, who was unable to attend the event. The company was honored for its work with Client of the Year Michael Rose, who is a valued employee of the Food Rite store.

ERMCO was presented the Community Support Award. The company was honored for

providing contract work for TRC clients, conducting the center's safety inspection, hosting a Christmas party for clients and "always being the first to give in the community" when local fundraising projects arise. ERMCO President and CEO Bill Reffert accepted the award.



Food Rite of Newbern's Assistant Manager Fred Newman receives the Employer of the Year Award from Tennessee Rehabilitation Center Manager Ronda Baker at the center's 2010 Disability Employment Awareness Luncheon.



ERMCO President and CEO Bill Reffert and Director of Human Resources Jerry Ray pose with an award presented to them by the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at its 2010 Disability Employment Awareness Luncheon.

The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center Board of Directors includes Chairman and State Advisory Board member Tyles Davenport, Vice-Chairman Jerry Ray, Mark Bowers, Marianna Williams, Darlene Bacigalupo Burks, Nancy Hurt, Emma Reynolds, Katie Winchester, LaMar Bartlett, Don Crews, Ray Lowrance, Ex-Officio Richard Hill and Ex-Officio John Holden, State Advisory Board member Kerrie Heckethorn and State Advisory Board member Eddie Brunswick, who will serve the organization as chairman next year.

TRC staff includes Regional Supervisor Kenneth Arnold, TRC Manager Ronda Baker, Rehabilitation Assistant James Murphy, Rehabilitation Assistant Dennis Prater, Vocational Evaluator Ellen Jackson, Placement Specialist Beverly Tipton, TRC Secretary Tammy Boxx, VR Counselor Chris McClimans, VR Counselor Ed Dodrill, VR Counselor Ashley Roberts, VR Secretary Sheila Weatherford, Transition School to Work Counselor Sherry Hill and TSW Secretary Celie Bonds.

Sponsors of the 2010 Disability Awareness Luncheon included First Citizens National Bank, First South Bank, First State Bank and Security Bank. Prater Catering Service prepared the meal, with Tennessee Technology Center at Newbern providing the sound system for the event.