



Archive News – December 2011

Aaron Kaufman of TILL, Inc. and Joan Arsenault, of MasSTex Imaging present Dysphagia Management Protocol at the 2011 ASHA Conference in San Diego, CA



Aaron Kaufman, MS, CCC-SLP, Speech and Language Pathologist at TILL, Inc., and Joan Arsenault, MA, CCC-SLP of MasSTex Imaging were recent presenters at the 2011 ASHA Conference in San Diego, CA. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention is the premier annual event for speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists. Bringing together more than 12,000 attendees, the annual Convention provides a once-a-year opportunity for speech and hearing professionals to learn about the latest evidence-based research, polish skills, improve techniques and gain new tools and resources.

Aaron and Joan presented “A Dysphagia Management Protocol for Individuals with Severe-Profound Developmental Disabilities” based on the results of their combined research. In their presentation, they described the ways swallowing disorders are managed at TILL, the important role of staff/caregivers and techniques/forms to improve communication, and the essential information a Modified Barium Swallow Study (MBSS) can yield.

When an individual presents with a swallowing disorder but is not able to tell what is wrong or use strategies to make swallowing easier and safer, a method is needed to identify signs of a problem and use strategies that do not require the individual to follow directions, such as giving extra time between bites, thickening liquids, or changing the texture of food. Often times, it is still difficult to know what is causing the problem and which strategies are the most effective. MasSTex Imaging uses a mobile imaging unit to perform the MBSS, bringing all the necessary equipment to the individual. The technician is then able to see how the individual is chewing and swallowing, using a video x-ray.

Congratulations to both Aaron and Joan for their well-received presentation and taking the opportunity to share their expertise with others helping to manage swallowing disorders for individuals with disabilities.

TILL's 2011 International Ambassador Trip *Costa Rica*

TILL developed the International Ambassador program, a service learning and cultural exchange program which began in 2001 with the vision to enhance professional growth through training, education and implementation of new ideas. Beginning with a trip to China, TILL has seized the opportunity to both broaden our knowledge and share our strong foundation as connections have been developed with human services organizations around the globe. TILL Ambassadors, comprised of staff and individuals we serve, have visited Denmark, Hungary, Poland and London with a strong resume of successes. Several visits to London have cemented our relationship with a sister organization, Langdon. Both TILL and Langdon staff and individuals engaged in a “work exchange”, where they changed places at supported employment and day program sites.



TILL's International Ambassadors Paula Aiesi, Molly Maher, Hector Melendez, and Svetlana Magao recently travelled to the San Jose area of Costa Rica where they visited several national and nonprofit agencies to learn about the successes and challenges that these organizations face. The Ambassadors are preparing a presentation to share their experiences in the near future.

TILL's Essence of Thyme Café (ETC) selected "Best Window Display in Hyde Park"

In Round One of Mayor Menino's 2011 Deck the Windows of Boston Main Streets Contest, TILL's Essence of Thyme Café was named "Best Window Display in Hyde Park" and went on to compete as a finalist with 17 other businesses city-wide for the "Best Window Display in Boston". A friendly competition, Deck the Windows focuses on businesses located in a Boston Main Streets district. The general public was invited to vote online, by phone or by test for their favorite in window display. ETC earned a respectable share of the votes in this popular contest and although we did not win the overall competition, we are very proud of our place in our local community, on the Main Streets of Hyde Park.



Essence of Thyme Catering Cafe and Gift Shop (ETC) is more than just delicious food, reasonable prices, and a welcoming atmosphere. Part of TILL's entrepreneurial food service program, ETC has a fully licensed kitchen where contracted catered meals are prepared and delivered to schools and public and private companies. Breakfast and lunches are prepared by the individuals who attend ETC for training in culinary arts or crafts. Artisans and chefs help individuals learn new skills and refine those they already possess. Stop by for a cup of delicious coffee and browse our unique gift items.

TILL's Handle With Care Chorus Performs at Talent Show

The TILL Handle With Care Chorus' premier performance impressed the crowd at last spring at TILL's Cultural Festival and have gone on to captivate an even bigger audience.

The TILL Handle With Care Chorus recently performed "With a Little Help from My Friends" at a Talent Show sponsored by the Central Middlesex Area of the Department of Developmental Services. Held at the Cotting School in Lexington on November 6, 2011, the event showcased the talents of singers, dancers, comedians, and musicians of all abilities and a silent auction raised funds to provide gifts for needy individuals. The noncompetitive performance was planned as opportunity for people who have talent to perform and in the process help and support others.



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