

August 8, 2019

Sheila Schulte, CESP
Training Advancement Skills in the Community
2213 Mount Olivet Road NW
Waukon, IA 52172

Dear Ms. Schulte:

It is my pleasure to inform you that Training Advancement Skills in the Community has been issued CARF accreditation based on its recent survey. The Three-Year Accreditation applies to the following program(s)/service(s):

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development
Community Housing
Community Integration
Supported Living

This accreditation will extend through June 30, 2022. This achievement is an indication of your organization's dedication and commitment to improving the quality of the lives of the persons served. Services, personnel, and documentation clearly indicate an established pattern of conformance to standards.

The accreditation report is intended to support a continuation of the quality improvement of your organization's program(s)/service(s). It contains comments on your organization's strengths as well as any consultation and recommendations. A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) demonstrating your organization's efforts to implement the survey recommendation(s) must be submitted within the next 90 days to retain accreditation. The QIP form is posted on Customer Connect (customerconnect.carf.org); CARF's secure, dedicated website for accredited organizations and organizations seeking accreditation. Please log on to Customer Connect and follow the guidelines contained in the QIP form.

Your organization should take pride in achieving this high level of accreditation. CARF will recognize this accomplishment in its listing of organizations with accreditation and encourages your organization to make its accreditation known throughout the community. Communication of the accreditation to your referral and funding sources, the media, and local and federal government officials can promote and distinguish your organization. Enclosed are some materials that will help you publicize this achievement.

Your organization's complimentary accreditation certificate will be sent separately. You may use the enclosed form to order additional certificates.

If you have any questions regarding your organization's accreditation or the QIP, you are encouraged to seek support from John Richer by email at jricher@carf.org or telephone at (888) 281-6531, extension 7112.

CARF encourages your organization to continue fully and productively using the CARF standards as part of its ongoing commitment to accreditation. CARF commends your organization's commitment and consistent efforts to improve the quality of its program(s)/service(s) and looks forward to working with your organization in its ongoing pursuit of excellence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian J. Boon, Ph.D." in a cursive script.

Brian J. Boon, Ph.D.
President/CEO

Enclosures

CARF Accreditation Report
for
Training Advancement Skills in the
Community

Three-Year Accreditation



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About CARF

CARF is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services, enhancing the lives of persons served worldwide.

The accreditation process applies CARF's internationally recognized standards during an on-site survey conducted by peer surveyors. Accreditation, however, is an ongoing process that distinguishes a provider's service delivery and signals to the public that the provider is committed to continuous performance improvement, responsive to feedback, and accountable to the community and its other stakeholders.

CARF accreditation promotes providers' demonstration of value and Quality Across the Lifespan® of millions of persons served through application of rigorous organizational and program standards organized around the ASPIRE to Excellence® continuous quality improvement framework. CARF accreditation has been the recognized benchmark of quality health and human services for more than 50 years.

For more information or to contact CARF, please visit www.carf.org/contact-us.

Organization

Training Advancement Skills in the Community
2213 Mount Olivet Road NW
Waukon, IA 52172

Organizational Leadership

Steven Perkins, DO, President - Board of Directors

Survey Number

118028

Survey Date(s)

June 17, 2019–June 18, 2019
July 2, 2019–July 3, 2019

Surveyor(s)

Marilyn J. Flanagan, MBA, QIDP, Administrative
Tiffany D. Byers-Draeger, Program
Mary Allen, Program

Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development
Community Housing
Community Integration
Supported Living

Previous Survey

May 9, 2016–May 10, 2016
Three-Year Accreditation

Accreditation Decision**Three-Year Accreditation**

Expiration: June 30, 2022

Executive Summary

This report contains the findings of CARF's on-site survey of Training Advancement Skills in the Community conducted June 17, 2019–June 18, 2019 and July 2, 2019–July 3, 2019. This report includes the following information:

- Documentation of the accreditation decision and the basis for the decision as determined by CARF's consideration of the survey findings.
- Identification of the specific program(s)/service(s) and location(s) to which this accreditation decision applies.
- Identification of the CARF surveyor(s) who conducted the survey and an overview of the CARF survey process and how conformance to the standards was determined.
- Feedback on the organization's strengths and recognition of any areas where the organization demonstrated exemplary conformance to the standards.
- Documentation of the specific sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey.
- Recommendations for improvement in any areas where the organization did not meet the minimum requirements to demonstrate full conformance to the standards.
- Any consultative suggestions documented by the surveyor(s) to help the organization improve its program(s)/service(s) and business operations.

Accreditation Decision

On balance, Training Advancement Skills in the Community demonstrated substantial conformance to the standards. Training Advancement Skills in the Community (TASC) provides high-quality community employment services, community integration, community housing, and supported living that are valued and respected by stakeholders and the community where the organization is well known. The organization clearly demonstrates its continuing desire to grow and evolve as the needs of the persons served and the requirements of funders change. It benefits from a dedicated and supportive board; the vigorous leadership of the executive director; and the enthusiastic provision of individualized services by highly trained, competent, and professional staff members. The organization provides services in pleasant and comfortable environments in its facilities, including the residences it operates. It proactively engages in partnerships and other community-based relationships and activities that are anticipated to accrue to the benefit of the persons served. The organization incorporates the CARF standards in its day-to-day business functions and service delivery practices, and its practices reflect that the leadership and staff members embrace continuous quality improvement. Across the board, persons served, family members, guardians, business owners, and other stakeholders expressed a high level of satisfaction with the organization and with its staff members and services. The few opportunities for improvement are scattered throughout the ASPIRE to Excellence standards sections. They include the consistent updating of the organization's fee structures, the comprehensiveness of written procedures regarding critical incidents, the consistent availability of written emergency procedures in the vehicle(s) used to transport persons served, and the incorporation of a definition of formal complaint in the formal complaint policy and written procedure for persons served. The receptivity of the leadership and staff members to the consultation and other feedback provided during this survey instills confidence that TASC possesses the willingness and capacity to bring it into full conformance to the standards.

Training Advancement Skills in the Community appears likely to maintain and/or improve its current method of operation and demonstrates a commitment to ongoing quality improvement. Training Advancement Skills in the Community is required to submit a post-survey Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to CARF that addresses all recommendations identified in this report.

Training Advancement Skills in the Community has earned a Three-Year Accreditation. The leadership team and staff are complimented and congratulated for this achievement. In order to maintain this accreditation, throughout the term of accreditation, the organization is required to:

- Submit annual reporting documents and other required information to CARF, as detailed in the Accreditation Policies and Procedures section in the standards manual.
- Maintain ongoing conformance to CARF's standards, satisfy all accreditation conditions, and comply with all accreditation policies and procedures, as they are published and made effective by CARF.

Survey Details

Survey Participants

The survey of Training Advancement Skills in the Community was conducted by the following CARF surveyor(s):

- Marilyn J. Flanagan, MBA, QIDP, Administrative
- Tiffany D. Byers-Draeger, Program
- Mary Allen, Program

CARF considers the involvement of persons served to be vital to the survey process. As part of the accreditation survey for all organizations, CARF surveyors interact with and conduct direct, confidential interviews with consenting current and former persons served in the program(s)/service(s) for which the organization is seeking accreditation. In addition, as applicable and available, interviews may be conducted with family members and/or representatives of the persons served such as guardians, advocates, or members of their support system.

Interviews are also conducted with individuals associated with the organization, as applicable, which may include:

- The organization's leadership, such as board members, executives, owners, and managers.
- Business unit resources, such as finance and human resources.
- Personnel who serve and directly interact with persons served in the program(s)/service(s) for which the organization is seeking accreditation.
- Other stakeholders, such as referral sources, payers, insurers, and fiscal intermediaries.
- Community constituents and governmental representatives.

Survey Activities

Achieving CARF accreditation involves demonstrating conformance to the applicable CARF standards, evidenced through observable practices, verifiable results over time, and comprehensive supporting documentation. The survey of Training Advancement Skills in the Community and its program(s)/service(s) consisted of the following activities:

- Confidential interviews and direct interactions, as outlined in the previous section.
- Direct observation of the organization's operations and service delivery practices.
- Observation of the organization's location(s) where services are delivered.

- Review of organizational documents, which may include policies; plans; written procedures; promotional materials; governing documents, such as articles of incorporation and bylaws; financial statements; and other documents necessary to determine conformance to standards.
- Review of documents related to program/service design, delivery, outcomes, and improvement, such as program descriptions, records of services provided, documentation of reviews of program resources and services conducted, and program evaluations.
- Review of records of current and former persons served.

Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed

The survey addressed by this report is specific to the following program(s)/service(s):

- Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
- Community Employment Services: Job Development
- Community Housing
- Community Integration
- Supported Living

A list of the organization's accredited program(s)/service(s) by location is included at the end of this report.

Representations and Constraints

The accreditation decision and survey findings contained in this report are based on an on-balance consideration of the information obtained by the surveyor(s) during the on-site survey. Any information that was unavailable, not presented, or outside the scope of the survey was not considered and, had it been considered, may have affected the contents of this report. If at any time CARF subsequently learns or has reason to believe that the organization did not participate in the accreditation process in good faith or that any information presented was not accurate, truthful, or complete, CARF may modify the accreditation decision, up to and including revocation of accreditation.

Survey Findings

This report provides a summary of the organization's strengths and identifies the sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey and the findings in each area. In conjunction with its evaluation of conformance to the specific program/service standards, CARF assessed conformance to its business practice standards, referred to as Section 1. ASPIRE to Excellence, which are designed to support the delivery of the program(s)/service(s) within a sound business operating framework to promote long-term success.

The specific standards applied from each section vary based on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, the scope(s) of the program(s)/service(s), population(s) served, location(s), methods of service delivery, and survey type. Information about the specific standards applied on each survey is included in the standards manual and other instructions that may be provided by CARF.

Areas of Strength

CARF found that Training Advancement Skills in the Community demonstrated the following strengths:

- People who visit the TASC facilities are immediately greeted by the organization's calm and supportive aura. Inside and out, its curved walls, calm colors, and relaxing furniture facilitate the provision of services and activities in a stress-free environment. The interior walls are adorned with artwork and inspirational quotes of persons served, past and present photographs, and open doorways that encourage conversation and ongoing interaction among staff members, persons served, and visitors. A porch with wooden swings and chairs acts as an extension of the organization's day habilitation area, and a game room lends itself to casual interactions. The open doors in all areas mean that persons served have immediate, ongoing access to program staff members and leadership. The organization's offices even have windows in lieu of full floor-to-ceiling walls.
- The executive director, in her new role at TASC, has already put her fingerprint on the organization. She has revamped the way that various facility spaces are used, implemented a successor-plan binder for herself, and begun a similar process for department heads. She is also undertaking a review of the organization's policies and procedures to ensure that its current practices and protocols are accurately detailed.
- Exceptionally enthusiastic and dedicated board members function as a true support system for the new executive director. The board makeup ensures that the needs of the persons served, employees, and community are addressed. An employee or person served is invited to each board meeting to give a short talk that highlights what is being done and what is needed by the boots on the ground.
- The employees of TASC, many of whom have long tenure with the organization, expressed high levels of satisfaction with their jobs. They go above and beyond to support the persons served, and they carry out their responsibilities with great competency and professionalism. Staff members demonstrate a dedication to the organization's mission and work together on an ongoing basis to improve its services. This is particularly noteworthy, given that the preferred model for vocational services undergoes continuous change.
- TASC provides exceptional staff training. Recent initiatives in this regard included a demonstration of skills to enhance staff members' ability to serve persons with visual limitations that was occasioned by a newly-admitted person served and "Can You Hear Me?" training to enhance employees' skills in supporting the persons served. The organization's commitment to its staff members is also reflected in personnel benefit packages that far exceed those typically offered by similar providers. Furthermore, TASC reaches out via its website and Facebook page to recruit staff members and to communicate with internal and external stakeholders on an ongoing basis.
- TASC has added a Fitness Inspired Together (FIT) exercise building where persons served and employees have the opportunity to engage in a 14 Weeks to a Healthier You program. Equipment available includes exercise bikes, treadmills, weights, and a golf simulator.
- TASC's programming areas were specifically designed for the populations served. They include laundry facilities, a roll-in shower, and a full kitchen where cooking activities take place. A simulator is even available for those who wish to learn to drive a car. The persons served clearly have opportunities for choice in their activities. During this survey, sign-up sheets for upcoming community outings were posted on the wall.
- The organization has benefited from many financial contributions over the years from pleased families of persons served. Contributions made the Jeanne Rooney Memorial Garden possible as well as the Mettille Room, which provides a comfortable environment with homelike furniture and casual décor for service planning meetings.
- The very comprehensive, organized, and detailed nature of TASC's records and documents reflects the high priority placed on the organization's administrative systems. Records of the persons served are also well organized, and documents are consistently filed, making their review very easy. The organization is further complimented for the ease in retrieval of information at all levels of service.

- TASC employees demonstrate a respect for the cultural diversity of the persons served. They offer a variety of unique activity options, which the persons served are free to participate in or decline.
- A full calendar of activities and choices was evident in TASC's community integration/day habilitation groups. For example, the interest list for the month of July included fitness; cooking; karaoke; art; social club; movie club; singing; the library; carnival day; and community events, such as the community fair and Music in the Park. Staff members and persons served appeared to be happy and very busy. At monthly meetings of the persons served as well as the advisory committee for persons served, persons served help select special events and add new activities to the activity calendar. Parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with all the activities and community outings offered by TASC.
- TASC maintains strong partnerships with community businesses. Business leaders expressed a long-lasting commitment to work with the organization in achieving "win-win" employment services. They stated that they are highly satisfied with the organization's employment services and indicated that the services make their jobs and lives easier. Their comments included, "They are like family"; "Staff are real and care, [and] they are always working to improve"; "There is great communication"; "They are reliable and friendly"; and "Services are of high caliber and quality with productive results." The support provided to the organization by families of persons served and other community members is also very significant in this regard.
- The well-maintained homes operated by TASC promote a positive image in the community. The persons served who reside therein choose the decorations for their bedrooms as well as décor for the rest of the home. The residences look and feel like family homes. Although health and safety items are present, staff members ensure that they are located in unobtrusive places that do not attract attention or give an institutional appearance.
- TASC is very well known and respected in the community. External stakeholders were complimentary regarding the organization's services. They noted that staff members quickly respond to their communications; proactively change goals for persons served when needed or desired, actively listen to the persons served, and write plans in the language of the person served, when appropriate, to ensure that he/she is heard.
- Family members stated that TASC is the best organization in the area. A family member commented that he gives his highest commendation to the organization and also said that he has referred many people to it. Another family member remarked that receiving services from TASC has been life changing for her family member. She stated that the organization encourages persons served to be their personal best. She also noted that her family member is much more confident and outgoing since beginning services at TASC. Furthermore, she stated that her family member now has friends at the organization, whom she considers her TASC family.
- Guardians expressed a high level of satisfaction with the services and staff members of TASC. They commented, "They are always willing to help"; "They helped my sister get back to her livelihood again"; "They take the bull by the horns and get things done"; "They are on top of it"; "They are there and present"; "They are like angels"; "They are a life partner for them and us"; and "They are super, and we love them all." Several parents emotionally told the stories of how they became aware of TASC and how that encounter turned things around for their loved ones. Many stated they are not sure what they would do without the organization.
- Persons served expressed great satisfaction with the services they receive from TASC and stated that they are happy to be there. They indicated that they like their staff members and that staff members help them. They also demonstrated that they know how to contact staff members after hours, if needed. One inspiring statement of a person served included, "The main thing is [to] never give up on yourself."