

Kaleidoscope Project

The Kaleidoscope Project, a unique partnership with Asolo Repertory Theatre and Community Haven for Adults and Children with Disabilities, had an amazing summer show. “Unwritten,” was a complete collaborative effort with both staff and consumers having creative input. For example, the actors created scenes such as “a western set in Hollywood” and the cast beautifully created “Heaven” on stage.

There were 18 consumers in the summer program at Asolo Repertory Theatre and every individual showed impressive growth in the five-week process. The success stories were many but a few stood out among the rest.

Teresa joined the summer program for the first time. She had some doubts about her abilities due to her physical limitations and at one point thought she would not be returning for a second season, it was all “a little too much for her.” By show time, Teresa was glowing with a smile from ear to ear; dancing about the stage, her physical limitations forgotten. She served as an example on stage by finding elements of her own comedic timing, creative personality and graceful movement. Teresa

said, with tears in her eyes she will be returning to Asolo Repertory Theatre next summer. She loved it!

Patricia has been with Kaleidoscope for the last three summers but this year she really blossomed. Patricia energetically served as a leader for the group, as well as lead actor in opening and closing “Unwritten.” She showed initiative and commitment throughout the summer. Patricia excelled in dance where in years past, this had been a challenge. Staff found her motivated in dance; she memorized all the choreography and knew exactly the precise moment to speak her lines. In addition, Patricia was featured in an article with The Sarasota Herald Tribune where she spoke authentically and eloquently about the program. She played a “sheriff” onstage in one of her scenes and offstage she was the official Kaleidoscope “sheriff.”



In addition, Alison and David were a part of the program last summer and were not able to attend this summer because they had jobs in the community. This is a testament to the goal of both programs to help consumers gain confidence and ability to ultimately interact positively in the community. With the encouragement of both Community Haven and Kaleidoscope, this goal was achieved.

Hugh was another newcomer to Kaleidoscope. He came tight fisted and quiet, not emotionally available to speak to anyone. Through Tai Chi, which was practiced each morning, his body began to open, his fists relaxed and his face softened. Socially, he began to speak with anyone who walked in the door. It was true evidence that through theatre, people are able to open socially, emotionally and physically. Hugh accomplished all three. When he stood on the stage for the very first time in front of over 300 people, he was relaxed, self-confident and personally committed to his performance and not his challenges.

