

Sugar Plum visions

News from Sugar Plum Bakery

Spring 2011

Executive Director celebrates 10 years with Sugar Plum

The first time Patricia Rakes Clark toured Sugar Plum Bakery, she felt an instant connection. "I knew that it was something special and that I wanted to be a part of it." Patricia, a '94 graduate of Johnson & Wales Culinary School, dove into her role of executive director head first by learning and working every detailed aspect of the bakery. "It is so much more than a job. To be able to serve and make a difference in peoples' lives on a daily basis is incredibly rewarding."

Over the last 10 years, Patricia Rakes Clark has been at the helm of Sugar Plum's amazing growth. Today, the bakery employs 45 staff members, 24 of whom are persons with disabilities. She was a first-hand witness to the love and support from the Hampton Roads community as the bakery's capital campaign exceeded its campaign goal. Programs include: community placements, two Medicaid Prevocational groups and our high school Transition Program. We currently provide transportation to our afternoon Medicaid prevocational individuals.

Q&A with Patricia Rakes Clark:

Most rewarding experience, thus far?

The successful completion of the capital campaign! Our current facility allows Sugar Plum to fulfill our mission of serving individuals with disabilities. It was and still is incredible to see the support we receive from the community.

What are your hopes for the future of Sugar Plum?

As an organization, I hope that we can lead by example in educating people on what individuals with disabilities are able to achieve. I also hope we continue to build sales that will help sustain the mission.

What is your favorite Sugar Plum treat?

Chocolate Divine is my favorite individual dessert (warmed) and my favorite cake is the Chocolate Mousse.

Personal Mantra? (she smiles) "Live in the moment." This is something that I have learned from working with individuals with disabilities. I try very hard each day to be in the moment, I am not sure it is ever mastered, it is an ongoing practice.



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Volunteer Spotlight: Ms. Jean Becker

Thursdays will not be the same without Miss Jean. After 17 years of volunteering, she is hanging up her apron.

Miss Jean Becker is an amazing community volunteer. She has shared her time and skills with the SPCA, the Beach Health Clinic, and Sugar Plum Bakery. She began volunteering with Sugar Plum 17 years ago and has been a constant in the bakery ever since. Through thick and thin, Miss Jean has seen it all and has shared in the joys created by the hard work of Sugar Plum employees.

Helping customers with cake orders, Miss Jean was always quick to share suggestions on what desserts to take home from the bakery cases. Ms. Jean has not tried all of the cakes, but loves the four-layer cakes because you get more icing! She especially loves the Chocolate Mousse cake.

Ms. Jean has promised to come back and visit and we are holding her to it. Ms. Jean, thank you for 17 wonderful years! We will miss you.

Inside:
Amerigroup
Foundation
supports
Sugar Plum with
\$25,000 gift



Our Mission

The mission of Sugar Plum Bakery is to serve the needs of persons with disabilities through training, employment, and education. Sugar Plum Bakery will promote the integration of people with mental and physical disabilities into society by helping them become independent and working, contributing members of our communities.

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Patricia Rakes Clark
Executive Director

Dear friends and neighbors

I would like to begin by taking the opportunity to say thank you to all of you who remembered Sugar Plum in your year-end giving, as well as those that gave throughout 2010. I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to our dear friends at Amerigroup.



We are honored that Sugar Plum was chosen as the recent recipient of a generous gift from the Amerigroup Foundation, which will allow us to accomplish a much needed, long-term goal—the construction of a universally accessible entryway.

As I write this letter, I must note that we have been gearing up and looking forward to the Sugar Plum Golf Classic scheduled for Tuesday, April 26th. It is always exciting to see friends and supporters of Sugar Plum coming together to raise money for the bakery's endowment fund. I look forward to seeing you there and breaking last year's amount. We can do it!

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Patricia Rakes Clark on her 10 years as executive director. Her dedication and commitment have truly helped drive the organization and make a difference in the lives of many.

Thank you again to all of you who support the mission of Sugar Plum Bakery. It is because of you, we are a success.

Warmest regards,

Thad Nowak, President, Sugar Plum Board of Directors



A Transition into Employment

Sugar Plum's Transition Program will wrap up its sixth year in June. Each year the Transition Program helps six local high school students by teaching them how to communicate with co-workers and staff, how to complete tasks and computer skills. We strive to teach skills that will help these students become employable valued workers in our community.

After spring break, students with disabilities from Virginia Beach high schools apply to this program. With the assistance of teachers and parents, students fill out applications and prepare for the interview. Each student interviews at Sugar Plum Bakery. Applicants are chosen by Sugar Plum's job specialists and group leaders based on those they feel will most benefit from this program.

Jean Marie, a 2010 graduate of Ocean Lakes High School, participated in the Transition Program from September 2009 to June 2010. In this program Jean Marie learned to make cookies and cakes; she also worked with customers and helped to box orders of various baked goods.

Jean Marie has now exited the Transition Program and is currently working with Linda, (Sugar Plum Bakery job specialist) in job development. Jean Marie is currently looking for a job and has applied to a variety of local businesses.

With many individuals with disabilities remaining unemployed after high school, programs like Sugar Plum Bakery's Transition Program are essential in preparing people with disabilities for employment opportunities. We have successfully placed six former Transition students into competitive employment. We are currently working with three former students in job development.

Sugar Plum Visions is published by the board of directors of Sugar Plum, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides an employment program for the developmentally disabled. If you have questions or comments, please contact Patricia Rakes Clark, Executive Director, Sugar Plum Bakery, 1353 Laskin Road, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451, (757) 422-3913. Email: sugarplumbakery@verizon.net

Sugar Plum contributors

Regular support from the community enables Sugar Plum Bakery to continue meeting its mission of serving individuals with disabilities. As always, we appreciate every gift that comes to us, and we offer sincere thanks to all of our donors. The following is a list of donors who made contributions between September 1, 2010 and February 28, 2011.

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Amerigroup Foundation supports Sugar Plum with \$25,000 gift

The simple action of opening the bakery's front door for an employee with a physical disability instantly detracts from Sugar Plum's mission—to help individuals with disabilities become independent.

On February 28, Amerigroup Foundation representatives proudly presented a check in the amount of \$25,000 to Sugar Plum Bakery's staff and board members. This generous gift will go toward the construction of a small atrium to be built at the bakery's entrance, as well as the installation of double, automatic doors that will open via sensor. "I use a walker. The doors will allow me to enter and exit on my own," explained Ms. Annie, a current employee. Tony, a Virginia Beach transition student with Cerebral Palsy, added, "I'll be able to enter the bakery without assistance. The old doors are too heavy."

"We are proud of and committed to the work of Sugar Plum Bakery. They affect so many in the community and we are happy to make it more accessible than it is today," shared John Littel,



John Littel, Amerigroup Foundation Chairman, and Jim Carlson, Amerigroup Chairman and CEO, present a \$25,000 check to Thad Nowak and Patricia Rakes Clark.

chair of the Amerigroup Foundation. Board and staff members of the foundation enjoyed meeting the individuals that will benefit from this gift, a guided tour of the bakery, and a sampling of Sugar Plum's signature cake, The Mozart.

Skills, life lessons and confidence: fresh from the oven.

Sugar Plum Bakery
1353 Laskin Road
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451

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Hop in soon for our Eastertime treats:

Hot Cross Buns, bunnies both big and small,
egg-shaped cakes made with yellow cake
or carrot cake, and more!

Cakes of the Month

April: Coconut Cake

Two whole layers of moist, yellow, coconut-flavored cake filled and iced with butter cream icing. The entire cake is then coated in coconut flakes and topped with butter cream rosettes and maraschino cherries.

May: Red Velvet Cake

Three split layers of red velvet cake filled and iced with our made-from-scratch cream cheese frosting.

Mother's Day

Make this Mother's Day a memorable one filled with Sugar Plum Bakery goodies. We are offering a variety of delicious cakes, cupcakes, and cookies that are sure to delight. Stop by and just see what we are baking for her special day.



Graduation

After all those years of work, doesn't your graduate deserve a personalized cake? Bring us a photo of your grad and we'll transfer the image onto the cake, or decorate it with the traditional cap and diploma scroll—we can even match school colors. All sizes are available, small to large. We look forward to helping you create the perfect cake.

Join the Plum Club for sweet savings

Sign up for our Plum Club at www.sugarplumbakery.org and receive advance notice on special bakery events, promotions, and our e-only offers. For a limited time, new members receive **20% off** on any special order cake. Coupon or email must be presented at time of payment.



For more information, call 422-3913 or visit the bakery at 1353 Laskin Road.