



“Hope is
being able
to see that
there is light
despite all of
the darkness.”

— Desmond Tutu

casa's support plans - part six

This year we are discussing the components of Casa's Support Plans, highlighting one every month. Please take this opportunity to learn more about these plans and the impact they have on our residents. Our subject this month is **WORK/MEANINGFUL ACTIVITY**.

This month we will focus on a 'double success' - one of our residents who proved he could be successful at his job while going to school to prepare himself for a career.

Jon Virshup moved into Casa in 2007. When his job development with Casa staff initially started, he told Casa how he hadn't been able to keep a job in the past, but would like to work for pay. He told us about his last job — which ended before his first day was over! Not defeated, Jon was certain he could work and it appeared he just hadn't been put in a position where he could succeed. Casa was determined to help Jon prove he had what it took to earn a paycheck. With the support of Casa's job developer, Jon was hired by a local storage facility checking locks on the units, running errands and keeping the place tidy. Since his first day Jon has done a great job and recently celebrated his nine year anniversary with that company! His manager says he is a studious and diligent worker and is impressed that Jon is committed to his job and that he is always on time.



Jon has always been interested in video editing and a few years ago he began going to the local college, with the goal of getting a diploma for Post Production. Jon's dedication was impressive and each semester he took the required classes to achieve his goal. During finals Jon would sequester while he worked hard to get a good grade. Last December Jon completed his program and received a diploma of completion in Post Production — the first Casa resident to get a diploma from our local college! When asked what his plans for the future are, Jon replied he is already enrolled to get a higher degree and continue with his schooling. Congratulations Jon, your hard work proves you are more than capable — and can succeed at anything you put your mind to!



in memoriam

Casa de Amma held the first memorial service for one of it's residents on April 28th. Many gathered; residents, staff, families and members of the local community, to remember the life of **Jorge Solano**. The memorial perfectly reflected the life of Jorge — meaningful, unassuming, beautiful, and memorable. With about seventy people in attendance, the program included a video tribute, people sharing their memories and a tree dedication in Jorge's honor.

Those in attendance would agree that the most meaningful part of the service was the people who shared how Jorge's life had impacted them and how his kindness, joy and love for life encouraged them to be more present in their day-to-day lives. Tears were shed by nearly everyone but smiles and laughter were as well as fond memories and stories were exchanged. One resident recalled how Jorge was always nice to others and in a genuine moment reflected, “We all need to be more like Jorge. We all need to be more willing to get along and be kind.”

The memorial concluded with the dedication of a tree in front of Casa and the burying of a box Jorge had given to the staff as a gift. In the box were handwritten messages with what everyone remembered about Jorge. In closing we reflected on the tree and how each year we will be reminded of life. There will be moments of spring where things are new, and opportunities abound. There will be moments of summer, where life is full, and all is going well. There will be moments of autumn where leaves change colors and though they fall to the ground they display their beauty. And there will be winter, where life feels cold and hope seems distant. No matter what season we find ourselves in, Jorge's life and legacy reminds us of gratitude, joy and loving others in all the seasons of life. For that and so much more we will always remember Jorge Solano and the powerful legacy he left us all.



www.casadeamma.org