

# Employment for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities/Mental Illness: *Forensic/Sex Offending Behaviors*



**Chris Snell, Director of Specialized  
Employment Services (SES) at CLASS, Inc.**

**Dr. Paul Van Almkerk, Clinical and  
Organizational Consultant to the SES  
program**



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# Welcome!

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  - You can type questions about the material presented in the **Q&A** section.
  - You can **raise your hand** and we'll pause to let you speak if we have time.
- ▣ Today's webinar will be **recorded and archived** on the NCCJD website. Please keep this in mind when sharing information and experiences during the webinar.

# Introduction of Presenters

- ▣ Chris Snell
- ▣ Dr. Paul Van Almkerk

# CLASS Agency Overview

- ▣ Founded in 1976, CLASS Inc. empowers people with disabilities through supports and services to promote personal choice, growth , and full participation in their communities.
- ▣ Agency sites in Lawrence and Wilmington serve more than 400 individuals from 40 communities.
- ▣ For more agency information please visit [www.classinc.org](http://www.classinc.org)

# SES Program Overview

- ❑ Located in a former mill building dating back to the 1800's when the city of Lawrence, MA was recognized as a major wool-processing center until the 1950's.
- ❑ Environmental setting includes 7 “homebases” that are rooms containing clusters of individuals.
- ❑ Each homebase is populated based on specific needs, supervision, compatibility, and vocational skills. These homebases are re-clustered at least twice annually to transition individuals to more appropriate areas dependent on their successes and challenges over the previous six months.

# SES Program Overview

- ▣ On-site employment opportunities
  - contracted piece work
    - ▣ shipping/handling, collating, assembly
    - ▣ producing work on looms for social enterprise company
  - in-house vocational opportunities (competitive wage)
    - ▣ maintenance
    - ▣ mail delivery
    - ▣ landscaping external site property
    - ▣ warehouse material handling employment

# SES Program Overview

- ▣ Off-site employment opportunities
  - ▣ local lumberyard involving janitorial responsibilities
  - ▣ local warehouse assembling production materials

# Polling Question

**What is the current number of sex offenders in U.S.?**



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# SES Best Practices Overview

- ▣ The program Best Practices contain a detailed overview of the program mission and values, as well as a multi-tiered service delivery model of universal expectations and individualized supports for all participants.

# Agency Collaborations

- ▣ Currently the SES program's census consists of individuals supported residentially by eleven state funded provider agencies.
- ▣ The funding sources for these providers-
  - Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
  - Department of Mental Health (DMH)
  - Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)
  - Department of Education (DOE)

# Interoffice Mail Vocational Opportunity



# Fabric Loom ~ Social Enterprise



# Polling Question

**Individuals with ID represent almost 3% of the U.S. population. What percentage is currently represented in prison or jail?**



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# Program Individuals Profiles

- ▣ Current census of 58 individuals
  - 8 Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB) leveled individuals (5 Level Two, 3 Level Three)
  - 5 additional individuals currently on probation
  - 7 individuals forensically involved within last two years
  - 3 individuals currently residing at regional inpatient stabilization unit
  - 2 individuals discharged from regional inpatient stabilization unit to group residences in last six months

# Individual Profiles

- ▣ Most prevalent and challenging diagnoses
  - 18 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
  - 10 Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) / Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)
  - 10 psychotic disorder
  - 6 Personality Disorder

The commonality within the population of individuals supported in the program is that the vast majority are multi-diagnosed.

# Polling Question

**An English research study examined 103 sex offenders with developmental disabilities. What percentage did they find had re-offended after 6 years?**



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# Program Staff Profile

- ▣ 13 FT frontline staff positions (1/2 of staff have at least undergraduate degrees)
- ▣ Case coordinator, behavior specialist, program manager, program director
- ▣ Supports by production coordinator and employment manager responsible for acquisition and oversight of employment contracts

# Polling Question

**What percentage of all reported sexual offenses are committed by individuals with developmental disabilities?**



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# Internal and External Program Challenges

- ▣ Funding
- ▣ Staffing
- ▣ Sheltered and community employment
- ▣ Risk reduction
- ▣ Managing behaviors vs. supporting/treating the whole person

# Case Study

▣ “Peter”



# Next Webinar

- ▣ Attend the next webinar on **November 20<sup>th</sup>: Laura Usher from NAMI talks about CIT**
- ▣ Sign up to receive email alerts
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# Questions?

## Survey:

- <http://fs8.formsite.com/thearcwebinar/form49/index.html>

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