



SHIFTING SANDS

PCI's President Message

Customer satisfaction

"If your job is customer satisfaction, your real job is problem solver." --Brian Tracy

Porto Charities and Porto 104 have lots of customers. Every young man or woman with a disability wants to lead a life like everyone else in the community. So yes, we are in the customer satisfaction business.

We have been pioneers in many ways:

In education, we are problem solving with existing programs at Diocesan schools providing support to meet their needs. We are also problem solving by meeting with schools who want to come on board to add new programs and by working with them to facilitate this process so more of this population can benefit from an education in an inclusive Catholic environment. This leads to increased self esteem for these students. The Options program began in 1998 with six students. There are now over 250 Catholic schools in the country providing customer satisfaction to over 3,000 students.

The George Mason University LIFE program was started by Porto/PCI members in 2004 with three students and is now in over 350 universities with over 6,500 young adults being satisfied with a college experience like their siblings. This will lead to an independent life in the community.

Porto and PCI families have over 60 of its members as coaches or volunteers in Special Olympics at over 20 area and state competitions. We provide customer satisfaction and continually problem solve to include different personalities and to create team work and camaraderie which again helps build independence.

In the housing field, Porto/PCI forged ahead several years ago with numerous meetings on how to problem solve this issue for the customers we serve. Members solved this issue by providing a model where families alone or together purchase a home for the young adults to share and pay either a mortgage or rent. Supervision in the evenings is provided by R.A.s, mostly graduates of GMU in social studies and special education. There are now 10 homes with 36 customers living in the area near GMU. They go to work using public transportation, shop at area stores, have dinner at Fairfax City restaurants, and attend events on campus. They also travel to movies, Wizards, Capitals and Nationals' games. Most important of all, they are all living independently in the community taking responsibility for their own needs and problem solving when necessary.

All of this customer satisfaction of our special needs community would not have been possible without the vision, commitment and perseverance of Porto/PCI members. We are greatly skilled at our job of problem solving!!

PCI President Leo Alonso