



Keeping You “In the Know...” 7/7/17

“Source Lunch with...Lawrence Benders”

- As we continue to tell the CSC story, Larry Benders recently sat down with Jay Miller of Crain’s Cleveland Business. Larry and CSC were highlighted in this week’s “Source Lunch” weekly feature of Crain’s.

Boston native Larry Benders' career has taken him from corporate marketing to nonprofit management.

He came to Cleveland in 1999, when he was named vice president of marketing and sales at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. He stepped back into the for-profit world briefly seven years later, becoming president and CEO of HF Food Technologies, a Cleveland maker of food products under the Heritage Fare brand. In 2008, he stepped away again, becoming executive director of Employment Connections, the joint Cleveland-Cuyahoga County workforce service now called Ohio Means Jobs.

In 2011, he became Cuyahoga County's director of development. In 2015, he was named president and executive director of the Cleveland Sight Center, the 111-year-old nonprofit resource for those who are blind or have low vision.

The organization provides vision screenings for preschool children, education programs and transportation services and employs 70 blind or low-vision workers at a call center for the Ohio Secretary of State and other agencies. His other music job? See below. — Jay Miller

Q&A

How did you get from a career in consumer marketing to this philanthropic, social service job at the Sight Center?

I was brought to Cleveland to be vice president of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. When I got here, I was put on a number of boards, including the Sight Center board. A few years later, before I got the workforce job, I was talking to my father and he said, "You've made a lot of investors a lot of money. It's time you did something of value." You don't listen when you're 18. You listen when you're 40. So I was always a fan of the Sight Center. Then 2 1/2 years ago I got a call from a recruiter (for the Sight Center job). My job is to hold the vision and make sure we have the resources, the money and the people in the right places to realize that vision. I try to hire good people and get out of their way.

What should sighted people understand about losing vision?

There is something unique about vision. We are such a visual society. All of our social cues are visual. When you came into this place (the Fluffy Duck), you immediately assessed it. You knew what the decor was, you knew about the staff. Without vision, you would have no idea whether you were in Chipotle, McDonald's or a fancy restaurant like Pier W.

So do you believe being sightless is a unique disability?

Yes, and there is an underlying discrimination against blindness. Blindness is not a covered condition by Medicaid or insurance. Here's an example. You're in a terrible car accident, and you break your leg and you lose your vision. You go to the hospital. They do surgery on your eyes, but you lose your sight. They set your leg and put it in a cast. You get discharged from the hospital. For your leg, you go to physical therapy. They pay for your crutches. They pay for all the rehab to get around on your crutches. For your vision, they just discharge you. Your crutches and your walker are covered, but your white cane isn't covered by insurance or Medicaid. It's not durable medical equipment. The white cane costs 20 bucks and the rehabilitation you need is not covered by insurance. It's such a profound inequality.

So what can you do at the Sight Center for someone who loses their sight?

One of the issues we have is isolation and depression. You lose your vision, you're afraid. You don't want to go out. So much of what we do is building people's confidence back up, talking to them about what they can achieve, maybe learning to use a computer. It's helping kids learn how to play on the

playground. To moms, it's convincing them that it's OK if their kid falls on the playground. That's part of being a kid.

You were born in the Boston area, you went to school in the East and had jobs all over. How did you end up in Cleveland?

My wife's parents were long-time Clevelanders. My late mother-in-law was Pat Mearns, mayor of Shaker Heights. So she said, "You'll live in Cleveland and live on these (Shaker Heights) streets and no others." It took 15 years to find a good marketing job here. Now we're happy here.

Before coming to Cleveland you worked in some interesting places.

We lived lots of place. In Boulder, Colo.; Burlington, Vt.; Chicago; Philadelphia; Princeton. N.J. We went from Coors beer to Ben & Jerry's ice cream; from the far right to the far left politically. Coors was developing new products, which is very hard for a big, established beer company. Ben & Jerry's was a lot of fun, a wild place. At Ben & Jerry's, my job was to raise sales, making it a much more saleable commodity. It eventually sold to Unilever.

Where did you get your start in marketing?

I cut my teeth at Johnson & Johnson, doing classical marketing mostly in the United States but also overseas, Australia, Germany, England.

What's The Whiffenpoofs?

A group of 14 a cappella singers, all seniors at Yale University. I was the student musical director. When I was with the group, we sang all across the country — San Francisco, Chicago, Tampa. It was great.

FIVE THINGS



Image of piano keys

Hobbies: Music and woodworking

Next vacation: Santa Cruz, Calif., with family

Favorite restaurant in Cleveland: Fluffy Duck on Chester Avenue

Job goal in high school: To be an architect

Musical instrument: Piano

Golf Spots Filling Fast...a Few are Still Open:

- This year's CSC Golf Classic will be Monday, July 17th at Westfield Group Country Club. For the third consecutive year, this tremendous fundraising and awareness opportunity is the result of the Employment team's strong partnership with Westfield Group's human resources department. The cost to participate is \$250 per person and includes an 18-hole scramble format, greens fees, golf cart, boxed lunch, awards reception including hors d'oeuvres and beverages, golfer gifts, contests and prizes. Foursomes are available for \$1,250 which includes a hole sponsorship. Contact Steve Frohwerk (216-791-8118) for additional information or [click here](#). Please pass along to those family, friends, colleagues and business associates who may be interested in teeing it up for a great cause!

Educating the Community and Strengthening Partnerships:

- Desmond Kennedy visited with staff members at the Behavioral Care for Older Adults (BCOA) unit of University Hospitals Parma on Monday. On Wednesday, he spoke with staff members at the Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) unit of Euclid Hospital. After receiving a request for more information on CSC programs and services from Cole Eye Institute Beachwood, Desmond met with them on Thursday.
- Participants in the Summer Youth Work Experience (SYWE) program are completing week four of this summer's program. Fun activities the

past week included a presentation by Guide Dog Foundation (including test driving a dog), a trip to B.A. Sweetie Candy Company in Brookpark, a cookout and fireworks on the Fourth of July, a shopping trip to Aurora Farms and an evening of beep baseball with the local Cleveland Scrappers Beep Baseball Team!

- Mark your calendars for the annual SYWE Talent Show scheduled for Thursday, July 13th at 3:00 p.m. in the Clyde E. Williams, Jr. Auditorium. It is shaping up to be a memorable event!
- The annual “See What’s Possible” educators workshop will be held at Cleveland Sight Center on Thursday, August 10th. The workshop is for educators (regular, special and support staff) who will be working with children with limited/no vision during the 2017-2018 school year and will feature strategies, technology and demonstrations. The registration fee is \$25 and includes lunch, materials and professional development certificate. For more information, contact Lorie Marsalis (216-791-8118) or [click here](#).

Kudos to CSC Team Members:

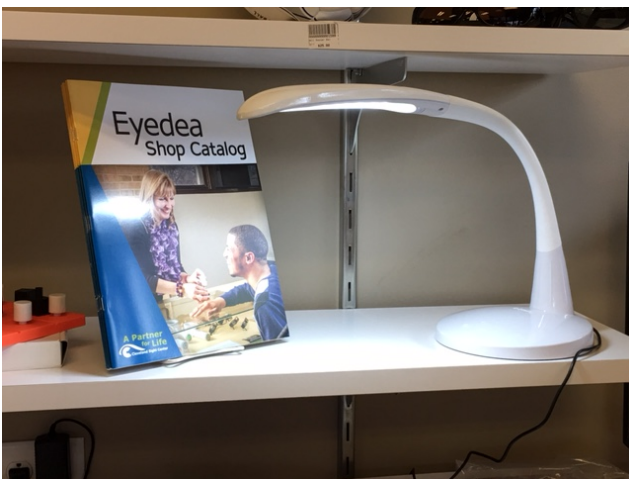
- The following notes have been received into CSC recently. Congrats to these team members for their great work.
 - To Lindsay Svarovsky about Kevin Pye: “I was just thinking about our past two Koinonia weekends at Highbrook Lodge and thought I’d drop you a note of thanks. We really appreciate being able to use this excellent facility but what I wanted you to know was this: Kevin has been such a great help to us on each weekend. When the electricity went out, he was there the whole time, working to make sure we had what we needed to carry on. When the heat was not working in a cabin, he fixed it immediately. In short, you are very fortunate to have such a hard-working, caring man as your employee.”
 - A Share the Vision volunteer shared these thoughts about Moreed Kamal: “I want you to know what a great job Moreed is doing. He is so skillful and caring in how he pairs people together

for this vital program. Moreed deserves a pat on the back and a piece of candy.” The volunteer also expressed how she feels CSC is such a wonderful agency that provides great services.

- A program director at Vision Rehabilitation Therapy sent this to Annette Jakse: “I would like to sincerely thank you for sharing your time and talents in support of preparing my student in her journey to become a Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist. Your willingness to supervise her 500 hour fieldwork (100 hours) and internship (400 hours) experiences is truly appreciated. I also wanted to take a moment to express how refreshing it is to work with someone like yourself, who is willing to take on the role of mentor for students pursuing degrees and certifications in this profession!”

Eyedeas Shop’s Featured Product of the Week: Stella Lamp

- It’s back! The Stella Lamp by Mattingly is this week’s featured item. While this lamp has been featured before, it now boasts some updated features worth checking out! The Stella now has tactile buttons which make it easier for a low vision/blind person to operate. Stella now has 10 dimming levels instead of three. She still has the three spectrums of light (Cool, Natural and Warm) and continues to offer a 25% brighter 50,000-hour non replaceable bulb. If the lamp is on for 12 hours a day for 365 days for 11 years, it will still put out 70% of the bulb’s output after all that time. Amazing! It’s a modern sleek design with a flexible arm and comes in white, black or grey. The price is \$190.



The Stella Lamp in white

- Can't make it to the Eyedea Shop at CSC? Then check out the product offerings online at www.eyedeashop.com and purchase items from the comfort of wherever you may be!

Wellness Squad Corner:

- Exciting news from the CSC Wellness Squad! The squad will be offering a quarterly series of "Lunch and Learns" including topics such as healthy eating, handling stress, financial wellness etc. Please save the date for the inaugural edition on Tuesday, July 25th. There will be two sessions, right after the other so hopefully this will encompass the majority of staffs' lunch time. The times will be from 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. More details will follow but we wanted you to save space on your calendar for Tuesday, July 25th.

Item of Note:

- Register for the 2017 Technology Fair! This year's event will be held at CSC on Thursday, July 27th and Friday, July 28th and will showcase new, emerging and established technologies as well as CSC's programs and services. Thursday's session is from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and is open to the general public, senior centers, caregivers and technology-seekers. Friday's session is from 8:30 a.m – 12:00 p.m. and is exclusive to educators and eye care professionals. Admission is free but pre-registration is strongly encouraged by calling 216-658-4567. Pre-registration includes eligibility for raffle giveaways totaling over \$10,000!

Did You Know?

- Early explorers who traveled the earth long before plastic was invented would eat out the inside of a watermelon and then use it to store water.