

New business spotlight

United Disabilities Services

460 Market St., Suite 232
Williamsport

320-0590
888-808-2188
www.udservices.org

Hours:
Mon. to Fri. - 8 a.m. to 5
p.m.

(EDITORS NOTE: New Business Spotlight is a regular feature of the Sunday Business section and is meant for businesses that have been operating for up to one year. If you own such a business and want to be considered for a New Business Spotlight, send an e-mail to mmaneval@sungazette.com)

By SAVANNA JENNINGS
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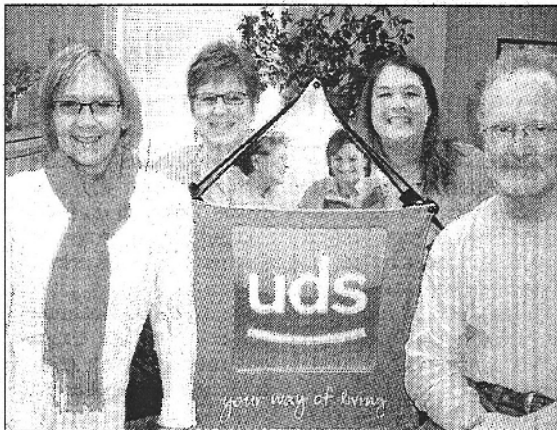
United Disabilities Services, or UDS, helps to advance the independence of people with disabilities.

UDS recently opened a new satellite location at 460 Market St., Suite 232, to provide care management and support coordination, fiscal management services, community integration and skills instruction for individuals with disabilities in Williamsport and the surrounding counties.

"We cover Center, Columbia, Northumberland, Lycoming, Montour, Union, Snyder and Clinton counties," said Tera Smith, skills instructor. "Our offices are open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m."

In 1988, the Department of Public Welfare created the Community Services Program for Persons with Physical Disabilities, which offered eligible individuals who were living in nursing homes the option to live in their own homes instead, according to Smith.

"Shortly after that, UDS became a provider of support coordination and fiscal management



SAVANNA JENNINGS/Sun-Gazette

From left, Allison Bloom, program specialist; Joleen Karichner, support coordinator; Tera Smith, skills instructor; and David Weeks, support coordinator are all employees at United Services Disabilities, Williamsport.

services for those eligible," Smith said. "We are now offering similar services under a new Care Management Division to those who do not qualify due to their age or income for support coordination under the Pennsylvania state waiver programs. Care Management Services will now be offered on a fee-for-service basis."

The main goal of the new Care Management Service is to help individuals suffering from physical disabilities and limitations to live independently, successfully and safely at home, according to Smith.

"We will help individuals assess, plan, coordinate and manager their care," Smith said. "This includes helping individuals find and hire qualified caregivers, arrange for home modifications, obtain necessary home medical equipment and other necessary services."

The existing business' goal is to provide care and support services for individuals with disabilities by providing support coordination, financial management services, community integration and skills instruction for individuals eligible for one of the state waiver programs, according to Smith. If an individual is eligible, they may choose to hire their own caregivers, which may even be their friends or rela-

tives.

Customers of UDS like the personal and positive responsive service that they are guaranteed to receive, according to Smith.

"Our customers benefit from smaller caseloads, which allow our support coordinators and care managers to focus on individual needs and more frequent visits," Smith said. "Our customers also appreciate our knowledge of the specific services provided under the waiver programs."

UDS also offers a special program in community integration with a skills instructor to allow individuals to participate and remain involved in their community. The skills instructor helps each person to set specific goals, achieve a sense of freedom and reach their maximum level of independence, according to Smith.

UDS is an organization with 40 years of experience that serves more than 33 different counties in Pennsylvania. What is most unique about the business is the caring and experienced locally based staff, according to Smith.

"We keep people comfortable in their homes and with their families compared to being in a nursing facility," Smith said. "We are changing lives."