

MPOWER

MY VOICE, MY CHOICE, MY LIFE

APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER

Edited by Erica Allcorn
Published by Cheyenne Freeman

FROM THE DESK OF TRAVIS DEMOSS

Conventional Wisdom

It seems to me that conventional wisdom is often not very conventional nor is it very wise. When I here something that professes that conventional wisdom has determined something or professes to know what is true, I immediately become suspect.

Conventional wisdom can be defined as a generally accepted theory or belief. Here's an example: "conventional wisdom has it that a book should never be judged by its cover". I think we

all know this statement means that we should get to know someone before passing judgement. If this statement is the conventional wisdom then why are so many books judged by their covers.

Here at Mpower we serve over 600 books with over 600 individual stories to tell and we make it our mission to tell those stories every time we engage in the personal planning process. Conventional wisdom at Mpower tells us that when that story is told, documented and supported that great

things can occur. Conventional wisdom can do what it wants by not judging a book by its cover but Mpower's conventional wisdom will simply be- never judge. Just support...



Travis DeMoss
Executive Director

MPOWERS VISION STATEMENT:

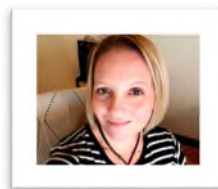
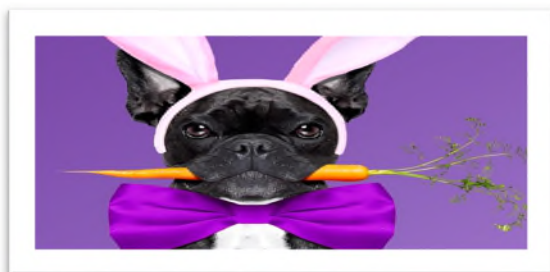
We are committed to the belief that promoting an individual's hopes, wants and dreams is the first step to achieving self-determination.

MEET THE TEAM

- Erica Allcorn Erica RENNISON
- Kellie Berry Alex Rutledge
- Dakota Cantwell Sonia Setzer
- Christy Coslet Tanya Steele
- Erica Cox Melissa Stockwell
- Diana Crouch Jennifer Trent
- Travis DeMoss Tim VanBebber
- Jessica Elgin Tammy Waggoner
- Tyler Emerson Elizabeth Washington
- Cheyenne Freeman Ashlea Withers
- Nik Langston Ashley Weir
- Angela May

MESSAGE FROM HR

- Mpower will be closed April 7th, 2023 for Good Friday Holiday



Cheyenne Freeman
Manager of Administrative Services

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FROM THE DESK OF ASHLEA WITHERS



Ashlea Withers
Pettis Supervisor

Administrative Professionals Day
Let's talk about office tasks and all of that behind-the-scenes fun that makes an office function.

Who thinks about how important it is to answer the phone? Or answer the door? Or open mail? Our admin in Pettis County is vital to the functioning of so much we do. Erica Allcorn has been with our agency for 6 years and I can't imagine not having her as part of our team. Within our office she is the central hub of organization, supplies, helpfulness, cheery attitude, ideas, etc. I could really make a list that is pages long.

Erica is the first one to offer her help with anything extra that comes up and is always thinking of ways to assist her teammates. As small as our agency is, you want your team to work well together.

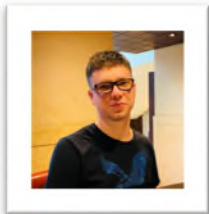
Erica is someone that makes it known that she wants people to feel comfortable coming to her for questions, help, and anything extra.

Sometimes I think it's easy to under-appreciate tasks such as answering the phone, mailing documents, and so on. But let's get real. Those are just the day-to-day things that most of us don't even think about. Those are the things that make our office an office. A welcoming environment for our anyone that comes in the door or calls on the phone. And although Erica does not enjoy being the center of attention, I like to acknowledge the true importance of who she is and what she means to our agency. Without Erica, I think we would all be a lot more lost.

Administrative Professional's Day is celebrated this year on April 26, 2023. But honestly, we celebrate Erica every single day. It's a great reminder to anyone that may come in contact with Erica or any other administrative assistant. Give them an extra thank you. An extra smile. Because they are one of the primary reasons that an office can survive most days.

Thank you, Erica, for all you do each day. You are valued beyond words.

FROM THE DESK OF A SERVICE COORDINATOR



Tristen Wells

Tristen is a 27-year-old man that lives at home with his family. He graduated from State Fair Community College and then from University of Central Missouri a couple of years ago with a degree in Sports Management. Tristen has never let his disabilities stand in the way of his goals. He has always wanted to be in sports management. His dream is to work for a professional sports team's organization. He is quite a sports fan and is terrifically knowledgeable about almost any sport that a person wants to talk about. He has his own sports blog. Right now, Tristen is working towards getting some experience through finding a business management position.

Tristen knows that if he is to

work in a management position, he will probably live in a big city at some time. Through his Individual Skills Development service, he learns and practices skills necessary for living in a big city. He knows that handling mass transit transportation is necessary. ISD helps him with learning this.

Tristen is a hard-working person. He has had to apply himself in order to become more independent and to overcome barriers that would keep most other people with his disability at home. Tristen worked hard to develop friendships with others while he was at UCM. He learned to stand up for his ideas and to promote them. He learned to do many things for himself that he had never done before. He learned to advocate

for himself.

Tristen is a giving person. He is currently working through his Community Networking service to develop an E-Sports team for people with disabilities. He may connect it to Special Olympics. He knows as a person with a disability that people with disabilities have many of the same interests that others do. He wants to help give them a chance to experience the same exciting things that other people do. Currently he is networking with individuals, organizations, and sponsors who are interested in bringing this dream of having a local E-Sports team for people with disabilities to reality.

By Tim VanBebber

FROM THE DESK OF ERICA RENNISON

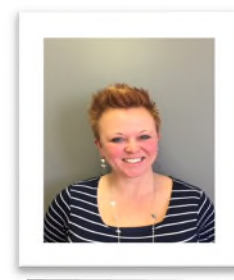
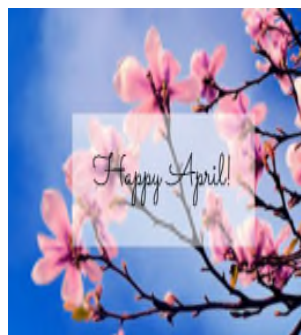
April is full of many things that we look forward to.... spring rains and flower blooms, autism acceptance/awareness, April fools, Easter Sunday, family events, baseball, track, Earth Day....heck, even National Babe Ruth Day (who knew!?). At this juncture here at MPower, with all the changes happening within the Department of Mental Health and forced upon us this year, we have to put our focus on service delivery. This can mean putting on our best faces for our clients, families, and the teams we work with. We have to keep the frustrations and struggles we face behind the scenes, right there at the office and not bring these to team

meetings. Our Service Coordinators are some of the most skillful folks I know. And as they continue to press forward despite staffing shortages, forced trainings, BIG system changes, never feeling like there's enough time to get it all done, and the pressure of everyone looking towards them to make it happen, I pray they find peace in our encouragement, patience, and guidance and know that we have their backs.

April 17th is Haiku Poetry Day. A haiku is a simple 3-line Japanese poem using the format of the first and third lines having 5 syllables and the second line having 7 syllables. And alt-

hough I haven't practiced writing a haiku since 6th grade, here's my try at a poetic message for the current situation we are experiencing:

Push past distraction
Be present in the right now
Do what you can here



Erica Rennison
Manager

FROM THE DESK OF A SERVICE COORDINATOR

I have had the pleasure of working with so many amazing consumers since beginning as a Service Coordinator. I have seen firsthand how access to much-needed resources can affect an individual by seeing personalities come alive as well as witnessing personal growth and peace of mind occur. DJ Gerber is one of those individuals that was recently greatly impacted by access to long-awaited services.

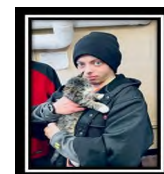
DJ is a spunky but kind and caring 24-year-old. He is very social, an avid gamer, and loves to be involved in his community as much as possible. Unfortunately, DJ has experienced many challenging times in his young life already including homelessness, food insecurity,

and many losses. DJ has worked tremendously hard over the past couple years in developing appropriate social skills and integrating into his community by attending day habilitation. His team has worked endlessly to advocate for his needs and maintain his health and well-being.

Recently, DJ was authorized for a Comprehensive Waiver. This will allow him to seek much-needed residential habilitation services. DJ would like to live in a Host Home or with ISL (Individualized Supported Living) supports. Currently, we are in the process of adding him to the Consumer Referral Database to find a provider, and ultimately a place for DJ to call "Home."

When DJ found out that he finally qualified, he was overjoyed! DJ said to me that he was so happy that he'll finally get to have a family and a house of his own. These are the times as a Service Coordinator that are the most rewarding; to see the joy in someone else because they were able to add meaning to their own lives and chase their dreams. Getting to be a part of his journey has been such a privilege. I am so excited to see what's in store for his future as he gets settled into a home of his own.

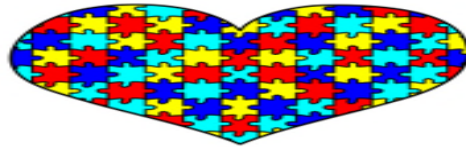
By: Alex Rutledge, Service Coordinator



DJ Gerber

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Stepping Stones Autism Family Support Group



Next Meeting April 3rd at 5:30pm
First Christian Church of Sedalia
200 S Limit

Come share, gather resources, ideas and help from families in our area!

For more information email:
Sara White at swhite082878@gmail.com
Karen Lauer at jklauser@charter.net



check us out on Facebook!
"Stepping Stones Autism Support Group"

COME CHECK US OUT ON
THE WEB!!!

WWW.MPOWERTCM.ORG

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MPOWER'S MISSION STATEMENT

*Empowering people to manage
the direction of their life.*



MPOWER

Derived from the word "Empower" and meaning "to promote the self-actualization or influence of one's self".

Welcome to MPower, an agency developed to meet the Targeted Case Management needs of adults with disabilities in Pettis and Saline Counties. At MPower, we have dedicated ourselves to providing the highest quality case management services available in Central Missouri. We believe that the individuals we serve deserve an advocate that is highly trained, well-educated on the latest trends and highly motivated to assist people in navigating the intricate systems of State and Federal funding sources and the growing list of qualified providers.

We believe in you, we believe in your hopes, wants, and dreams. We believe that when you are "MPowered" to make your own choices and have the proper supports, then you have the greatest potential for success.

It is our pleasure to walk beside you.