



# AUGUST 2023 NEWSLETTER

Edited by Erica Allcorn  
Published by Cheyenne Freeman

## FROM THE DESK OF TRAVIS DEMOSS

### Let it Rain

It is dry in Pettis County, I mean dry. Crops are suffering, lawns are brown and the creeks are no longer running. Rain has literally been skirting Pettis County to the North and South all spring and summer. Everywhere you go the topic of conversation will eventually include the weather and when it may rain next. There's nothing we can do about this problem. There's no amount of complaining, no one to complain to and as far as I'm aware no real rain dance that can bring an end to the dry. We can only sit on the porch (or in the A/C) and hope the clouds get together, collaborate

with the high and low pressure systems and grant us with those little drops that make things grow. That's a difficult pill to swallow isn't it. Nothing to do, no one to complain to and to hope something goes in your favor. I received a call recently from a stakeholder/friend who knew of a gentleman who was living in this very situation. He had no support and no one who was working with of for him. He was close to being evicted from his apartment and my friend reached out to me to see if Mpower would be able to intervene. There was nothing for him to do, no one to complain to and could only hope for

someone to help. I heard yesterday that he has been determined eligible for DMH services and that we would be receiving his referral soon. We are looking forward to receiving him on our rolls and providing a few drops of support and watching things grow. If you know someone who might benefit from their own little drops, contact Mpower and we will help with the eligibility process.

### 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	Angela May
Kellie Berry	Shayla Mitchell
Dakota Cantwell	Erica Rennison
Christy Coslet	Alex Rutledge
Erica Cox	Sonia Setzer
Diana Crouch	Tanya Steele
Travis DeMoss	Jennifer Trent
Jessica Elgin	Tim VanBebber
Tyler Emerson	Tammy Waggoner
Cheyenne Freeman	Elizabeth Washington
Nik Langston	Ashlea Withers
Kristina Livingston	Ashley Weir

## MESSAGE FROM HR

# JOIN OUR TEAM! MPOWER IS HIRING

A rewarding career empowering individuals with disabilities to live their life to the fullest

- Major Medical, Dental, Vision, and other Insurance options
- Retirement Fund
- Generous Vacation and Sick Leave
- Flexible Schedule
- Work from Home options



**APPLY NOW**

[www.mpowertcm.org/careers](http://www.mpowertcm.org/careers)

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## FROM THE DESK OF ELIZABETH WASHINGTON

### Special Education

When children are struggling in school, it's important to find out why. It may be that a disability is affecting a child's educational performance. If so, the child may be eligible for special education and related services that can help.

What is Special Education? Special education is "specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability." It is range of supports and/or services that can be provided in different ways and in different settings. It is not a cookie

cutter approach to educating a child with a disability. The support and services that a child receives is individualized to meet their needs.

Special education is not a place, subject, or identity. The law requires that children who receive special education services are to be educated alongside their non-disabled peers wherever possible.

To receive Special Education requirements have to be met, some of these are:

- the child must be between the ages of 3-21
- must have a disability as defined by IDEA

- the disability must adversely affect the child's education.

If you believe your child would benefit from Special Education Service the first step is to reach out and request this from the school.

<https://www.missouriparentsact.org/resources/understanding-your-childs-rights/special-education-eligibility/>

## FROM THE DESK OF A SERVICE COORDINATOR

### Watching A Boy Become A Man

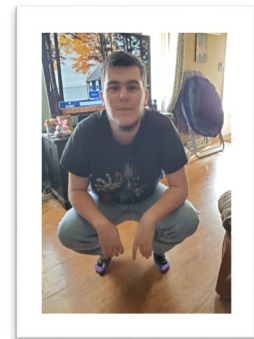
Sometimes we are lucky as Service Coordinators to watch individuals become the people they will be and I've been lucky during my time to watch this happen to several of my people.

Once such individual is Bruce Dittmar. When I first started as an SC, 10 years ago, Bruce was the first kid on my caseload. Bruce has Autism and I've had the privilege of seeing him transform from the scared kid in the corner of the room to the man he is becoming today. Bruce gets straight A's, belongs to the

Dungeons and Dragons club at school and has even sat on the Student Council. He was so mature in his meeting this year, answering my millions of questions and not getting upset and even making many of his hilarious jokes.

Bruce plans to get a job at Walmart and is very particular about what he wants and what he doesn't. He has learned to advocate for himself and manage his Autism, including figuring out what he needs to navigate school and his social life. Bruce is a funny guy, and I can't wait to see what he does in his life. I have no doubt he will go far.

By Tammy Waggoner



## FROM THE DESK OF ASHLEA WITHERS

### Welcoming New Staff

On July 10<sup>th</sup> we welcomed two new Service Coordinators to the Pettis County team. We are so excited to have Shayla Mitchell and Kris Logan-Livingston on board.

Starting as a new SC is always a challenge just learning the language, the role, and ALL of the processes. I think Shayla and Kris have a small advantage to get to learn together and go through those steps with someone else to lean on, not knowing all the same things!

Kris comes to us with knowledge and history of previous social work jobs and some case management experience. She is knowledgeable about advocating for individuals,

seeking resources, and assisting people with taking steps to maintain a great life. She is someone I am confident will establish great boundaries and rapport with those people she works with. She is excited to learn her new role and start meeting all the individuals and providers we work with. Kris is also a huge animal lover and will share her love for her dogs with anyone who asks!

Shayla comes to us with knowledge about community resources and some of the ins and outs of the insurance world, although we all know the world of Medicaid/Medicare is not easy for anyone to know! Shayla is very practical and down to earth, with a great desire to help people and do her very best in anything she touches. She is excited to start

getting out of the training mode and all the reading, to meet new people and learn more about the day to day ins and outs of being a Service Coordinator. From what I gather, she is an avid reader as well so I am sure that the few of us that are book junkies are ready to pick her brain about her favorite reads!

The Pettis County team is so excited to have these new people join our team. The team is a force to be reckoned with. They have each other's backs for all the good, bad, and super busy! Service Coordination is not an easy job but boy do all of our people make it look like a breeze most days!

## FROM THE DESK OF A SERVICE COORDINATOR

Johnny Martin is an intelligent, and good humored 37-year-old gentleman who currently resides at Pettis County Assisted Living facility. He has experienced many hardships in his life, including a TBI at the age of 16 from a vehicle accident. He has an extensive history of criminal activity and drug use that has lead him to his current residential setting as well as the removal of his drivers license and being appointed a guardian.

Johnny expressed his wish to leave the facility and move somewhere closer to his family in Cole County, but his guardian believed this

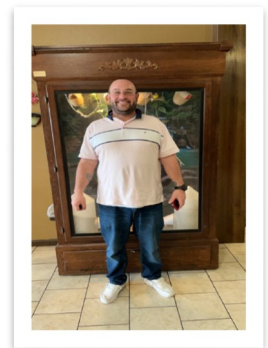
wouldn't be the most beneficial decision for Johnny due to his ongoing addiction problem. Johnny and I decided that he should be drug free for at least 6 months before we revisited this. Johnny was successfully and proudly drug free for 6+ months! His guardian then asked for an affidavit from his physicians stating that he would be successful in an ISL type setting. This affidavit not only showed that he would be successful in an ISL type setting, but also that his guardian was no longer necessary!

Johnny was immediately placed on the CRD and

already has an interested provider in his hometown! He has already started the process of obtaining his drivers license, with the help of his guardian, and has a job lined up and ready for him once he gets moved. He is excited to move and have the support of his provider to help him get back on his feet while offering services to guarantee his safety and success.

Johnny is the epitome of hard work and growth, I am so honored to assist him in these major changes!

By Tyler Emerson



## COMMUNITY INFORMATION



COME CHECK US OUT ON  
THE WEB!!!

[WWW.MPOWERTCM.ORG](http://WWW.MPOWERTCM.ORG)

**SEDALIA OFFICES**  
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Sedalia, MO 65301

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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.