



Connections
Case Management, LLC



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STAFF

Spotlight

Ed Herkless, Supervisor

Ed is a case management supervisor for Central Indiana. Ed provides case management for the FSW and CIH Waivers.



What led you to the social services field?

Although I have a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, I had not intended to be in this type of work. During college years I worked as a screen printer at a private company. An employment training program for people with special needs was looking for someone that had experience in running a print shop and I hired in. I enjoyed working with the participants and the idea of helping improve the quality-of-life the people had. After that, I worked at various employment and community support positions and became well networked which led to where I am today at Connections. I started as a case manager in 2002 and found I enjoyed the autonomy and advocacy roles the most, and have worked as a case manager ever since.

What is a random fact about yourself?

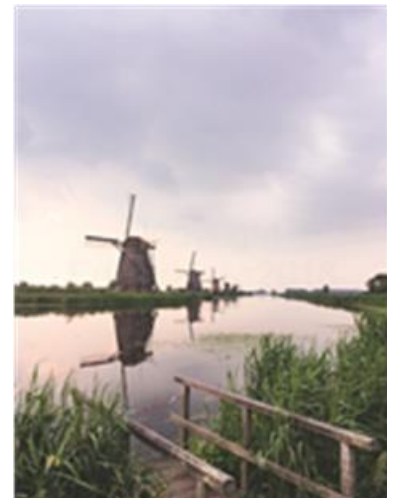
I enjoy being creative. I have been a professional photographer and I also enjoy working with glass, wood, and ceramics.

What do you love most about your job?

I love being able to provide resources and use my voice to advocate. The best part is watching my individuals excel. I live to see individuals accomplish whatever their heart is set on.

Do you have a favorite pastime you enjoy?

Bicycling has become a large part of my life. It is a de-stressor, provides exercise, and has become a great way to be social and meet new people. I enjoy taking bicycle vacations along the rivers of Europe. It is wonderful to experience the history, cultures, and everyday life in a slower, more casual way. This is a picture I took on a bike trip in Netherlands at Kinderdijk.



Do you have pets?

I have three cats, Leah, Buddy, and Roameow (Romeo). Leah is probably the smartest cat I have had. She knows several words when she hears them and has an innate ability to learn new things, or teach me things. Buddy is young, rambunctious, has a strong personality and likes to tease the other two. Roameow was left behind when some renters moved out of their home. His name came from him wandering the neighborhood and then from his wonderful personality.

~ Ed





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STAFF

Spotlight

Robyn Bercot, Case Manager

Robyn serves Hamilton, Marion, and surrounding counties for the FSW and CIH Waivers.



What led you to the social services field?

I graduated IU with a secondary teaching degree. When I graduated at the age of 22, my student teaching taught me that it was too narrow of a gap to be teaching people just a few years younger than me. My first professional job landed me at a provider agency, where I learned all about waiver services and fell in love with this population. I later worked at Midtown with the STARS team and found my real love in the dually diagnosed population. Anyone who knows me, knows that I'm a straight shooter. I love the directness of so many of the individuals I serve. They don't have a filter and I just appreciate their directness so much!

What is a random fact about yourself?

My family moved to Fishers in 1985, before it even had its own zip code. We had a Noblesville zip code and had to drive to Castleton to do our "big grocery shopping" for the week. I still live in Fishers, but it's changed a little.

What do you love most about your job?

I love the individuals that I serve, as well as the teams with whom I work. I try hard to have teams that can collaborate so that they all work together for the collective purpose of best serving our clients. I find it difficult to do my job well when a team feels disjointed about their purpose, which occurs for a variety of reasons. Client advocacy is so important to me. Even more important to me than advocating for my clients is teaching and empowering the individuals that I serve to advocate for themselves. It fills my heart with joy to see my individuals realize their worth and "own it."

Do you have kids?

I have four children and a husband. I have two older boys and then talked my husband into a third child, who surprised us by bringing a fourth along for the ride. My twins are a boy and a girl. My daughter is a force, which isn't surprising since she's got three brothers.

~ Robyn



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STAFF

Spotlight

Lauren Brooks, Case Manager

Lauren serves Hamilton and surrounding counties for the FSW and CIH Waivers.



What led you to the social services field?

When I went to college, I knew that I wanted to do something that allowed me to provide others with a way to have the best life possible. I decided to major in social work, then our college opened up a recreational therapy program, so I did both and added in psychology as a minor. I have been in social services for over 20 years and after some time with DCS, I took a much-needed break and began staying home. When I was approached about being a waiver case manager, I attempted to decline stating that I was done with social services. Thank goodness that this person shared that while this position was in social services, it was the most rewarding type of social services out there, with the most amazing individuals and I would regret not giving it a try. They were right. Seeing individuals have the opportunity to live their best life, watching them grow and achieve new things, and seeing their smiles is what this job is all about for me!

What do you love most about your job?

This is a hard one as I love just about every aspect but if I have to pick one, it is definitely the times that I am able to just be with the individuals on my caseload. Getting to know them, no specific meeting agenda or things to go over, just laughing, sharing stories and having fun. I always ensure I allow time for this to take place as it is really the best way for me to get to know others. I also love the work/life balance that this job provides. I have to admit this is the only social services job that I have had where I have this and have never hit burnout. Not having that happen allows me to be the best case manager I can be for the individuals, families and teams that I work with.

What is a favorite pastime you enjoy?

Playing games (board games, cards, outdoor games) is something that I have always loved doing with friends and family. As our children have gotten older, we don't seem to have as much time to do this, so I look forward to times that we do. I am always up for a night out with friends and love just about any fall activity!

Do you have kids or pets?

My husband and I have been married since 2002 and have two daughters. One is in high school and the other is at the University of Cincinnati. We have a 10-year-old Newfoundland named Sophie who has a heart that is just as big as she is, and I have an ICAN dog who is a black lab named Pierson. Pierson was in a local high school with me where he was used in the counseling center, Life Skills classroom, and adaptive PE. He returns to the school at various times and attends waiver team meetings with me when appropriate.

~ Lauren



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STAFF

Spotlight

Tammi Earles, Case Manager

Tammi serves Hamilton and surrounding counties for the FSW and CIH Waivers.



What led you to the social services field?

For years I wanted to be an attorney; that is, until I realized my life would largely consist of writing briefs and posing arguments. My desire to advocate for others is what initially drew me to law, and ultimately lead me down my current career path. I spent many years working with families through DCS, supervising thousands of hours of visitation and providing Case Management services. From there, I moved on to crisis intervention, and then back to serving DCS families, before finally landing with Connections and finding my passion as a Medicaid Waiver Case Manager. It took me 50 years, but thankfully I've found my professional home.

What is a random fact about yourself?

I love to write and have been doing it since I was in grade school. I journal, write poetry, essays, short stories, and I am working on a somewhat autobiographical novel.

What do you love most about your job?

So much!! I love building rapport and bonding with individuals. I love that my colleagues are all so supportive and helpful. I love challenging myself with documentation deadlines and meticulous attention to detail. I love the flexibility in my schedule. But hands down, the thing I love the most is advocating for individuals! My job keeps me inspired and intellectually stimulated, and I am so grateful to have found a career that I love!

What is a favorite pastime you enjoy?

I love nature walks with the dogs in the woods, reading fiction and non-fiction, cooking, and growing indoor plants!

Do you have kids or pets?

I have an amazing daughter! She'll be completing her bachelor's degree next spring and will be going on to Graduate School with a goal of earning a PhD in Psychology. She was also recently engaged and will be planning a wedding within the next 2 years! I do have grand dogs and grand kitties, including a 1-year-old black German Shephard named Keeva, a 7 year old Australian Shephard mix named Vaughn, a 5 year old cat named Lion, and a kitten named Lioness, or Nessie for short. I adore them all!

~ Tammi



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STAFF

Spotlight

Lacey Hillard, Case Manager

Lacey serves Hamilton, Marion and surrounding counties for the FSW and CIH Waivers.

What led you to the social services field?

Originally, I attended my local community college in Danville, IL with hopes of obtaining a degree in Agriculture Business and transferring to the University of Illinois. After a year, I found myself interested in psychology and how the mind works. I then switched my major to Clinical Psychology, with a minor in Fine Arts. With both art and psychology, I was driven to become an Art Therapist. However, life had a different course for me. After graduating from Eastern Illinois University, I accepted a caseworker position with DCFS in my hometown for 3 years. In 2018, I moved to Indiana for more opportunities. During that time, I applied for DCS and was hired with the State of Indiana as a caseworker. One year later, I was offered a career with Connections Case Management and accepted. I have been with Connections almost 3 years and I am beyond thankful to be part of such an amazing company.

What is a random fact about yourself?

I love engaging in outdoor activities. I love going fishing, mushroom hunting, gardening, hiking, and keeping my yard in pristine condition.

What do you love most about your job?

I love meeting new people and watching individuals grow by achieving desired goals and outcomes.

Do you have kids or pets?

My family has quite a few pets. I have a Bernedoodle (Murray), a Box Turtle (Tomasina), a Leopard Gecko (Darla), a Hamster (Wiggles), a Conure (Tilly), and two fish tanks with African Cichlids. Between the pets and three children, Zaeden (7yrs), Asher (4yrs), and Stevie Jane (1yr) our home is filled with both excitement and lots of love.



~ Lacey



STAFF

Spotlight

Deanne Langeman, Case Manager

Deanne serves Hamilton and surrounding counties for the FSW and CIH Waivers.



What led you to the social services field?

I grew up in Wabash County and pursued a teaching degree from Ball State University. Upon graduation, I moved to Indianapolis and spent several years as a teacher serving children with disabilities. After getting married and beginning a family, I began a career in case management.

Do you have a career success story?

My career success story has been watching my kids develop the passion to build friendships, advocate and include their peers with disabilities.

What do you love most about your job?

I am passionate about my job and feel privileged to advocate for individuals and families pursuing a path to independence.

Do you have kids or pets?

I have four kids: Jake 23, Ellie 21, Joey 19 and Alyssa 16. Over the years they have persuaded me into bringing home 3 dogs and 1 bunny rabbit.

~ Deanne