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Budget Cuts Hit People with Disabilities

Facing a budget deficit in 2018, the 2017 Missouri General Assembly decided to make several budget cuts in order to balance the budget. Among these cuts, the state reduced the State Independent Living Grant that affects every Center for Independent Living in the state. Governor Eric Greitens stated that these cuts were necessary because of “lagging state revenues and rising health care costs,” according to US News & World Report. Greitens has reduced the reimbursement rate for Medicaid providers by 1.5 percent to save \$12 million, and he will hold onto \$60 million earmarked for the Department of Social Services, the agency that oversees Medicaid. Next year’s budget has the potential to be even more strained due to impending Missouri tax cuts which take effect in 2018. All of these cuts have left several people with disabilities, many of whom use The Whole Person’s (TWP) services, feeling fearful of the future as there is no guarantee that they will be able to continue living as independently as they do now.

Some consumers are concerned that as a result of the cuts, they will be placed in an institution which would cost tax payers considerably more than the current program’s costs. TWP CEO, Julie DeJean, said that these cuts are like a punch in the stomach to her. “I think, in this case, it might have

been pennywise and pound foolish because it’s going to potentially end up costing more than if we’d have left things the way they were,” DeJean stated. Recently, The Whole Person was featured on Fox 4 News. During the piece, consumer Pamela Chavez and CEO Julie DeJean were interviewed. According to Chavez, “It’s disrespectful. It affects human rights. It’s pretty fearful and disappointing.” People like Chavez are being affected by the budget cuts because the number of hours per day they can receive care has been lowered as well as changing the requirements to receive the services. Although a bi-partisan bill to avoid cuts to in-home and nursing care services for the people with disabilities was passed by the house, Greitens vetoed the bill, so many are fearful of the effect this could have on their future.

The cuts in Missouri, the debate surrounding The Affordable Care Act – also known as Obamacare – and its repeal, and the possible solution touted as Trump Care have sparked a debate. People all over the country are asking the questions, “Are Americans afforded a right to be cared for? Is good health a right, or a commodity?” These questions seem to be a dividing line across the country, making it difficult to find a compromise. With all the discord, people all over the country are reporting “political



burn-out.” It is important for people to remain politically active during difficult times. Educate yourself on the topics you find important, and let your representatives at the city, state and federal level know your wishes. Our elected officials are put in office “by the people, for the people.” We must continue to let them know how to serve us. TWP’s public policy department is in constant contact with our elected officials and will continue to strive to advocate for people with disabilities as well as keep TWP employees and consumers informed.

Due to the cut of our budget, TWP has begun taking steps to save money. In an effort to lessen the blow, voluntary layoffs were offered to all employees.

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MISSION

The Whole Person connects people with disabilities to the resources they need by supporting independent choice and advocating for positive change in the community.

VISION

The Whole Person envisions a fully accessible community where opportunities and choices are not limited by disability.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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An accessible PDF, screen reader compatible file, is available in the newsletter archive on our website.

Connecting

This time of year is always busy for the Marketing and Development Team. We are in the middle of an eight-week period of time in which we put on three major events for The Whole Person. We celebrated the anniversary of the signing of the ADA with our July Jubilee, our first annual Night of Independence Gala is almost here, and we are in the final stages of planning our fourth Planting Independence. A great deal of time and energy goes into planning these events, but we enjoy them and they are vital to our mission.

Our mission continues to be to connect people with disabilities to the resources they need, but we are exploring new ways in doing that. More and more, we are also connecting our community to information, resources and opportunities they need to be more diverse and more inclusive. TWP programs engage volunteers and advocates to build and support independence, and now, events are evolving to include wider audiences and create even more interaction among many different groups in an increasingly diverse Kansas City.

July Jubilee has grown to be a two-day event. The first day is all about inviting the surrounding community to come celebrate with us. A celebration with food, entertainment, and a makers fair is a great way to bring people from different backgrounds together and erode preconceived notions about people with disabilities.

The Night of Independence Gala is a celebration of people and organizations in our community that help further the independence of people with disabilities. This celebration not only rewards people for living our mission and moving towards our vision, but it also is another time



that people can come together in order to alleviate fear and insecurity around interaction with people with disabilities.

Finally, Planting Independence not only helps people with disabilities with yard work they may be unable to take care of themselves, but it allows the volunteers to meet and get to know people with disabilities. Interaction and conversations are how we change the community, one person at a time. As people meet and get to know others, they begin to advocate for their new friends, and see how the community may need improvements in their accessibility and inclusion.

Connecting people to the resources they need is a huge step in allowing people to live independently. Changing minds, and breaking down barriers in the community quickly improves people's lives.

Sincerely,

Terri Goddard,
Resource Development Manager

TWP Programs and Services

- Independent Living Services
- Consumer Directed Services
- Employment Services
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- Individual and Systems Advocacy
- Telecommunications Access Program
- Mental Health Services
- Transition Services
- The Whole Family Project
- Blindness Low Vision Experience
- Youth and Adult Services
- Adaptive Sports

Budget Cuts

Continued from page 1

In total, 23 people took the package offered. TWP is still offering the same services as before, as well as continuing to look for new ways to help people with disabilities live more independent lives. Remaining staff have been moved where necessary to continue to provide services, and vacancies will be filled when possible. Although money allows us to do the work we do, it is not the heart of our organization. Our people are what make The Whole Person: our consumers, employees, and volunteers. We will continue to provide services, share resources, and advocate at the local, state, and federal levels.

Concert Hosted by Brain Injury Support Group

The Whole Person's Brain Injury Support Group will host a special meeting and concert on September 14 that is open to the public (RSVPs needed). Singer-songwriter **Cristabelle Braden**, a fellow survivor of traumatic brain injury, will tour the Midwest this fall and TWP will be one of her stops.

Following her brain injury in December 2007, Cristabelle began writing music and has since released four albums. Her newest album speaks specifically to living with a brain injury and everything that goes with it. Her life is a miraculous testimony of courage and strength, described perfectly by the title of her new album – Hope Survives.

On September 14, Cristabelle will offer more than her music; she will also tell us about her story and message of inspiration, hope and sincerity.

This special meeting of the brain injury support group will take place on Thursday, September 14 from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm. Attendance is limited to 60 people, so RSVP early (to Tristan at 816-595-3337) in order to secure your seat and to let us know if you need accommodations.

“Getting Social” Group

People with disabilities often struggle with feelings of isolation due to a lack of adequate transportation and accessibility. The Whole Person's **“Getting Social” Group** was created because our consumers wanted the opportunity to gather together with other people who also have disabilities, simply to have fun. The importance of social activity and recreation to long-term independent living success can be overlooked sometimes. Getting out into the community and enjoying social interactions with other people not only improves the psychological wellbeing of people with disabilities, but through contact and interaction, group activities can break down barriers to inclusiveness in the community. In addition to “fun for the sake of fun,” topics of conversation at group meetings often include education, employment, and housing.

The group is still in its infancy, but attendees have already enjoyed some great activities. In May, the

group met at TWP for bingo and board games; June included a trip to the zoo; and August provided cooking lessons. There are plans in the works for the group to complete a community service project this year, in part to show that people with disabilities are contributing members of society. The TWP Getting Social Group meets the first Tuesday of every month from 2-4 pm. We are looking forward to finding new ways to “get social” together. If you are interested in participating in the group, contact Ruthie Stephens at rstephens@thewholeperson.org.



(From left) Camille, Christina and Letiah watch Wendy prepare egg rolls as part of the TWP Getting Social monthly meeting.

Expressions Artists Receive Training

Since its inception in 2011, TWP's Expressions Art Exhibition has transformed from a one-night opening event for artists with all types of disabilities to a yearlong traveling fine art exhibition with opportunities for professional development training for participating artists. Thanks to a grant received by the Kansas City-based professional development organization, Artist, Inc., TWP was grateful to offer this sought-after training for Expressions 2016 and 2017 artists at no cost to our organization this year. We are committed to continuing to offer this training opportunity in 2018 and beyond.

Earlier this spring and summer, Artist, Inc. provided four workshops for the Expressions artists that focused on skills including marketing and communication,

so the artists may achieve professional goals such as having their art displayed in galleries and selling their work. TWP's organizational goal is to combine advocacy and training to ensure that people who love art see the work of a wonderful artist with disabilities as simply the work of a wonderful artist.

TWP is pleased to announce that artwork from both our 2016 and 2017 Expressions Art Exhibitions may be viewed on the walls of the Ford Education Center of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art through November 12. If you haven't made it to Expressions in the past year, please make this show a destination point this fall. Information about future Expressions events and traveling shows may be found at TheWholePerson.org/Expressions.

FACES OF TWP



1. Lea poses with members of the KC Chiefs at the Chiefs Ability Day event. **2.** TWP staff accompanied the TWP Getting Social consumer group to the Kansas City Zoo. **3.** Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft spoke with Camille Givens at the "Show it 2 Vote" presentation at TWP. **4.** The Blindness Low Vision group rides tandems with volunteers from TWP and BikeWalkKC. **5.** Jimmy, Jaima, Jennifer, Joey, Karen, Teri and Shana pose with Ronald McDonald after serving families at the Ronald McDonald House by Children's Mercy Hospital. **6.** Wes shows his models at a Deaf Peer Support Group meeting. **7.** Letiah (in the water) tries out water skiing at the Ability KC Day at the Lake event. **8.** Rick Haith is the new Recreation Outreach Coordinator at TWP. Welcome, Rick!

FACES OF TWP



9



10



11



12



13

9. *Mattie (center) won the Missouri Health Care Association District Two Ms. Nursing Home pageant. The Whole Person Home Health Care was a sponsor of the event. Mary (right) was first runner-up and Darlyne (left) was second runner-up. 10.* Jason (left) and Kelly congratulate Jeremy (right) for being chosen as the TWP Volunteer of the Year. **11.** *Staff of TWP gave a going away party to Elf (front, center) as he retired as Callie's (holding leash) service dog. 12.* Lea gives a tour of TWP to the Access and Inclusion group from the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. **13.** *(From left) Christine, Tamara and Anthony celebrate after finishing the "Heroes for Hospice 5K run."*

EVENT CALENDAR

For specific locations and times of the events listed, visit our calendar at thewholeperson.org.

SEPTEMBER 4:

TWP Closed for Labor Day

SEPTEMBER 5:

TWP Getting Social at TWP

SEPTEMBER 12:

Life With Spinal Cord Injuries or Related Disabilities (SCI/D)

SEPTEMBER 13 & 27:

Mental Health Peer Mentoring Group

SEPTEMBER 14:

Brain Injury Peer Support Group; Cristaballe Braden Concert

SEPTEMBER 15:

Night of Independence Gala

SEPTEMBER 26:

Consumer Advocacy Group

SEPTEMBER 27:

Deaf Services Special Presentation

OCTOBER 3:

TWP Getting Social at TWP

OCTOBER 7:

Planting Independence

OCTOBER 11 & 25:

Mental Health Peer Mentoring Group

OCTOBER 12:

Brain Injury Peer Support Group

OCTOBER 19:

Life With Spinal Cord Injuries or Related Disabilities (SCI/D)

OCTOBER 24:

Consumer Advocacy Group

NOVEMBER 2

Life With Spinal Cord Injuries or Related Disabilities (SCI/D)

NOVEMBER 7:

TWP Getting Social at TWP

NOVEMBER 8 & 22:

Mental Health Peer Mentoring Group

NOVEMBER 9:

Brain Injury Peer Support Group

NOVEMBER 23-24:

TWP Closed for Thanksgiving

NOVEMBER 28:

Consumer Advocacy Group

RECEIVE OUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL!

Sign up at:
thewholeperson.org/newsletter



July Jubilee 2017

Two years ago, The Whole Person celebrated the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act by hosting a “July Jubilee” in our parking lot. It was such a success that TWP decided to present the July Jubilee every summer. It has already grown into a two-day event on the last Saturday and Monday of July.

The Saturday, July 29th event appealed to a broad spectrum of the Kansas City community, including an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast by Chris Cakes, a maker’s fair and flea market, inflatable obstacle course, adaptive sports chair demos, appearances by professional sports team mascots and Star Wars characters, and performances by The Marching Pythons, The Pulse Dancers, and the new inclusive choir, Tota Voces. DJ Chad Slater provided music throughout the day.

Monday, July 31st, the second day of July Jubilee 2017, featured appearances by Kansas City, Missouri Mayor Sly James and Independence, Missouri Mayor Eileen Weir; city council officials; state representatives; and representatives from the offices of Senator Claire McCaskill, Senator Roy Blunt, and Congressman Emanuel Cleaver. DJ Chad provided music on Monday also, and TWP gave away hundreds of free hot dogs, free popcorn, water and lemonade as refreshments. The July Jubilee has grown every year, and we look forward to seeing how it expands and evolves in 2018.



Consumers, neighbors, volunteers and staff enjoyed the 2 day July Jubilee: **1.** Visiting Star Wars characters help bring in the crowd for Chris Cakes pancakes. **2.** The adaptive sports area was popular. **3.** A lot of volunteers made the two-day event possible! **4.** The Marching Pythons performed on Saturday. **5.** The Tote Voces choir posed with Sluggerrr. **6.** KC Wolf shares a laugh with Heather Schouten. **7.** Face painting was a popular station in the kids corner. **8.** (Left to right) Dean Fatopolous, George Fatopolous, John Marshall (back), Donald Beets and Rick O’Neal, TWP Board President enjoy the festivities. **9.** Little Miss Wheelchair Kansas, Sophia Beers poses with Kansas City Mayor, Sly James. (Photos by Vivian Strand and Larry Eichner.)



Sponsors of this year’s July Jubilee included: (Left) The Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund (NTDF), providing support to non-profit organizations through contracts for services and (right) The Main Street Corridor Development Corporation (MainCor) who is the champion and leading community partner of Kansas City’s Main Street Corridor.

All About Community Outreach

The spring and summer seasons keep staff of the Community Outreach team busy each year! From speaking at businesses and schools to advocating for independent living at health and resource fairs, The Whole Person has left its mark all across the metropolitan area.

One important concern for TWP is making sure that patients in rehabilitation hospitals and nursing facilities know what their options are when returning back

home. Community Outreach staff have been visiting the Kansas University Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation Hospital twice a month to visit with patients. We also had the pleasure of speaking to the Multiple Sclerosis Achievement Center's members about services that might benefit them.

One of our favorite places to speak is at local schools. Fifty students with disabilities from East High School's summer program learned more about services available to them as they grow into adulthood.

By visiting schools, businesses, and organizations, TWP hopes to bring light not only to our own programs and services, but also disability awareness,

etiquette, and "People First Language" (for example, saying "people with disabilities," not "disabled people").

Staff recently spoke to the American Academy of Family Physicians and provided a resource table at Hallmark's disability awareness fair.

If your business, school, or organization is interested in a free presentation about disability etiquette, awareness, using People First Language, or if you would like TWP to provide you with information about our services, please contact Adam Lane by calling 816-595-3334 or emailing him at alane@thewholeperson.org.

Planting Independence – Fall Edition

The Whole Person is **Planting Independence – One Yard at a Time** on Saturday, October 7 from 8 am to noon. This will be the fourth time we have organized general yard clean-up services for TWP consumers who participate in any of our programs, and who own or rent their homes. TWP partners with volunteer groups throughout the community to provide low- to moderate-risk activities such as mowing, raking, weeding, and planting.

Yard maintenance can be difficult for people with disabilities. This service project, coordinated with our volunteers, helps TWP consumers get a handle on their yards and avoid unnecessary fines from the city where they reside. This is an excellent volunteer opportunity for individuals, families, clubs, schools, scouts, organizations, and businesses that are looking for a way to give back, be outdoors and serve people in our community who live with disabilities. With the help of volunteers, we were able to work on 30 yards last spring, but we had several more homes that remained on our waiting list. With more volunteers, we could meet the needs of everyone who requests yard clean-up.

If you are a TWP consumer and would like your yard to be considered for **Planting Independence** services on the first Saturday of October, or you would like to volunteer as an individual or

Wish List

Garden Tools

- Pruning Shears
- Hedge Shears
- Loppers
- Gloves
- Leaf/Yard Waste Bags (Paper)

group, you can go to the TWP website – thewholeperson.org/plant – or contact Kelly Grooms at 816-627-2232 or by email at kgrooms@thewholeperson.org.



The volunteer group from Synchrony made a big difference in the life of one of TWP's consumers during the Spring 2017 Planting Independence event.

Christopher & Dana Reeve Grant Received

The Whole Person has received a coveted Nursing Home Transition (NHT) grant from the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, one of seven NHT grants of \$40,000 awarded to Centers for Independent Living in the United States. The Foundation's Paralysis Resource Center provided the funding under a cooperative agreement with the Administration for Community Living in the US Department of Health and Human Services.

TWP will use this grant to assist eight people with functional paralysis to transition out of a nursing home and into the community-based home of their choice. The grant will also provide supports to alleviate isolation, including additional personal care attendant hours and a laptop for online connections.

Gabi Collins, TWP Independent Living Manager, explained, "I have found that people with paralysis aren't as limited by a lack of mobility as by a lack of understanding of and funding for the supports they need to successfully live as part of the community. Access to social interactions with a variety of people – with and without disabilities, both in person and through social media – is key to sustaining a satisfactory quality of life and it is essential to successful independent living."

*Connecting people with disabilities
to the resources they need.*

3710 Main Street, Kansas City, MO 64111
thewholeperson.org

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Sign up at:
thewholeperson.org/newsletter



JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

Signing up for our email list is a great way to stay connected to TWP. Visit thewholeperson.org to sign up.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

For media inquiries, interviews or statements, please contact:
Terri Goddard
Resource Development Manager
816-627-2220
tgoddard@thewholeperson.org

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Contributions from Individuals,
Honorariums and Memorials

Corporation and Foundation Gifts
Planned Giving

For more information on planned giving, contact Terri Goddard, Resource Development Manager at tgoddard@thewholeperson.org, or call 816-627-2220.



#volunteer

LEND SOME TIME TO "PLANT" INDEPENDENCE

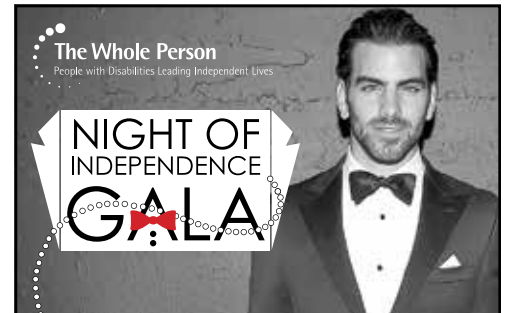
Join with friends, family, or co-workers and volunteer to do general yard maintenance for people with disabilities

Saturday, October 7

8:30 am to Noon
(or until work is completed)

Sign up to volunteer!
thewholeperson.org/plant

Contact Kelly for more information at 816-627-2232
kgrooms@thewholeperson.org



Friday, September 15
7:00 - 11:00 pm

The Gallery Event Space
Kansas City Power & Light District
61 E. 14th Street, KCMO

- Dinner and dancing
- Music by "Sellout"
- Silent and Live Auction
- Fund-A-Need

Individual tickets: \$150
Tables of 10: \$1,500

Table or ticket purchase required.

A portion of ticket and table purchases are tax deductible. Parking options provided.



SPECIAL GUEST
Nyle DiMarco

CO-CHAIRS
Jami & Fred Pryor

EMCEE
Phil Witt

Tickets available through September 1
thewholeperson.org/gala