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Planting Seeds of Change and Independence

Spring is a time for planting seeds, but not just any ordinary seeds will do. The Whole Person invites you to plant seeds of change and independence. With almost 200,000 Kansas Citians living with some form of disability, there are thousands of households in need of helping hands to do spring cleaning. "Planting Independence," The Whole Person's new yard cleanup program invites volunteers to roll up their sleeves in June and October to promote health and inclusion for people with disabilities.

TWP's yard cleanup program invites volunteers to roll up their sleeves to promote health and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Although it may not seem like raking leaves or mulching gardens can make much of an impact, take a moment to consider some often-overlooked facts:

- The sense of control that comes with living independently has been associated with less stress, better coping ability, and better overall health. By helping people maintain their yards, volunteers can support independent living.
- Areas for private respite and social interactions, such as yards and gardens, are associated with better health and lower mortality rates.
- Nature and gardens are great settings for "positive distraction," which can improve emotional states and lower stress.

Beyond the health benefits, "Planting Independence" will allow people with disabilities to avoid unnecessary fines, feel pride in their neighborhood, and interact with community members they may not meet otherwise. This is a unique volunteer opportunity for families, groups, and businesses looking to make a visible impact!

If you or your group would like to volunteer, contact Kelly Grooms, Volunteer Program Specialist, kgrooms@thewholeperson.org or (816) 627-2232.



For anyone looking to make a difference without getting their hands dirty, there are many other ways The Whole Person can put your talents and skills to work:

- **Events & Outreach:** From health fairs to art exhibitions, get involved in one of our exciting events or help us reach more people and businesses with our message.
- **Special Projects:** If you have a special interest or skill, put it to good use by working with one of TWP's many programs and services as a one-time or ongoing volunteer.
- **Peer Mentoring:** Peer mentors are individuals with disability-related experiences and knowledge who assist others with similar experiences. The goal of peer mentoring is to enable consumers to meet their personal goals in order to become more fully functional and

MISSION

The Whole Person assists people with disabilities to live independently, and encourages change within the community to expand opportunities for independent living.

VISION

The Whole Person envisions a fully integrated community of equality, where opportunities and choices are not limited by disability. We will promote a world in which people with disabilities will exercise independent choices and join with their supporters to advocate for positive change within society and its systems.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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



The Whole Person staff, volunteers, consumers and guests from EITAS attended Disability Rights Legislative Day at the Missouri Capitol in Jefferson City on March 10. Without the help of volunteers, this trip would not have been possible.

Letter from CEO

Committed people are those that give freely of their time, energy and resources to organizations and causes, expecting nothing in return. This is the description of The Whole Person's volunteers.

Volunteers fill many roles. We think of them as people who assist us with special events and activities. We forget that even our board members, students, interns, consumers and staff give their unpaid time and expertise to the organization in many different ways. Volunteers provide new ideas and creative thoughts. They bring enthusiasm and positive emotions to the organization. Their infectious desire to be of assistance lights up the environment and keeps the organization's mission and vision visible.

Our volunteers at The Whole Person are essential to getting the work done. A board member's community network provides contacts that result in new resources for our consumers. A social work intern researches data and provides feedback that can improve a program. Consumers are helped, a community is educated and lives are changed forever.

Thank you to all of our volunteers. Your time and energy supports the developing framework of The Whole Person in the pursuit of extraordinary accomplishments.

Julie DeJean, CEO



Disability Rights Legislative Day

On March 10, 2016, staff, consumers and guests of The Whole Person attended Disability Rights Legislative Day at the Missouri Capitol in Jefferson City. TWP was joined on this trip by EITAS, a non-profit agency working with people with developmental disabilities in Jackson County. Approximately 50 people represented both agencies at the capitol. During our visit, we participated in a rally with speakers Lt. Governor Peter Kinder, Assistant Attorney General Brian Weisel, Representative Kevin Engler, Senators Paul Weiland and Eric Schmitt, and various personal advocates from across the state.

The legislators talked about meeting people with disabilities had influenced how they viewed pending legislation. Rep. Engler has introduced a bill calling for the first raise in asset limits for consumers using Medicaid in over 40 years. This legislation will allow for people using Medicaid to better plan for emergencies and for equipment and assistance they require in order to live in the community of their choice.

Sen. Paul Weiland is a strong advocate of the Money Follows the Person program, which allows people in nursing facilities to transition to the community. He helped with the creation of a committee that explores how to continue this valuable program in Missouri.

Sen. Eric Schmitt is a parent of a child with a disability and, as such, understands the unique needs of families with children with a disability. He has been involved with numerous disability organizations and works to establish the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) act in Missouri. The ABLE act will allow for savings for people with disabilities to help meet their future needs.

After the rally was completed and lunch was served, many of our consumers were able to meet with their representatives and senators to express support for the raising of asset limits, streamlining of the ticket to work program with Medicaid, and changes to guardianship laws. Jason Greene, a member TWP's Brain Injury Peer Support Group, was also able to talk with legislators regarding bills dealing with changes to Missouri's helmet laws.

TWP was able to share lunch and visit with Rep. Bonnaye Mims and Rep. DaRon McGee in between their votes on the House floor. Consumers and staff were also able to observe both the House and Senate in session during the day. The House of Representatives worked on budget bills and the Senate worked on clarifying items in their journal, which is the historical record of their day-to-day proceedings.



Jason Greene (left), a member of TWP's Brain Injury Peer Support Group, spoke with Rep. DaRon McGee (right) about changes to Missouri's helmet laws.

Employment Success Story

Johnathan, who lives with autism and depression, wanted to start working after graduation from high school, so in September, 2014, he sought help at TWP to find the right job. When he first met employment advocate Katie Shern, depression had gripped him so severely that he decided he was not ready for a job.



Petco team member Johnathan

Four months later they met again and Katie immediately noticed a significant change in Johnathan's attitude and outlook. He was much happier and ready to begin his job search preparations. During an interview at Petco he exceeded all expectations and the assistant manager was ready to offer him a part-time job, but the official approval had to come from upper management. Petco was not able to offer him the job at that time, but the manager promised to keep him in mind if anything opened up. Johnathan was crushed, but he was also determined and continued to apply for other opportunities. About a month later, a part-time position opened at Petco and they offered it to Johnathan.

Johnathan started working at Petco in September, 2015, and is doing fantastic! He has made great strides in self-esteem, dedication and motivation. Thanks to TWP's partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the hard work of Katie, and TWP's Employment Services Department, Johnathan has completed a major step toward achieving his independence.

TWP Programs and Services

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

FACES OF TWP



Kathy and her PCA, Ruth, take part in Bingo at The Whole Person in January. Game Day is held the fourth Friday of every month.



Darla and Huck, along with Erika and Shaunda take part in the Canines and Canes event put on by the Blindness/Low Vision program.



Kay Jee and Megan McCall supported the Whole Person by donating change at the Chocolate for Change event in February.



Gay Lynn, TAP Specialist, delivers an Assistive Technology phone to Damon at his home.



Ayla (center) came to TWP to thank David, Susan, Mary Pat and Ruthie of the Employment Team for their help in getting her a job!



Karen takes Wesley of the Kansas City Board of Elections on a tour of TWP. We are hoping to become a polling place for people with disabilities.



Karen takes part in a Youth Transition class at a local high school. Youth Services partners with 20 schools throughout the area, with classes in 11 schools this spring.



KCATA held a focus group at TWP to discuss transportation for people with disabilities in the Kansas City area.



Sheila, Blind and Low Vision Specialist, (left), traveled to Michigan to cross country ski. She is shown here with her guide for the week, Jan (right). Sheila was chosen by Ski For Light to represent the U.S. in the Ridderrenn Games in Beitostolen, Norway.



Clark, Youth and Adult Services Specialist, (second from right), leading the Living Well With a Disability Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers at TWP. The program is held for 11 weeks.

FACES OF TWP



Elijah Klock (center) raised money with his high school classmates at Pembroke to support The Whole Person. Elijah and his mother came to deliver the check in person.



Students from Park Hill High School came to TWP to take a tour with Sam (front left) and Becky (front right) who are part of the Youth and Adult Services program at TWP.



The Home Modification Committee meets to review applicants for services.



Rep. Bonnaye Mims (left) met with Patrice at Disability Rights Legislative Day.

★
THE WHOLE PERSON'S
**CELEBRATION
AWARDS
LUNCHEON**
AUGUST 26, 2016
KEYNOTE | COL. GREG GADSON

SAVE THE DATE

Friday, August 26
The Gallery Event Space
61 E 14th St, KCMO

Our 6th Annual Celebration Awards Luncheon honors individuals and organizations that are working to further TWP's mission to assist people with disabilities to live independently.

Tickets will be available for purchase at thewholeperson.org/celebrationawards.

Sponsorship opportunities available

Contact Terri Goddard, at 816-627-2220, tgoddard@thewholeperson.org.



TWP Intern David (left) and staff members Terri (center) and Caitlin (right) board the bus for the ride to Jefferson City for Disability Rights Legislative Day.

take control of their life in their home, community and place of employment. Those wishing to become peer mentors must be interviewed by the Volunteer Program Specialist and receive eight hours of training. Training will be done twice a year, including the first week of July.



TWP intern Jake Marshall (right) accompanies Robert (left) and Wesley (center) to Disability Rights Legislative Day. Jake knows sign language and he volunteered to interpret for the two consumers at the event.

- **Internships:** Whether you're a student interested in public policy, youth transition or other disability-related issues, The Whole Person seeks to create intern positions that will contribute meaningfully to the organization while also supporting the learning, growth and development of the interns.

If you're interested in promoting a community of inclusion for people with disabilities, The Whole Person's volunteer program is a great place to start! The dedication of your time and talent is just as beneficial as any donation, so we invite you to join us in breaking down barriers, one yard or one person at a time.

For more information, or to register as a volunteer, contact Kelly Grooms, Volunteer Program Specialist kgrooms@thewholeperson.org or (816) 627-2232.

News from Resource Development and Community Relations

Health Care Foundation Grant Support Continues in 2016

Last year ...

...through a Health Care Foundation grant of \$71,636, peer support groups and psycho-educational classes were provided at no cost for 278 youth and adults with disabilities from the Greater Kansas City metropolitan area.

2015 highlights included two new peer support groups; quarterly Living Well With a Disability classes for adults and youth with disabilities; seven Youth in Transition classes that were hosted by area high schools for students preparing for adulthood; and four Urban Career Academy classes that were piloted for Park Hill South, Belton, and Center High School students with disabilities.

In addition to meeting or exceeding nearly all participation and attendance goals, the youth and adults served through the grant also met or exceeded outcomes related to their personal independent living goals. Examples of goals included becoming more comfortable in leaving home to feel less isolated; practicing mindfulness techniques; and developing peer friendships.

This year ...

...TWP has received a grant of \$40,000 from the Health Care Foundation to support a part-time staff position responsible for one-on-one mental health advocacy, so that people with disabilities can access the mental health services they need and to which they are entitled. These grant funds also support youth and adults with disabilities who participate in peer mentoring and support groups and classes administered

by TWP's Youth and Adult Support Services staff. The funds help to ensure the continuation of previous successes through initial, intermediate, and long-term mental health and wellness outcomes for the participants.

New Staff ...

The Resource Development and Community Relations Department recently added two people to the team. We are excited to announce that **Kelly Grooms** has joined TWP as the new **Volunteer Program Specialist**. Kelly comes to TWP with seven years of non-profit volunteer experience. Kelly was awarded The Roselle Atkins Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award by The National Kidney Foundation in 2015. She also has experience with program development and has been involved in many community outreach programs and activities. Kelly has a B.S. from Missouri State University.

Lea Klepees will be the new **Development and Database Management Specialist**. Lea comes to us with a B.S. degree from the University of Hawaii and many years of advocacy experience. Special thanks to Shana Widau who brought Lea's resume to us from the Employment Services Department. We are excited that Lea found us first as a volunteer, then as a consumer and is now an employee of The Whole Person.



New TWP employees Kelly Grooms (left) and Lea Klepees (right).

Adopt-A-Poll

The Kansas City Board of Election Commissioners (KCEB) has recently implemented a new program in Kansas City called Adopt-A-Poll. Adopt-A-Poll allows nonprofit organizations (NPOs), such as The Whole Person, to “adopt” a polling place, and staffing it with volunteers on election day. For each volunteer provided, KCEB will make a donation of \$180.00 to \$215.00 directly to the organization. This allows volunteers the flexibility to support both TWP and their community by working as a poll worker on election days.

The Whole Person will supply volunteers to work at the polls. According to the election board, approximately 1,200 to 1,500 volunteer poll workers are needed for each election. Volunteers must complete a mandatory two-hour training with the election board in order to take part. After completing this training at TWP, several staff members volunteered

at polling places for the March 15 elections in Missouri.

There are 3 upcoming opportunities for TWP to participate in this program.

- April 5 – General Municipal Election Day
- August 2 – Primary Election
- November 8 – General Election

The KCEB is one of the first election boards in the state to adopt this innovative approach to finding election workers. They will share their outcomes with other election boards across Missouri.



TWP staff training for staffing the polls.



JULY JUBILEE
CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE!

SAVE THE DATES!
Saturday, July 23 and Monday, July 25
2-day celebration of the 26th ADA Anniversary!
Saturday, July 23 • 8:00am-4:00pm
All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast by Chris Cakes from 8:00-10:00 am and a Yard Sale until 4:00pm.
Monday July 25 • 11:00am-2:00pm
Party in our parking lot with a live band, speakers, food, vendors and a whole lot of fun!

Sponsorship opportunities available!
Contact Terri Goddard at 816-627-2220,
tgoddard@thewholeperson.org.

Learn more at thewholeperson.org/jubilee



The Whole Person
People with Disabilities Leading Independent Lives

Youth Empowered Club

A peer support group for youth with disabilities ages 14-21 and their friends.

Fun discussions, learning new skills and social activities!

April 5, July 5, and October 4 • 6:00-7:30pm
The Whole Person, in the Community Room

Hosted by The Whole Person Youth Services Program

For more information, contact: Samantha Roe
816-561-0304
sroe@thewholeperson.org

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

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

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.



5TH ANNIVERSARY RETROSPECTIVE

EXPRESSIONS

FEATURING ARTISTS WITH DISABILITIES
FROM 5 YEARS OF EXPRESSIONS EXHIBITIONS

The Expressions Art Series provides opportunities for artists with disabilities to overcome barriers that may keep them from showing their art in a professional setting, and allows them to share their perspectives and experiences with the community.

The Expressions Art Series has been made possible by the generosity of the Francis Family Foundation, ArtsKC and the Missouri Arts Council.

For more details on the 2016 Expressions Arts Series, visit TheWholePerson.org/expressions



Financial assistance for this project has been provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency.

2016 Expressions Art Series

APRIL 2016

Expressions 5th Anniversary Retrospective Preview
Jones Gallery, 1717 Walnut Street, Kansas City, MO
Monday–Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Friday, 7 to 10 p.m.

MAY 2016

Expressions 5th Anniversary Retrospective
The Whole Person, 3710 Main Street, Kansas City, MO
Every Tuesday, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Expressions Booth at ArtsKC Block Party
Southwest Boulevard and Baltimore Avenue
Crossroads Arts District, Kansas City, MO
Friday, May 6, 4 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Main Street Day — Expressions Artists' Reception
The Whole Person, 3710 Main Street, Kansas City, MO
Saturday, May 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

JUNE–AUGUST 2016

Expressions 5th Anniversary Retrospective
Leawood Pioneer Library
4700 Town Center Dr, Leawood, KS 66211
Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.;
Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

OCTOBER 2016

6th Annual Expressions Art Exhibition
The Arts Asylum, 1000 E. 9th Street, Kansas City, MO
Dates and Times TBA