

OU Receives Grant from Missouri River Historical Development

Jennifer McCabe, Vice President of Waiver Services, is thrilled to announce that the Opportunities Unlimited Waiver Department has received a grant from The Missouri River Historical Development (MRHD) to purchase new equipment for our clients to access at our center.

Items that were purchased are as follows:

- Activity Table
- Lego Table
- 4 Piece Kitchen Set
- 2 Tumbling Mats
- Toaster & Coffee Pot toys for kitchen
- Play Food & Dishes for the kitchen



Grace takes a break from "washing the dishes" to smile for the camera.

Our clients are truly enjoying all of their new equipment, and with the cold weather beginning and outdoor play being limited this is a great time to get to explore new items at the OU Center.

Many of our younger children really love playing in the new play kitchen. It has been great fun to set the table, have tea parties and "make supper" together. When Grace was asked what she enjoyed the most about the new equipment she stated, "washing the dishes."

Thank you, Missouri River Historical Development, from the bottom of our hearts. The clients of OU as well as the staff are grateful for your generosity! Through your gifts you are bringing smiles to our clients faces every single day! Again, thank you! ♥

Spotlight On Staff...

Genevieve Perrin, Waiver Leader, joined Opportunities Unlimited in the early Fall, after relocating to Sioux City from Kailua, Hawaii. She is currently working with the children and adults served in OU's Waiver Program. Prior to joining OU, Genevieve was a special education teacher for Kindergarten and First Grade students in a Fully Self Contained (FSC) and resource setting combined. She graduated from the University of Hawaii with a M.Ed. in Special Education with an emphasis in Autism and has extensive experience working with children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.



Garrett Boardman, Allison Wisco, Kristan Geary, Genevieve Perrin

Garrett Boardman, Residential Leader – Meadow, joined Opportunities Unlimited after relocating to Sioux City from Minneapolis, MN. Garrett was previously a Community Outreach Manager with Rainbow Health Initiative working to improve the health conditions of priority populations. Prior to that experience, Garrett worked as a Health Education Manager and Outreach Worker to empower youth toward healthy lives. He graduated from the University of South Florida, with a BA in Women's Studies.

Opportunities Unlimited also asks that you congratulate the following individual on her promotion:

Allison Wisco, Residential Leader – Woodridge, joined Opportunities Unlimited after returning to Sioux City. Allison graduated from Grinnell with a BA in Chemistry and Religious Studies. She served at L'Arche Tahoma Hope as a Noah's Workshop Assistant, providing care and employment support for individuals with disabilities. Allison has an extensive background rooted in volunteerism, and is committed to sustainable living and social justice in her volunteerism.

Kristan Geary, Community Relations Manager, was recently promoted to this position in the late Summer 2009. Kristan began working with individuals with disabilities in 1991, and has dedicated her entire career to this pursuit. She joined OU in 2000, working at the Children's Center. In 2003, she worked as a paraprofessional in the special education department, while maintaining her employment at OU. Kristan will be working to further OU's Mission and interact on a regular basis with the community, providing educational opportunities on TBI, fundraising, etc. ♥

"Maximizing Personal Potential through Dignified and Purposeful Living"



LEADER

A Quarterly Publication of Opportunities Unlimited

Merry Christmas from OU

The holidays at Opportunities Unlimited are always a delightful time of year. There are special meals to prepare to share with our OU family, treats to make, songs to sing, prayers to pray, joy, parties to have and presents to wrap. You could say that at OU, we are truly blessed. In our community, however, there are some not so fortunate.



Santa and his helper visit OU for our Christmas Party.

Even with the recent announcements of the budget cuts within the State of Iowa, which will affect programs we serve, the leadership at Opportunities Unlimited has chosen to remain positive in our outlook and even more committed to provide the level of excellence that we do through the services provided to individuals with disabilities and their families. Remaining positive can be difficult in these challenging times, but then one look around and you remember that even in the face of adversity, each of us has something to smile about.

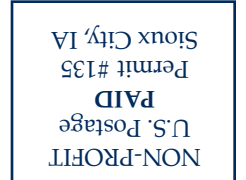
Jumpy Monkey Coffee News

Jumpy Monkey™ Coffee is thrilled to welcome Mosaic in Osceola, IA as a new distributor of coffee. Mosaic in Osceola is one of several in their organization across fourteen states. They were anxious to team up with Opportunities Unlimited and Jumpy Monkey™ Coffee and have been very successful since joining in June. Besides the coffee, the vocational clients served through Mosaic in Osceola keep busy by working on several projects including making soy candles, lotions, jewelry and other craft items that are sold in their own store, "Expressions by Mosaic," in downtown Osceola.



Jumpy Monkey™ Coffee has also released its 2009 holiday catalog. If you are looking for the perfect gift this Christmas season, keep in mind that Jumpy Monkey™ Coffee offers several gift items in all price ranges. Not only are you giving a great product to someone on your holiday shopping list, you are also providing employment opportunities to the clients served at Opportunities Unlimited. Jumpy Monkey™ Coffee will also ship your gift for you to anywhere in the United States. Please allow two days

for orders to be filled for pick-up and three additional days for shipping. If you did not receive a copy of the holiday catalog and would like to request a copy, please call Nicky at Opportunities Unlimited: (712) 277-8295 and she would be glad to mail it to you free of charge. ♥



Winter 2009-2010 ♥ Issue 35

February 9, 2010
10:00am – 4:00pm: Advocacy Day
State Capitol, Des Moines, IA
1st floor Rotunda, West Wing

March 2010
Brain Injury Awareness Month

May 6, 2010
Children's Mental Health Awareness Day

July 16, 2010
OU's 13th Annual Golf Shootout

This year, the staff members at OU have decided to "adopt" two families for the holidays. Both families have experienced hard times due to the economic environment, personal hardships, and health issues. These families would not be having as bright of a Christmas if not for the generous staff members who have come forward to ensure that these families be taken care of. Being one of Santa's elves is not OU's first mission – Maximizing Personal Potential Through Dignified and Purposeful Living – is – and it's a mission that we take seriously every day. That's why the two families chosen are families that are served by Opportunities Unlimited.

As you wrap your presents, bake your pies, and sit by a warm fire in your cozy home, remember those in our community who could use your uplifting help through the holidays. It's a time of year that we are focused on each other at OU and on the joy that the season can bring. ♥

Halloween and Thanksgiving at OU

Halloween started off like any other day at Opportunities Unlimited, but with a twist; instead of business casual there was a news anchor from the 70's, a pair-of-dice, 80's girls, an ER doctor, a creative quarter back, Laurie Partridge, a mummy and a girl whose boyfriend just broke up with her, among many others-and that was just staff! Individuals served also joined in the festivities, with the opportunity to win prizes some took their costumes very seriously!

At the end of the day Waiver clients went trick-or-treating at the Residential homes, which was a fun activity for both the individuals giving and getting the candy! It was a very memorable Halloween.

On November 20th, the Annual Nurses Lunch was held at the Opportunities Unlimited Center. Preparation for the much anticipated event started earlier in the week with Nurse Carol cooking the noodles for the soup from scratch and Nurses Dawn and Hilary cooking the turkeys and, of course, ordering cookies.

The soup turned out wonderfully, and there was even music and singing to accompany the food; our very own Deb Conley was on the piano with guest appearances by clients and staff. Not only was the food great, the company was even better. During this time of year we get the opportunity to reflect upon what we are thankful for, during that lunch you could tell individuals served and staff alike were thankful for the ability to live and work at a place where you can make a difference each and everyday. ♥



Jon and Caitlin dressed up for Opportunities Unlimited Halloween Party.

Waiver News

The OU Waiver Program has hosted some exciting group respites this fall, which continue to involve a number of children and adolescents from our community. In October, our staff and clients celebrated Halloween with their annual costume party which also included a night of trick-or-treating this year. There were some "spooktacular" costumes at this event which attracted nearly 70 individuals! New to the line-up of group respites this year was the OU Fall Carnival and Fair! Clients and staff enjoyed some of their favorite carnival foods and participated in a popular games where they collected a variety of carnival prizes. This will likely be a repeated event, as many have requested we offer this again – and soon! Andy Posey and Jon Niemic have been able to gain experience as "party planners" while hosting these events with the help of fellow Senior Waiver Specialists Brenna Regan, Derek Haskell, and Ryan Held. ♥



Blaine with his face painted at an OU celebration.

Family Fun at Opportunities Unlimited

Family Day was held on Saturday, September 12, 2009 at Opportunities Unlimited. OU Staff Members hosted over 250 family, friends, and neighbors to an afternoon filled with fun activities and good food. On hand were officers from the Fire Department, the DARE program and the K-9 units of the Sioux City Police Department. The K-9 unit performed a demonstration with the trained police dogs which was informative and enjoyed by all in attendance.

Activities for the younger set included a bouncy house, a golf putt, bingo, face painting, and a craft table. Everyone was able to also take part in the dunk tank, with a chance to dunk their favorite staff member. The popular cake walk was also a return event.

Many families travel from points near and far to participate with their loved ones on Family Day, along with staff members, their families and our immediate neighbors. It is a day that was enjoyed by many and gives everyone a chance to experience "community" at Opportunities Unlimited.

Special thanks to the officers from the Sioux City Fire and Police Departments for joining us on that day and for all of the volunteers who helped to make Family Day 2009 a success! ♥



Stephanie Brown, President & CEO, and Bailey at Opportunities Unlimited Family Day 2009.

Save the Date

Please save the date! The Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines, Iowa will be holding Advocacy Day on February 9, 2010 from 10:00am to 4:00pm. This will take place in the State Capitol on the first floor Rotunda, West Wing. Advocacy Day was created to educate legislators and policy makers on the needs of individuals who have sustained brain injuries as well as the needs of their family and friends who were directly affected by their injury. For more information on Advocacy Day please visit the Brain Injury Association of Iowa website at www.biaia.org. ♥



Annual Angels Continue to Make a Difference

The clients of Opportunities Unlimited continue to be successful thanks to generous members of the community and staff who are committed to achieving our mission through "Maximizing Personal Potential through Dignified and Purposeful Living."

During a time where funding for clients is being reduced, OU continues to be committed to "Pursue Excellence in all we do" through our Annual Angels program.

On the average, clients who live in their OU home are eligible to receive \$50 per month. \$50 a month to cover shampoo, toothpaste, clothing, etc. There are no leftovers for something fun like every other person enjoys such as movies, hockey games, concerts and even life's necessities, such as an assistive device to help you express your wants and needs.

Over the last year Angel Funds have been used to purchase coats, scarves and gloves, shoes, concert tickets, back to school clothes, adaptive equipment and therapeutic equipment that will help aid in clients reaching his or her goals.

During the last year we had two young adolescents receiving services in our Waiver Program. These adolescents were being raised by a family who struggled to provide the children with everything they needed. Rarely did they get to enjoy things other kids their age were doing such as buying clothing from the mall, playing video games and hanging out with friends their age. OU staff saw a need for these kids to have a life experience like everyone their age and brought an Angel request forward. These clients were thrilled to find out they got to go out to dinner in a sit-down restaurant and attend a movie of their choosing with their staff on a Friday evening-just like everyone else their age!

For less than the cost of your favorite soda or favorite coffee drink you can make a difference in the lives of clients that we have the pleasure of serving at OU. We make it very easy for you to participate in Annual Angels. You can pay via check, cash or credit card. You can be billed monthly, quarterly or on an annual basis. The full Angel level is \$1 a day for a full year or \$365. At the \$365 level you will receive a commemorative keepsake pin and your name on the commemorative wall at the Opportunities Unlimited Center. Any amount that you can give is much appreciated. Remember that the donations are tax deductible and 100% of the funds in the Angel Campaign go directly to benefit the clients we serve.

Together...one dollar a day...one day at a time...we will make a difference for many! ♥



Become an Angel!

Yes, I want to pledge \$1.00 a day for 365 days in support of OU's mission.

I will fulfill my commitment:
 Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Single Payment

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard
 Account Number: _____
 Credit Card ID Number (3 Digits on back): _____
 Expiration Date: _____

I want to support OU with an alternative gift of: \$ _____

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____

Clip and Mail to:
 Opportunities Unlimited
 3439 Glen Oaks Blvd.
 Sioux City, IA 51104

