

Dear Friends of ACT,

Earlier in my career I'll admit I had some big goals. And I was ready to work to achieve them. I thought then if I accomplished those goals (like CARF accreditation) I could just sit back and manage ACT at a comfortable pace.

That's laughable to me now. In fact, the whole tone of ACT, I am pleased to say, is one where I see our very talented and dedicated employees stretching every day, not resting, working to push the boundaries of what's comfortable or what we've always done. They want to do more. Often, to do more, you've got to do something different.

You've got to innovate. Change your perspective. Break your habits. Test something new.

Last month I mentioned two new ideas we're taking on here at ACT.

The budget has been approved and the process has begun for us to add a new position, an HR training specialist who will manage all training activities and track each employee's training status. This is no small undertaking. We think we'll see a new dimension of service to individuals as a result of this move.

We've also initiated a new effort to expand our quality measures. We're starting a new set of practices designed to look at a wider range of metrics and then act on what we learn.

If you ask someone what ACT does, he or she will likely say we provide services to persons with

disabilities. In order to do that there's got to be a process in place to make it possible to hire the employees needed to deliver those services.

I'm proud to say ACT is not just innovating and stretching in the areas of direct services to individuals. This ethic, this commitment to going beyond what we're comfortable with is alive and well in our financial management functions, communications and outreach, and human resources.

If you haven't heard them yet, I'll let you in on the news that ACT is now running radio ads on Y107. We're at the tail end of a two week run that invites job seekers to join us at a job fair August 9, 4:00-7:00 pm at Shakespeare's South, 3911 Peachtree Drive.

Employee turnover is a big part of everyday life at ACT. We have work to do and we need people to do it. Our work goes on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We need people to join us in this work and then stick around and grow with us.

We must do better at hiring and retaining employees.

But it was me who was a little apprehensive when our Director of Human Resources Brian Tveitnes suggested a new approach to addressing hiring and retention issues. We're going beyond the usual

www.indeed.com ads, prospecting at the University School of Health Professions, and employee referrals.

What's new in hiring? Radio ads to reach a wider audience and a job fair with on site interviews (and free pizza). What's new in retention? Bonuses. Employees who stay at ACT can get retention bonuses at 6 months, 12 months, and 2 years. As much as \$2,000 can be earned by those who make it beyond these critical retention milestones.

Please help us spread the word. ACT has opportunities that few private sector employers can offer: schedule flexibility, highly competitive benefits, and now bonuses.

Never rest on past accomplishments. Always examine services and systems to find better ways. Remember that it's about the journey, not the destination. So, don't ever arrive. Continue to stretch, to reach, to aspire to do better. Never be satisfied or become complacent.

I'm glad to say these principles are in effect at ACT. I am excited to see new ways of doing work emerge as we continue to listen to the persons we serve, their families, our employees, and the businesses that welcome us into their workspaces.

Until next month,



In This Issue

ACT Shares Experiences of Change at APSE-MO Conference

ACT Will Participate in the 2017 CoMoGives Campaign in December

Lucky's Welcomes Day Program Tour Group

Shop and Donate



Mark Hassemer
Executive Director

ACT WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE

2017 COMOGIVES CAMPAIGN IN DECEMBER



DERRICK, GARY, AND KELLY

During the last three years ACT has raised over \$50,000 through CoMoGives for people with disabilities.

Medical needs were met, lifelong memories were created, and first time experiences were made possible through this campaign.

Funds from last year have continued to be a lifeline for many people who receive ACT's services Roman's motivation is also a significant contributing factor to his rock star status.

CoMoGives donations helped Gary, Dennis, Derrick and Kelly go to Camp Wonderland, an unforgettable experience for people with disabilities.

Josh, who struggles with his weight, bought a new kitchen table, chairs, and a pedometer. A behavior therapist suggested these items to aid him on his road to health. He is now down more than 11 pounds!

Gabrielle needs a particular vitamin not covered by insurance. She has it every day now thanks to CoMoGives.

Veronica bought a new mattress; Allan, new bedding.

And we are just halfway through the year!

Thank you! Thank you to everyone who has supported ACT through the years. None of this would have happened without your generosity.



JOSH

Beginning December 1 and extending through the end of the month the CoMoGives campaign will be active and accepting donations once again. We are excited to be a part the 2017 campaign. We are anticipating tremendous community support, and, of course, the good work that will be done.

ACT SHARES EXPERIENCES OF CHANGE AT APSE-MO CONFERENCE



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: MICHELLE BELL, CRAIG VALONE, MARK HASSEMER, AND JESSICA MAHON.

ACT Executive Director Mark Hassemer, Directors Jessica Mahon and Craig Valone and Assistant Director Michelle Bell presented at the 2017 APSE-MO Summit, "Focusing on Transformation."

Their session on Day Two of the conference, "The Road to Change: A Transformation Story in Missouri," aligns perfectly with the conference theme. It featured the changes the programs have made.

APSE-MO is the Missouri chapter of APSE, the Association of People Supporting Employment First. APSE is a national organization committed to improving and expanding integrated employment opportunities, services, and outcomes for people experiencing disabilities.

Its mission is to advance employment and self-sufficiency for all people with disabilities through advocacy and education.

Both Career Services' and Day Program's changes have been highlighted in this newsletter recently.

Due to a waiver definition, ACT had to eliminate its recycling program, ACT Works. Now employment services, in what is now known as Career Services, are offered primarily in community locations, with the goal of individuals obtaining competitive, integrated employment.

Day Program is no longer limited to the hours of 9 am to 3 pm Monday through Friday. Services have been expanded to include evenings (for individuals living in their natural homes) and weekends, as the schedule allows (<http://www.actservices.org/day-program-expands-its-hours>).

A Certified Nursing Assistant has also been added to the roster to allow people who need additional medical attention to enjoy the

community (<http://www.actservices.org/day-program-offers-new-service-and-new-support>).

A more rounded, personalized level of care is one result of these changes.

"The evolution was due to a waiver change, but it aligned with our mission," Bell says. "We took the opportunity to grow our programs to provide a meaningful day for the people we serve."

Suzan Schuetz, ACT Career Services Program Supervisor, was also asked to co-present. Her topic, "Natural Supports and Social Inclusion in the Workplace," was given with Melanie Jordan, University of Massachusetts, The Institute for Community Inclusion. The presentation addressed how mentors, supervisors and coworkers are instrumental in the transition to employment for supported employees.



Both presentations demonstrate ACT's commitment to continuous improvement, always seeking to improve the service we provide and be more effective in accomplishing our mission. Communicating these experiences and best practices with our professional colleagues helps spread the word and work so that other persons with disabilities benefit, even those beyond our community.

LUCKY'S WELCOMES DAY PROGRAM TOUR GROUP

Lucky's Market

Individuals attending ACT's Day Program want to eat more healthfully. So they requested a visit to Lucky's grocery store to learn what they could about better eating.

The store provided an extensive tour during which they learned about Lucky's produce, deli, sushi, and what makes Lucky's stand out from other grocery stores.

Direct Support Professional (DSP) Trellene says, "Staff were so friendly and welcoming to everyone. Billy Dearing, the store manager, was very patient and answered all the questions our group had. I've never experienced such friendly attitudes and customer service like that from a grocery store."

After the tour, Lucky's provided a \$50 gift card so participants could enjoy some of their freshly made pizzas.

Angel, a person who attends Day Program said, "I liked the pizza!"

Nancy, another person supported in Day Program says, "My favorite part was all the nice people at Lucky's".

DSP Shaylee said, "Dearing was super inviting and friendly. We learned a lot we didn't know about Lucky's."

Thank you Lucky's for offering such a great experience and helping people in Day Program on their road to better health.



Billy Dearing

SHOP AND DONATE

At Gerbes and Schnucks, simply apply for their community/rewards program, pick ACT as your designated charity, and shop away!

When shopping at AmazonSmile, create an account, pick ACT as your charity, and again, shop away!

JustGive makes donating to charitable organizations easy. Go to their website and search Alternative Community Training to donate. You can even pick to give one time, monthly, or to put on a registry.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ACT!



AUGUST

	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	ACT Hiring Event at South Shakespeare's (#3) 4-7pm	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31				

SEPTEMBER

September 10-16 - DSP Week

	1	2
3	ACT facility based programs/offices closed for Labor Day	5
6	7	8
9		

Check our Twitter @ACTofCoMo and our Facebook fb.com/ACTofCoMo for more details

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GETCONNECTED

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