

Dear Friends of ACT,

I have a positive feeling lately of change, energy, and anticipation at ACT. I hope it's just not me! I know it's not.

Certainly the construction in our building contributes to the feeling.

A couple weeks ago we started renovations to our building at 2200 Burlington Street. We've been in this space since October, 1989. It has served us well. But it was time to make some changes.

Last year we closed our facility-based work program (recycling). Although it was a difficult process, the time was right and the change was right. Now there's no looking back. It's onward and upward for ACT Career Services and its job seekers who are making their preparations for community-based jobs, not here, but in the community.

We are changing some of the space that was used for the recycling program and we're making smaller rooms for our Day Program. This building is simply a home base for the Day Program now. Time spent in the community continues to ramp up.

Some offices will also be located in this space.

We are changing a couple of the offices for our business and human resources staff. Some

doors are being moved to improve efficiency. These may seem like minor changes, but we expect big results and a better working environment for all.

The training center will relocate from across the street to our main building. And we'll be adding a smart board and numerous laptops. We have added a new Training Coordinator position to the Board-approved budget for fiscal year 2018, which begins July 1st. An emphasis on training is critical to what we do.

One of our Directors, Jessica Mahon, will also begin monitoring quality metrics across all programs in addition to her current duties overseeing employment services. That focus will be on performance measurement, management, and improvement. This is a renewed and bolstered commitment to improving the outcomes of our services.

New levels of creativity are evident all around me. You've read about the Day Program's expansion into evening and weekend services. It's just one example. The response has been outstanding!

Our human resources staff continues to explore new ways to attract and retain high quality employees. The business office just finished the first year with new fund accounting software.

Although these are not direct services to individuals, they contribute to the positive energy and favorable culture I feel.

We've had a good year financially. We'll share the benefits of that with all staff. As I told them in a letter I sent recently, they remain our greatest asset.

Our community living staff continue to provide exemplary services despite the need for more personnel. Direct support professionals are working overtime. Managers are picking up hours and filling in as needed. Whatever it takes to get the job done, these tremendous people are delivering. They continue to illustrate what a valuable asset we have in our employees.

We just received another three year accreditation from CARE. The creativity and effort that ACT employees brought to bear to prepare for the site visit and demonstrate our commitment to the highest standards of care were truly remarkable.

No doubt, challenges loom ahead. Uncertainty about Medicaid funding on the Federal level continues. There are budget concerns in Missouri. But you know what? We've faced obstacles before, and we will again. What's important is how we respond to what's in front of us.

In This Issue

Working in Various Programs is Meaningful for Employees and Individuals Served

Household Items in High Demand in ACT's Community Living Program Give A H.O.O.T Gives

STEP Graduate, Valuable Employee on MU Campus

Shop and Donate



Until next month,



STEP GRADUATE,

VALUABLE EMPLOYEE ON MU CAMPUS

Plaza 900 is the largest all-you-care-to-eat dining hall on MU campus. That's something to brag about.

They also have an amazing staff. Roman is proud to be among them.

Roman is a Columbia Rock Bridge High School graduate. He was also a STEP intern (read more about STEP here).

Shortly after graduation he interviewed for the job of part-time opener (morning shift) in the dish room.

Assistant manager Kyla says, "Roman went through the same process as anyone else applying for a job here, including background check, interview, screenings, etc."

After landing the job, Roman has continued to impress his managers and co-workers.

"He has come so far during the last year," Kyla exclaims. "His job coaches are down to coming for just a couple hours each day."

One of his duties is loading and unloading the dish belt. It's a two-person job, but Roman can handle it single-handedly. During the lunch rush the hall serves 900 to 1,100 people, so this solo performance is impressive.

Some of his success can be attributed to management at Plaza 900. Kyla, who holds a degree in event planning and business, makes sure she utilizes the expertise of ACT's job coaches to ensure Roman thrives in his role.

"We work well together," Kyla says of her relationship with the job coaches.

Roman's motivation is also a significant contributing factor to his rock star status.

"I am working hard toward not needing a job coach anymore," Roman says. "I like my job. And I really like getting a paycheck. I am saving up for a dirt bike!"



WORKING IN VARIOUS PROGRAMS IS MEANINGFUL FOR EMPLOYEES AND INDIVIDUALS SERVED

In an effort to offer a Meaningful Day for the individuals served at ACT, Career Services and Day Program began last fall sharing an employee, Danica Duensing.

“It’s been fun to mix up the day with a new location and I always love getting to know new individuals,” Duensing says.

She has become a valuable part of both the STEP Program and the Day Program. Having a staff member cross-trained in two programs has benefitted both programs.

Duensing brings her knowledge of Career Services and supported employment to her job at the Day Program.

Duensing says, “I’m looking forward to seeing how we can bring some aspects of Career Services into Day Program. I’m working on a soft skills curriculum for our Day Program individuals who hope to some day work in a competitive wage job.”

ACT also has several employees working in both In-Home Services and the Day Program. Their familiarity with individuals made this transition to the second program a natural fit.

Jackson says, “This allows individuals to swim and exercise locally without cutting into our budget or taking away other fun and exciting activities our individuals love to do. It will also help individuals meet exercise goals and allow for more community integration.”

“As we continue to hire more staff under this model, we expect it to become the new way services

are delivered between the programs,” says Craig Valone, Director of Day Program.

Taylor Widdison is currently working in both Day Program and In-home Services. “He has been doing a great job!” Valone exclaims.

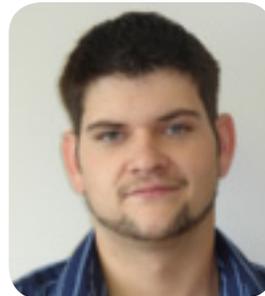
This approach creates an opportunity for individuals and staff to receive and provide services that more closely fit their needs and schedules.

It also allows individual to access services from multiple departments while keeping the flexibility and familiarity of having those services provided by a single staff person.

Staff benefit by receiving additional training and more variety in work hours and work location.



DANICA, LEFT, WITH ANGEL WHO PARTICIPATES IN DAY PROGRAM.



“I worked for about 2 years doing in-home respite with a gentleman who also received support in the Day Program,” Day Program Supervisor Adam Hayes says. “I think he felt very comfortable with a familiar face. Staff sharing is fast track way to accomplish ACT’s Vision, Mission and Values.”

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS IN HIGH DEMAND IN ACT'S COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM

It is a harsh reality many of the individuals supported in ACT's Community Living (CL) face, living month to month financially.

Quality, affordable housing is the biggest ticket item people in the program need.

The cost of living continues to rise but incoming funds do not follow this trend. Many times, CL Managers are scrambling to find a new home for the men and woman they support after getting a rent increase notice that's effective immediately.

On high demand are smaller household items - pots, pans, crock-pots, spice racks, silverware, blinds, cleaning supplies, sheets, towels and toiletries.

Art, decorations, curtains and accent rugs could give some of the houses a little cheer.

Some larger items are also in demand. Dawn, an individual supported in CL, could use a desk chair and some houses could use some fresh carpet and paint.

Living room furniture, deep freezers, refrigerators, laminate flooring, fans, floor lamps, humidifiers and vacuums are things that also make this list.



DAWN, LEFT, NEEDS A DESK CHAIR.

If you would like to donate any items, or have rental property, we would love to hear from you.

SHOP AND DONATE

You can now donate to ACT by shopping at Gerbes, Schnucks, and AmazonSmile andJustGive.org!

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! Tuesday, July 11 is Prime Day and will feature more than 100,000 deals exclusively for Prime members, making it one of the biggest shopping days of the year.

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!

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.



JULY

1						
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

ABLE Accounts & Special Needs Trust, 6-7pm at Woodhaven, 1405 Hathman Pl, Columbia

APSE-MO 17th Annual Employment Summit



AUGUST

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Check our Twitter @ACTofCoMo and our Facebook [fb.com/ACTofCoMo](https://www.facebook.com/ACTofCoMo) for more details

CONTACTUS

 ACT
2200 Burlington
Columbia, MO 65202

 1-800-359-4607
1-573-474-9446

GETCONNECTED

Come follow us on social media:

 www.actservices.org

 fb.com/ACTofCoMo

 pinterest.com/alternativecomm

 [@ACTofCoMo](https://twitter.com/ACTofCoMo)

 google.com/+ActservicesOrg

 Alternative Community Training

 pinterest.com/alternativecomm