

Forging Connections



Mainstream Living has provided exceptional services and supports for persons with disabilities in central Iowa for 47 years. During this time, I have noticed a trend. Almost every week someone has called, or pulled me aside to comment on our amazing services and our amazing staff! Everyone at Mainstream Living works to meet our mission to “enhance opportunities, create success and fulfill dreams.” But I

believe we are unique in our industry largely because of the long-term relationships we have developed with our members and their families. Our staff forge unbelievable connections and it is evident in the work we do each and every day. This newsletter is dedicated to those connections. We have pulled together some of the comments, notes and messages from our family members and our members.

Our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and our members are at the heart of quality care. Our DSPs work best when they receive high-quality training, living wages, and respect for the central role they play. We are grateful that so many of our families and guardians not only have a great deal of respect for the work of our DSPs, but also support us in addressing the challenges we face with a diminishing workforce. We are glad to report that over the past 2 year we have had some real success putting the needs of our members and DSPs in front of policy makers and funders. Iowa’s 2022 legislative session was our most successful year yet in over two decades of advocating for change. With your help and advocacy, the legislature restructured funding for mental health services, and provided additional funding for mental health, and HCBS services which we were able to use to increase staff wages.

Your advocacy is working! As parents and guardians, you appreciate the importance of a direct care workforce who is well-trained and compensated for the work they do. Yet, there is still a great deal to do. Longstanding staff-shortages and pay disparities persist on a state and national level. We finally have the attention of the Governor’s office and the legislature. During the upcoming legislative session please help us continue to build on our success. Our voices are stronger when they are multiplied. Contact your local, state and national lawmakers and share the stories of the connections that are made at Mainstream Living.

Finally, as we reflect on the past year and prepare for the future, I would ask that each of us take a moment to reflect on the hard work and dedication of our staff and let them know we appreciate all of their efforts. Many of you are already doing that and I can’t tell you how much it means to our staff to hear that their work makes a difference. Mainstream Living is exceptional because of our staff and we are so grateful to all the parents and guardians who support us.

Thank you all.

Bill Vaughn
President/CEO



Mainstream Living 

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Flexible scheduling

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Mainstream Living Receives \$25,000 Donation from First Interstate Bank's Believe in Local Campaign

First Interstate Bank launched the Believe in Local campaign to celebrate the Bank's longstanding commitment to the communities it serves. Forty nonprofit organizations across the Bank's expanded 14-state footprint will receive a \$25,000 gift in support of their mission. Mainstream Living was nominated by local First Interstate employees and selected from a pool of over 400 nominees thanks to its alignment with the Bank's philanthropic goals.



Mainstream Living has received a life-saving automatic external defibrillator thanks to the Iowa Heart Foundation.



Mainstream Living has received a life-saving automatic external defibrillator (AED) thanks to the Iowa Heart Foundation. The device will be installed at our 11-bed Residential Care Facility for Persons with Mental Illness (RCF-PMI). Sudden cardiac arrest can strike anywhere and at any time and is a leading cause of death in the United States. Persons with mental illness are more likely to be diagnosed with chronic conditions that affect heart health.

AEDs – automatic external defibrillators – are state of the art devices that when used in conjunction with effective CPR, assist in the resuscitation of a sudden cardiac arrest victim. Thank you to the Iowa Heart Foundation for supporting Mainstream Living and other non-profit organizations in our efforts to improve survival rates for people who experience sudden cardiac arrest.

Congratulations to all of our employees celebrating milestones!

Our long-term employees are the reason that our mission, vision and values are visible in the communities we serve. Thank you for your commitment to our members and to our organization.

5 Years

Tonia Roberts
Gladis Aguirre
Briana Bradley
Irumva Hyves
Takiya Luster
Emma Schuler
Sara Nybong
Amy Grange
Sara Sampson
Megan Smith
Nathan Harrington
Brendan Nelson
Sarah Cornelis
Sara Ray
Jessica Royce
Willy Nzimi
Joanie Rice-Phipps



10 Years

Jason Kennedy
Denise Bown
Tiffani Chandler
Adol Manyiel
Andrea Hernandez
Angela Wolfe
Wanda Walker
Amanda Royce
Romnita Watkins
Samantha Brockshus
Shari Randol

15 Years

Tasha Villa
Dena Risius
Amber Schaefer
Edward Morris
Nermina Ramic

20 Years

Betsy Dehaan

25 Years

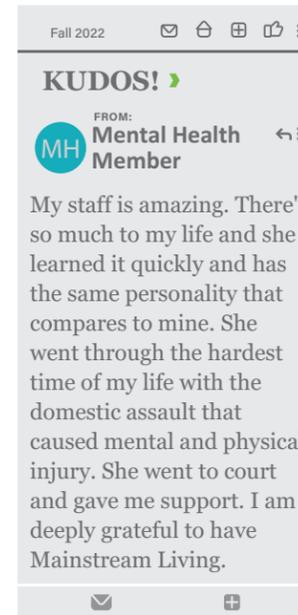
Lu Wingfield
Judy Hansen
Christine Hatcher
Pat Van Cannon
Andrew Gomez

35 Years

Kent Meier

KUDOS KUDOS KUDOS KUDOS KUDOS KUDOS KUDOS

ACE offers so many opportunities for my child...we greatly appreciate all they do.
- Mainstream Living parent



We would like to relate a recent experience we had with one of Mainstream's staff on Tuesday, October 4th. Our daughter Laura had an issue with one of her knees and needed to visit an urgent care clinic. Laura's staff got her to the clinic even before we could be there. When I arrived and identified myself to the receptionist, she said the Mainstream staff accompanying Laura was one of the kindest, most loving persons she'd ever seen! I told her we have the best! She went on to say they see a lot of staff/client visitors, but this was exceptional! The doctor we saw continued the praise. I believe his phrase was, "This is extremely rare!". It wasn't a surprise to us because we see the fantastic care Laura receives regularly from all her staff. But it was quite a feather in the cap for Mainstream.
- Mainstream Living parent

Very satisfied with service. Makes me feel comfortable as a human and give me empowerment within my life as a parent and my power that I still have to give to the community. Humanity!
- Mental Health Member

I feel we have great rapport and communication with Mainstream Living staff. I believe they truly want the best for our daughter and work hard to give her social and learning opportunities and provide for a lot of fun, always cognizant of her goals.
- Mainstream Living parent

I would definitely recommend the day program because staff has done such an amazing job of changing it from what it used to be. They listen to what you say and help problem solve. It is such a useful program to have and gives purpose to so many that can't go find a job or go into the community by themselves.
- Mainstream Living parent

Excellent program with many opportunities for members to go out in the community for activities. Staff is very caring and easy to communicate with. They make safety a priority. I would definitely recommend Mainstream Living to those in need of services.
- Case Manager

There are not enough words to express the gratitude and appreciation we want to leave with you for the care you have given Jeff over the many years he has been attending the Center. So a huge thank you to all of you!
- Mainstream Living parents

"Mainstream staff not only treats my son with dignity and respect, but they also treat me with dignity and respect."
- Mainstream Living parent

