



Messenger

Summer 2019



Spirited People Leading Spirited Lives
..... Celebrating Advocacy



LETTER FROM

Cindy Clark, President & CEO

WHAT WE DO

Many people with developmental disabilities find it hard to live independently. At Emmaus, we provide services so they can be in control of their lives and live like you and me.

Dear Friends,

More than a year ago our Board of Directors made the bold decision to invest \$10 million over three years to increase our wages for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), our frontline team members. At the same time, we initiated an ambitious plan to reorganize our service delivery system to enhance services to our clients and families and create meaningful career paths for our DSPs. While the wage increase had an initial short-term impact on staff turnover, we now see our headcount dwindling again. Our wage initiative will soon be overshadowed by the minimum wage increases in Missouri, and nationally, we have seen unemployment fall to the lowest rates in more than 50 years.

We are not alone. In Missouri, the crisis is so bad that earlier this year another provider closed their doors, discharging 17 clients overnight because inadequate government funding left them unable to hire staff. Simply put, we, like hundreds of other providers in Missouri, have a revenue problem. The average hourly rate that we receive to provide critical services for our clients is \$25.91.

Yet, an independent study of Missouri's rates indicates that we NEED \$29.91 to provide these services and break even financially. ***A four dollar an hour difference in reimbursement, coupled with providing more than 1,000,000 hours of service, equates to a \$4,000,000 shortfall annually.*** Not many businesses can sustain losses like that, yet year after year, Emmaus and other providers are forced to.

It is during times like this that our confidence is shaken... or at least mine. Then a memory popped up on my

Facebook from a year ago. It was a quote from author Elisabeth Elliot, "Don't dig up in doubt what you planted in faith." Our Board faithfully committed to this plan last year and we are only one year into a three-year plan. We continue to adjust the plan to be responsive to the needs of our clients and are in constant communication with our team members about improving the employee experience. And most importantly, we have been persevering through workforce crisis' and a lack of funding for 125 years.

Support from our generous donors helps bridge the gap, but not enough to stem this crisis. We need your help. Please consider joining our mission by becoming a part of our workforce. Even a few hours each week would be helpful, or you can volunteer and begin to develop a meaningful relationship with one of our clients which will forever change your perspective on the world. Finally, please join us as we continue to expand our advocacy efforts. It is going to take many persistent voices to move this crisis to the top of the priority list for our state and our nation. Contact Austin Hayden, Advocacy Coordinator at haydenaustin@emmaushomes.org for more information.

You can be part of the solution. Our clients need your help now more than ever before.

God bless,

Cindy Clark
President & CEO

START SOMETHING

Randy attended a conference focused on the strengths, abilities, dreams, and goals of individuals that learn and communicate differently. After participating in sessions for two days, Randy decided to put his learnings to practice. He recently took an assessment to start working at a new job, and passed. This job pays more than min. wage, offers benefits, vacation and a 401k! After sitting through another session he has learned that he can be his own guardian and have control over his finances and his life as a whole.



FEATURE

ADVOCATING FOR ANDREW

In May of 2014, Richard and Diane were given the most unexpected news from their son, Andrew's case manager.

Andrew, with multiple diagnoses on the autism spectrum, had been selected by the state of Missouri to receive funding for full time residential care. Their case manager looked at them shocked and surprised: *"I can't believe this - this just doesn't happen"*.

Long before receiving this amazing news, Andrew, Diane and Richard had looked around the St. Louis area for a potential residence for Andrew, who often exhibited challenging, aggressive behaviors. Without doing a lot of research, their initial thought was that an organization with a campus setting would be a good fit.

Quite simply, they couldn't have been more wrong.

They met with numerous agencies, specializing in the care of people with developmental disabilities. It was during this process when they realized that the best outcome for Andrew would be in a home with a few other clients.

A home in a typical neighborhood would allow for personalized one-on-one care that would foster Andrew's continued development

and promote an active and productive lifestyle.

It had to be an extraordinary organization because Andrew's future was at stake. They found that Emmaus had the most to offer Andrew. This included a knowledgeable transition team and well-trained staff who were willing to learn sign language in order to communicate.

Most importantly, by living in a regular house in St. Charles County, Andrew would enjoy the same "normal" lifestyle that he had grown up with - he would be living in a suburban neighborhood with the opportunity to wave to neighbors and be conveniently located close to shops, restaurants and other urban amenities. But there would be one significant difference - one that Andrew's parents had only dreamed about - a newfound sense of independence.

Andrew loves going to McDonald's and his Direct Support Professionals love taking him. Instead of placing an order and paying for him, Andrew is able to use a self-service station with an interactive display.

This technology allows Andrew, who communicates with sign language, to select the food that he wants and pay on his own. Andrew loves the food,

but he always is filled with joy at completing this act independently.

After Andrew moved out of his family home, Diane and Richard were astonished to experience his newly discovered independence during their very first visit to with him. In just a few short weeks, at age 22, Andrew had grown up.

When they returned from taking him to dinner, he was so proud to open the front door of his new home and invite them in. And later, when it was time for his parents to leave, they wondered if there would be tears, but there were none. While Andrew did not shed any tears after that first visit, there were many tears shed by his mom, dad and sister during that drive home. Not tears of sorrow - but rather of tears of joy - because Andrew was home.

This is what Emmaus does! Along with providing above-and-beyond care every day, Emmaus Direct Support Professionals discern and invent new ways to assist and improve client's lives. This is why we and so many other parents and families entrust the lives of our loved ones with Emmaus.

- Diane Alt



SAVE THE DATES!



Duckfest Sept. 14th

Lakeside 370 Park

*A day dedicated to celebrating all things outdoor.
Live music, contests, great food and plenty of drinks.*



#GivingTuesday Dec. 3rd

Follow Us on Facebook

*Help Emmaus connect with the generous people of
St. Louis for a 24 hour marathon of online giving that
allows us to continue to serve the community we love.*

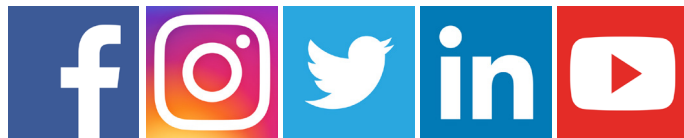
3731 Mueller Rd.
St. Charles, MO 63301

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST. LOUIS, MO
PERMIT NO.783



Emmaus

STAY CONNECTED



DDRB



United Way
of Greater St. Louis



3731 Mueller Rd.
St. Charles, MO 63301

636-534-5200
www.emmaushomes.org