



2024

Emmaus



SPRING
MESSENGER

LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

What an exciting time this is at Emmaus!

As you may have heard, in recent weeks we welcomed nearly 100 team members from the residential services program at Community Living. We worked closely with leaders at Community Living to ensure a smooth transition, and you can read more about our work later in this issue. We are delighted to welcome our new clients and team members to the Emmaus family!



This issue of The Messenger also includes stories of the critical work our team members, clients and volunteers continue to do. Our client Jeffrey shares his story of finding his voice with the help of People First and learning to advocate for himself and others. We also celebrate local CAPS (Center for Advanced Professional Studies) students who are pursuing degrees in the healthcare field, and whose volunteer work at Emmaus helped them learn to form real connections with our clients.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with Emmaus and the clients we serve, here are three easy ways to help!

ONE: PRAY

Please join us in praying for the clients we serve and the team members who serve them. Pray for their health and safety.

TWO: ADVOCATE

Become an advocate for the clients we serve. Join hundreds of others in working with our elected officials to champion our cause! It can be as simple as calling or e-mailing your elected official. Or visiting the capital with others from Emmaus. We have a list of resources to help. You can learn more about our advocacy work and how you can help by visiting emmaushomes.org/advocacy.

THREE: GIVE

When you make a gift to Emmaus, it provides support to the hundreds of clients we serve. Donations help to fund charity care, spiritual care services and outings for our clients. You can support our mission in several ways including becoming a monthly donor, sponsoring, or attending an Emmaus special event and more. To learn more about ways to support our clients, visit emmaushomes.org/donate.

Thank you for your continued support of our mission,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Cindy Clark
CEO Emmaus Homes



"Even if you don't think you have a voice, you have one. You can use it."

UNLEASHING THE POWER WITHIN: JEFFREY'S SELF-ADVOCACY ROAD

The self-advocacy journey for Jeffrey, a man served by Emmaus, began in his teenage years when he first joined People First. People First is a self-advocacy organization formed by, run by, and exists for people with developmental disabilities in Missouri. Although he had some time away, the last year marked his triumphant return. The unwavering support and guidance of friends, family, and Emmaus shaped Jeffrey's rediscovery of his voice. Embracing the power of advocacy, Jeffrey now feels a passion to stand up for what is right. He has advocated to his Direct Support Professionals, his family, and even his friends. One notable instance was during a conference trip when his friends wanted to go swimming, but Jeffrey needed quiet, alone time. With newfound confidence, he expressed his needs, emphasizing the importance of his self-care to enjoy the rest of the conference fully. Jeffrey's self-advocacy acts have profoundly impacted those around him, inspiring them to find their voices. He encourages others by sharing, "Even if you don't think you have a voice, you have one. You can use it." Now, not only does Jeffrey advocate for himself, but he passionately stands up for his friends and what is right. His journey exemplifies the transformative power of self-advocacy, proving that everyone has the ability to make positive change.

A Journey of Resilience and Growth

As we reflect over the past few years, we have successfully managed many changes at Emmaus. From transitioning our services from the campus to the community, to navigating the many challenges that came with the pandemic. During these times, Emmaus' frontline heroes, our direct support professionals (DSPs), played a pivotal role in rising to these challenges. Their flexibility, strength, courage, heart, and commitment to our clients underscore the spirit of Emmaus.

Fast forward to today, Emmaus stands in a position of strength, ready to embark on a new and exciting chapter in our history. In January, Emmaus announced the expansion of our services by welcoming the residential clients and support team from Community Living into the Emmaus family.

This strategic move was anchored in careful consideration. Emmaus has focused on strengthening its workforce over the past two years, which makes this expansion possible. We are excited to share what we have learned in order to strengthen the Community Living team. Many of the Community Living clients have lived together for decades and this transition will allow their care to continue uninterrupted with the same team members they have grown to rely upon.

The transition, involving forty-one clients across twelve community homes in the St. Charles area, comes with approximately 100 new team members and has positioned Emmaus to provide residential services in seventy-six homes for 220 people.



Volunteers prepping welcome bags for new team members

In early February, the executive team hosted an open house welcoming new clients and their families to Emmaus. Other Emmaus family members and clients were present to help answer any questions or concerns they may have.

We ‘officially’ welcomed our new team members, clients, and their families on February 27th. Over the past few months our team members have visited the homes and met with both clients and staff to ensure a smooth transition.

We were diligent about creating a welcoming environment for our new clients and staff members. From a comprehensive orientation program for our new team members, to personalized support structures for our new clients, we aimed to create an environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and supported. Emmaus is honored to be a part of their lives and careers.

As Emmaus looks back on its journey, we see resilience and growth. We applaud the members of our client services team for their incredible work. This transition is a direct result of our reputation for providing high-quality services to adults with developmental disabilities.

The support of our partners – our staff, donors, local churches and organizations, municipalities, and volunteer groups – has been, and continues to be, instrumental. Together, we will continue to make an even greater impact on the lives of those we are honored to serve.



Above: Welcome to New Emmaus Client Services Leadership Team Members



Left: Client Services Leadership Team Photo

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: STUDENTS AT EMMAUS

In the bustling hallways of Francis Howell High School, a group of senior students, including Nick and Brianna, are not just counting down the days until graduation. They are proactively looking and working toward their future as part of the Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) program, and their journey has led them to Emmaus, a place where compassion meets action.

Their time at Emmaus is not just about volunteer work but also personal growth, professional aspirations, and genuine human interactions. With dreams of becoming a pediatrician, Nick fondly recalls, "There's this moment when I helped Shawn with his garden, and his smile made all the difference. It taught me that healthcare is more than just medicine; it's about the human connection." Brianna shares a similar sentiment. "Helping a client cook was so much more than a task; it was about building relationships. These small moments remind me why I want to work in medicine."

As they prepare for their future, they do so with a deeper appreciation for the human element in healthcare, nurturing a lifelong commitment to service and empathy. For these young volunteers, Emmaus is more than a stepping stone; it's a place where they learn the true essence of caring for others.



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Healthcare is more than just medicine; it's about the human connection.
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KATIE'S 30TH BIRTHDAY ON WAVES OF INSPIRATION

Katie, an Emmaus client, and her mother, Julie, commemorated Katie's 30th birthday on the enchanting Miss Augusta yacht at Emmaus' Waves of Inspiration Event. This marked their second year attending and was a memorable experience for them both. When initial birthday plans for Katie didn't quite pan out, Julie decided to bring her daughter to the Waves of Inspiration event.



Katie harbors a deep love for trees and nature and was surrounded by its beauty while on board. The simple pleasure of gazing at the trees and feeling the wind against her face was some of her favorite moments. The highlight of the day was when Katie ascended the stairs to the captain's seat and steered the boat. The excitement radiating from Katie was heartwarming for everyone, especially Julie.

Julie took a moment to express her gratitude for Emmaus, an organization that has become an integral part of their lives. She shared that what she loves most about Katie being an Emmaus client is the opportunities it provides her to engage in exciting activities with Katie. For example, Waves of Inspiration or activities like skiing, ice skating, and summer camp programs through Harbor Unlimited. Julie emphasized that Katie, in her own unique way, teaches her valuable lessons every time they are together. Lessons on how to slow down, appreciate life's simple joys and find beauty in every moment. Julie says that Katie brings out the best in who she is as a person. Julie's appreciation and support for Emmaus goes beyond special events like Waves of Inspiration; it extends into the everyday moments she shares with her daughter and the dedicated team members. She believes in the transformative power of Emmaus, not just in creating memorable experiences but in fostering a deeper connection and understanding between individuals with diverse abilities and the broader community they live in.





APRIL 26, 2024
ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT
EMMAUSHOMES.ORG/GOLF

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED



Advocate

Ask your elected officials to fund services



Volunteer

Impact someone's life through service



Attend an Event

Attending an event helps us get the word out



Become a Host Home

Get paid to work from home



Join our Team

PT & FT positions



Donate

Gifts help with staffing and enriching lives