



2025

# Spring Messenger



Emmaus

[emmaushomes.org](http://emmaushomes.org)



## Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Spring edition of The Messenger! Spring is one of my favorite seasons, with longer days, more sunshine and the St. Louis Cardinals back in action!

Spring is also when the new legislative session begins and our important work of advocating on behalf of our clients continues. At Emmaus, we remain committed to advocating for people with disabilities, ensuring they receive the necessary care and support they deserve.

Unfortunately, potential cuts to Medicaid funding threaten the very foundation of the services that we, and other organizations like Emmaus, provide. **Medicaid is a lifeline for the people we are entrusted to serve**, covering essential healthcare, personal assistance, and community-based programs that promote both inclusion and independence. **Any funding reduction will significantly impact the quality of support we provide and limit access to other critical services.**

For many years, organizations like Emmaus have been at the forefront advocating for both a strong and effective disability policy that ensures people with disabilities have equal opportunities to live, work, and participate fully in society. Policies like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Medicaid provide critical safeguards against discrimination and ensure access to necessary services. Without robust policies in place, people with disabilities could face increased barriers to healthcare, employment, and community inclusion.

We cannot stand by and allow any additional funding cuts to Medicaid. That is why we are calling on you, our valued supporters, to act. **Your voice matters, and together, we can and will make a difference.**

Here is how you can help:

1. **Contact your elected officials** and urge them to protect Medicaid funding for people with disabilities. Information about our advocacy efforts and how you can help can be found at <https://emmaushomes.org/advocacy/>.
2. **Spread awareness** by sharing our message with your friends, family, and on social media. You can find us on all social media platforms by searching Emmaus Homes. We are active on X (formerly known as Twitter) at EmmausHomesInc and on Facebook and Instagram as Emmaus Homes.
3. **Support Emmaus Homes** by becoming a donor. Without the support of our generous donors, we could not continue to provide the services our clients need. If you would like to make a gift, more information can be found at <https://emmaushomes.org/ways-to-donate/>.

Now more than ever, we must unite to safeguard the rights and well-being of those who depend on us.

With gratitude,



**Cindy Clark**

President & CEO, Emmaus Homes







## A Night to Shine

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Excitement filled the air as Emmaus clients stepped into a night designed just for them—A Night to Shine. This special prom, hosted by the Tim Tebow Foundation, celebrates people with disabilities, giving each guest a chance to experience the joy of music, dancing, and a red-carpet moment they will never forget.

The excitement began long before the event, with Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) ensuring everyone enjoyed the full prom experience. Emmaus team members organized special shopping trips to pick out gowns, providing each client a chance to express themselves. On the day of the event, the excitement and anticipation grew as DSPs helped with hair, nails, and makeup, giving clients an extra boost of confidence before they hit the red carpet.

The red-carpet moment was the highlight of the night. As they walked the carpet, clients were announced one by one, greeted with cheers and applause, and given a flower corsage. Their joy and pride were uncontainable as they giggled the entire time.

Inside, the celebration continued as clients sang karaoke, posed for photos in the photo booth, and danced with each other and the other guests. The DJ kept the energy high and ensured everyone felt included. Before the night ended, guests received a gift bag to round out a memorable night.

For weeks after the event, clients would still talk about it, reliving the whole experience, especially the excitement of dressing up. Thanks to the dedication of Emmaus DSPs and their families, our clients truly shined!



**“As they walked the carpet, clients were announced one by one, greeted with cheers and applause, and given a flower corsage.”**





## FINDING BELONGING **with Emmaus**

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Heather's journey toward independence has been nothing short of inspiring. Since moving into her new home last year, Heather's world has expanded in ways she never imagined. Leaving the familiarity of living with her father and aunt, Heather embraced a new chapter—one filled with friendship, personal growth, and a sense of belonging.

Now sharing a home with three housemates, Heather thrives in her environment. She treasures the relationships she has built, whether it is laughing over meals, playing games, or simply spending time together. She has also formed strong bonds with the direct support professionals who support her in daily routines like preparing meals, personal care, and staying active in the community.

Before coming to Emmaus, Heather found joy in time spent at the Rainbow Activity Center and fishing trips with her dad—who remains an important part of her life. Their adventures continue, whether it is fishing at the lake, indulging in sweet treats at Starbucks, or browsing the aisles of her favorite store. While Heather still spends time with her loved ones, her days are also filled with more opportunities to explore her passions and engage with the world around her.

From friendly games of UNO and phone chats with friends to visits to the St. Louis Botanical Gardens and trips to the movies, Heather embraces every moment. She especially loves it when team members paint nails for everyone in the house, turning





“Since moving into her new home last year, **her world has expanded in ways she never imagined.**”

simple self-care into a shared experience. One of her proudest accomplishments is decorating her own bedroom in her favorite color—orange—creating a space that reflects her vibrant personality.

Heather is a go-getter with big dreams, including one day working at Target to earn her own money. She also loves music and often turns her phone into a DJ station, connecting it to the TV to throw impromptu dance parties for her roommates.

Beyond her playful and energetic spirit, Heather’s kindness shines in the way she cares for others. When a roommate recently lost a beloved pet, Heather showed incredible empathy—bringing a blanket for the cat and sitting beside her friend in comfort. She has a heart for those around her, making her home a warmer place for everyone.

With her infectious energy, compassion, and determination, Heather is flourishing with Emmaus. Her journey is a strong example of the power of community, independence, and the dedicated support that allows individuals to live their best lives.



## LindsayLee's Journey to Empowerment at Emmaus

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LindsayLee Rubino, Client Services Manager at Emmaus, knows what it feels like to be underestimated. Growing up with an intellectual disability, she struggled with reading and comprehension. "I was told I would never live on my own. That I would never be independent," she recalls. "You hear that enough, and you start to believe it."

But LindsayLee was not lacking ability—she just learned differently. Over time, she proved to herself and the world that she could do much more. LindsayLee now works as a Client Services Manager at Emmaus, and she carries those lessons into her work every day.

"I have to prove myself every single time," she admits. "But it also gives people the opportunity to see that not everybody learns the same way. Just because I learn differently does not mean I do not have value."

That belief fuels her advocacy. She fights for clients to have adaptive equipment, access to care, and—most importantly—the chance to prove their potential, just like she did.

**"Over time, I proved to myself and the world that I could do much more."**

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PREPARING FOR  
EDUCATION:

## The Learning Lab at Emmaus is Here for You

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The Learning Lab at Emmaus is officially open and providing essential training opportunities for the community! Since our soft launch in early September, we have been equipping individuals with vital skills through monthly CPR/First Aid and Level 1 Medication Administration courses.

In just a few short months, we have successfully facilitated:

- ✓ 11 CPR/First Aid courses
- ✓ 4 Level 1 Medication Administration courses
- ✓ A Live Webinar on Recruiting, engaging participants from various agencies across the St. Louis Metro area

The Learning Lab at Emmaus is more than just a training center—it is a community resource offering affordable certification courses to anyone looking to gain these essential skills. It is also a place for partnership, providing training opportunities for employees of other agencies that may not have a training department or may need additional training support.

To learn more about the Learning Lab at Emmaus or to register for upcoming training courses, visit <https://emmaushomes.org/about-learning-lab/>.



JOIN US AT

## Chicken N Pickle!

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Looking for a fun way to support a great cause? Join us on **Tuesday, May 20th** from **6 PM to 8 PM** at **Chicken N Pickle in St. Charles!** Enjoy delicious food and drinks while playing pickleball, cornhole, Jenga, Connect Four, Battleship, and bocce ball—all while giving back to Emmaus.

A portion of the evening's proceeds will go to support Emmaus and our work with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It's the perfect mix of fun, food, and philanthropy. We can't wait to see you there!

Get  
Involved!

