Genesis Partners with the HICS Region for a New Drop-In Center in Dallas County

On January 3rd, Genesis Development opened our first Drop-In Center in Adel, IA. This new venture is the result of a partnership between the Heart of Iowa Community Services region and Genesis Development. The Drop-In Center is open to all adults with a mental health diagnosis (in Audubon, Dallas, Greene and Guthrie counties) who are wanting a place to go to meet with peers and find supports in their community.

The Drop-In Center will host a variety of activities each month for members to participate in as they choose. These activities will include potlucks, crafts, puzzles, video games, and so much more. Members can provide input into the kinds of activities and events that are available. The Drop-In Center also plans to be involved in the community and volunteer where help is needed.

Overall, the Drop-In Center is a place where individuals with a mental illness can come and meet new people, socialize with peers and interact in a safe, open, and inviting atmosphere.

In addition to the scheduled activities, members will have access to information about resources and providers in the area. This information will include services for general assistance, food and living, counselling and many other services.

The Drop-In Center will be supervised by Megan Hicks of Genesis Development. In addition, members will be hired as part-time staff to help coordinate and run the schedule of activities as well as provide peer support to other members. This group, along with some other members, will make up an advisory board that will plan and coordinate Drop-In Center functions.

“I’ve been an advocate for mental health services for many years and the biggest issue I have seen is the stigma which prevents individuals from creating the connections and the support that they need. The Drop-In Center is a much needed, stigma-free, open space where someone with a mental illness can go to make friends and to find supports,” said Hicks.

Every member of the Drop-In Center will have the same goal to build peer and natural supports. Other goals can be addressed and worked on as members choose to with the help of the Drop-In Center supervisor and staff.

“Heart of Iowa Community Services Region is excited to partner with Genesis on the new Drop-in Center. Drop-in Centers with peer support have shown to increase individuals’ social and interpersonal networks, help meet basic needs and assist with much needed resources, and give voices to members wanting to promote change. HICS is excited to see this program grow and hopefully expand in the future,” said HICS region CEO, Darci Alt.

Any person in one of the Heart of Iowa counties with a documented mental health diagnosis (and co-occurring issues) is eligible to use the Drop-In Center. After a meeting with Hicks and approval by the HICS region, an individual can begin coming to the Drop-In Center as they wish.
Genesis Development Mission Moments

Kory is one of our members that is a true asset to the community. He has worked and maintained a competitive waged job in the community for the past 16 years. He enjoys making people smile and being helpful wherever he is. This past November, Kory ran in the Race for the Cure in Des Moines. In the event, Kory placed 2nd out of 21,000 runners. That is quite an achievement from a man that is always looking for ways to help and serve the greater community. Great job, Kory!

Wyatt works at a nursing home. Earlier this year, he was having some problems with his job and the duties that come along with it. However, in December, Wyatt was named Employee of the Month by the residents of the home he works in. The honor comes due to Wyatt’s care and service to the residents. This award is one way that the residents can thank Wyatt. In addition, to a certificate, the award comes with a preferred parking space and a gift card.

Dakota has dreamed of being a radio announcer for a very long time. This summer, he gained an internship at a local radio station through the Making the Grade program. After his internship, Dakota was fired up to pursue his dream. He began broadcasting a podcast from his home. He interviews area business people about events, sales and other things going on in the greater community. Dakota wants his show to be positive and uplifting. He broadcasts every Saturday. You can find him on Facebook at “the dakota show.”

“Success is where preparation and opportunity meet.”
- Bobby Unser

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Employee of the Year: Kayla Dollens

Kayla Dollens was named Genesis Development’s Employee of the Year for 2017. The award comes from a committee of her peers that recognize her efforts to go out of her way for her teammates and the members. Dollens works in the Hourly Supported Community Living department in Dallas County. One of her members over the past year has began to show signs of dementia and other memory loss. Dollens realized that the member hadn’t spoken to her daughters in years. She got permission from to reach out to her daughters and invite them to Adel.

One of the daughters came to Adel and Dollens mediated a meeting between the two. She explained what was going on and smoothed over some rough patches in the conversation. At the end of the meeting, the daughter agreed to be a part of her mother’s life again.

There are many other stories specific to Dollens that show she truly is the Genesis Development Employee of the Year. Associate Director of Services, Josh Tuel, says, “Kayla is truly one of the most selfless, kind, caring and compassionate people I have ever had the pleasure to know.”

Here and There in Our Communities

Members in Boone found a giant Christmas Bear during their shopping.

Discovery members in Storm Lake adopted some families for Christmas.

Genesis Development in the Indianola Holiday Extravaganza lighted parade.

4H threw a party for our members in Jefferson.

Hope Wellness felt the Christmas Spirit

It’s festive in Winterset
Genesis Development Donations

Contributions made October 2017 through December 2017

With grateful thanks, we acknowledge the generosity of our many donors. THANK YOU!

**Every effort has been made to ensure a full list of donors. If we have omitted or misspelled your name, please accept our sincerest apologies and contact us at (515)432-7288**

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The Hideout, Indianola
The Zoo, Indianola
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Tony Bedel, Storm Lake
True Value Hardware, Indiana
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Thank you for your generosity and support. Your donations make a significant difference in helping us provide essential services to those in need.
 Genesis Staff Giving Program

*If you’re part of the Genesis team/staff and would like more information on how you can be a part of this list and give, please contact Sara Morton at sara@gendeviowa.com or 515-432-7288.

Memorials

In Loving Memory of their daughter, Becky North
By James & Karen North, Jefferson

In Memory of Katie O’Bryan,
By Jean Finch, Jefferson

In Memory of Leona Phillips,
By Catherine Miller, Ames
Terry & Lori Williams, Boone

In Memory of Deb Rogers,
By Carrie Wilde, Jefferson

In Memory of Kenny Russell,
By Rolfe Blaes, Sun City, AZ

In Memory of Paul Schmitt,
By his friends and family
Davis & Catherine Foster, Iowa City

In Loving Memory of their late husband, Ray Schneider,
By Janet Schneider, Storm Lake

In Memory of Janice Tilley,
By John Lewis & Denise Van, Jefferson

In Memory of Harold Woodruff,
By Anonymous Donor
Kathy Milligan, Jefferson

In Memory of their daughter, Carrie,
By Alan & Angela Wadsley, Alta

Happiness consists in giving and in serving others.
Every Quarter, staff and supervisors nominate fellow employees that go the extra mile in their interactions with members, other staff and the community. An Employee of the Quarter is a person that exemplifies the core values of Genesis Development (integrity, teamwork, caring and open-mindedness) and really live the mission (to create opportunities, choices and support for people with disabilities).

Amy Aushorn, Boone (3rd Quarter) —
Amy is always the first to step up when asked to help. Amy is truly and all-around team player that anyone can count on. She sets a great example for her staff and our members.

Debbie Price, Toledo (3rd Quarter) —
Our Discovery folks look forward to each day knowing that Debbie is a part of it. She has the ability to channel positive energy to help members maximize their abilities.

Kacey Beckendorf, Jefferson (3rd Quarter) —
Kacey is a natural leader. She headed up the 1st annual 5K Color Run fundraiser. Kacey spearheaded the operation and helped to raise $6,000 for Genesis services.

Amber Aller, Winterset (3rd Quarter) —
Amber is an exceptional leader because she leads by example. She is efficient and confident as she carries out the responsibilities of her position. She is a great leader, staff and person.

Maureen McLain, Boone (4th Quarter) —
With her leadership as the Program Director, each member of her team has taken extra responsibilities. Maureen has also become the “go to” person due to her vast expertise.

DaNaye VanDeKrol, Grinnell (4th Quarter) —
Even while suffering a leg injury, DaNaye saw members and took them on their errands. She also took on doing payee services for members.

Megan Streyffler, Indianola (4th Quarter) —
She leads by example to her peers. She asks her staff for ideas and feedback to improve member services.

Judd Stover, Winterset (4th Quarter) —
Judd took it upon himself to implement a change in the EBCE curriculum for Winterset. The curriculum will be used Genesis-wide.

Jodi Warford, Dallas County (3rd Quarter) —
Jodi joyfully shares many of her “success stories” at meetings rather than just presenting the dilemmas. This enthusiasm shows her team what success really looks like.

Lisa Fish, Indianola (3rd Quarter) —
Lisa assisted a staff during an allergic reaction and stayed very calm. She utilized her first aid training and made the other staff feel very comfortable and safe. Thank you.

Jenni Peterson, Storm Lake (3rd Quarter) —
Jenni continually exhibits excellent teamwork, often filling in for other staff and adjusting her schedule to meet the needs of our members. She is just a huge asset to our organization.

Amber Aller, Winterset (3rd Quarter) —
Amber is an exceptional leader because she leads by example. She is efficient and confident as she carries out the responsibilities of her position. She is a great leader, staff and person.

Kayla Dollens, Dallas County (4th Quarter) —
Kayla is truly one of the most selfless, kind, caring and compassionate people that I have ever had the pleasure to know. Kayla rises to the top.

Stephanie Redig, Woodward (4th Quarter) —
Stephanie is always willing to stop and assist as needed. She never downplays anyone’s situations and becomes a confidant.

Michelle Dickson, Jefferson (4th Quarter) —
Michelle cares and attends to the needs of the management, staff and members without any hesitation and with a smile and warm greeting.

Laurie Allen, Storm Lake (4th Quarter) —
Laurie would have my vote for MVP for stepping up to the plate many times. She creates a home run experience for her members.

Kendra Kajer, Toledo (4th Quarter) —
Kendra has a very caring heart and will go out of her way to work with clients and staff. She is who I look up to as an example of how to do my job and to interact with other.
Genesis Development began in 1973 as the Greene County Sheltered Workshop with a rented building at the fairgrounds. Forty five years later and Genesis has 14 locations serving 16 counties across central Iowa. This past year has seen Genesis serve over 4,200 individuals in a variety of services.

The Development Team met in November to come up with ways for every site to celebrate the 45th anniversary of Genesis Development. The group came up with the year’s theme “45 years of Creating Dreams and Opportunities.” The group also decided that this year should be one in which Genesis gives back to the communities that have supported us for the past forty five years.

Throughout 2017, each Genesis location will be choosing an event to celebrate the 45th anniversary and give back to the greater community. These events can range from food drives to blood drives and anything in between.

If people would like to participate in the Genesis Gives Back program, information can be found at the nearest Genesis location beginning in February.

To help the feeling of comradery, The Development Team also instituted a t-shirt design contest. Any staff or member was invited to submit a design for the 45th anniversary t-shirts. The t-shirts will be given to each staff as a gift to be worn at the community events throughout the year. The winner of the contest would receive $100 and have the design printed and displayed at their home site.

The Development Team narrowed the entries to the top five and all staff and members had an opportunity to vote for their favorite. The winner was entered by the SCL team in Indianola.

Lastly for the year, many sites are working with their area Chamber of Commerce to plan events for local businesses to bring more awareness to the 45th anniversary of Genesis Development.

While the year is shaping up to have many events to commemorate the history of Genesis and remembering the changes that have come about, the future is still in the gaze of the company as change is inevitable and Genesis Development continues to thrive.
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