



State Budget Background

October 2009, following lower tax revenue predictions, Governor Culver ordered a 10% across-the-board spending cut.



Effective December 1, 2009, EPI's Medicaid funding received a 2.5% rate reduction resulting in \$170,000 of lost revenue.



The 2.5% rate cut for services under the Intellectual Disabilities waiver resulted in a funding loss of \$7.6 million to services.



Astonishingly, it's estimated the \$7.6 million cut saved only \$385,000 of state money. In addition, the state also lost \$5.2 million in federal draw down money available from these cuts.



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We hear the news reports daily, telling us of the shape our economy is in and the effects on our federal and state budgets.

The impact on the services and programs the community has come to rely on locally is sure to be great. And, we know few to no programs will go unharmed.

Over the last few months EPI has worked extremely hard to manage the 2.5% rate reduction to our Medicaid funding - around \$170,000 - for fiscal year 2010.

While \$170,000 may not seem like a lot of money in a budget of \$20 million, the cut is concerning. The rates we receive are required to be very close to expenses - leaving little to no profit to absorb such a cut.

We've asked all of our staff to join with us in finding ways to reduce expenses and also to increase revenue. Swift action was taken to cut expenses. With half of our fiscal year now

complete, we can see our efforts making a difference.

While managing this year's challenge, we continue monitoring the effects we could see coming from the current legislative session - likely resulting in deeper cuts for next year.

The bumpy road we face with state funding doesn't for a minute take our focus from why we're here - and that's to provide quality service to the vulnerable persons we serve. The valuable service EPI provides makes a positive difference for people with disabilities, strengthens families and the entire community.

Over the last 52 years, EPI has seen its share of difficult financial cycles. With the help of our volunteer board members and loyal community we've made it through each one before and we're confident we'll come through this as well.

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A year later, the men from Atalissa feel at home.

Fifteen of the 21 men remain in the Cedar Valley. They've chosen their housing, jobs, roommates and daily activities.

"It's a day I will never forget." Executive Director, Chris Sparks, has said this many times. And, he's not alone. On February 7, 2009, the state fire marshal shut down the 106-year-old Atalissa bunkhouse where 21 men with intellectual disabilities were found living in what one state official called "deplorable" conditions.

Some of the men had lived in the bunkhouse and worked at the turkey processing plant for 30 years - making well under \$100 a month.

The same night the bunkhouse was shut down, EPI's Services Director, Susan Seehase, received a call from state officials asking if EPI could provide services for the 21 men.

And so began our journey. On this journey, we've gone through a range of emotions.

Confusion. How in this day and age could people be treated this way - and just a couple hours away?

Outrage. The men were in immediate need of medical and dental care. Bugs infested their belongings. Some showed signs of physical and mental abuse.

Urgency. The staff at EPI quickly saw to their immediate medical, dental and mental health needs, as well as temporary housing and day activity needs. Not to mention, the countless extra hours worked and donations staff volunteered within hours of bringing the men to Waterloo.

Relief. In a relatively short amount of time, we began to see once furrowed brows and fear turn into genuine smiles and a sense of security on the men's faces.

Pride. Twelve of the men now live in homes they rent from community landlords. They chose their roommates and their new house. The men are enjoying being a part of a neighborhood and taking care of their new home.

Some of the men have chosen to retire and participate in

various day activities. Many have a natural gift providing great customer service. We're happy to say four of the men are working at competitive jobs in the community utilizing the skills they enjoy. A few of the men are still eager to work and are looking for the job that's right for them.

The men are enjoying the new lives they've established in the Cedar Valley taking advantage of all the area has to offer - movies, church, UNI events, bowling, eating out and much more. New relationships and friendships have been made with community members. And as we knew they would, the community has welcomed the men with open arms.

We saw community members reach out with donations, house warming showers of gifts and even a very special trip for a couple of fans to attend the NASCAR race in Newton.

Optimism. Bright futures are within reach - we feel fortunate to be a small part of their futures.



Where does the money raised go?

Funds raised from the 2009 Annual Appeal benefit Children's, Employment and Multiple Sclerosis Services.

In this issue learn how your gift will touch the lives of the children and their families utilizing Children's Services.

EPI's Children's Services works to reduce the stress and provide support to families caring around-the-clock for a child(ren) with special needs.

While many families qualify for funding, such as Medicaid, to help pay for services for their child(ren), funding isn't always available when families need it most.

Families can be put on a waiting list for funding. What's more, there is often a cap to the number of hours a family can use in a year. Often the funding runs out long before the need.

When stress of caring for a child with special needs goes unmanaged we often see families seeking services for their child outside the home. This not only results in a separated family, but increased costs to taxpayers as well.

Funds from the community certainly made a difference for the "Smith" family. The Smith's have three children. Their youngest, "Chris" is four and has a developmental disability.

The Smith's were on a waiting list for Medicaid funding. While waiting they were struggling to find a balance between caring for Chris around the clock and nurturing their other children.

With the support of the community, they were able to start Chris in group respite right away. Mom and dad now have time to focus on their two daughters and Chris has a new opportunity to socialize and make friends.

The children participating in Children's Services group respite also participate in community activities such as swimming, enjoying parades, visiting petting zoos and much more.

Since the mileage and admission into community events is not covered by Medicaid, funds raised from the community allow the children to create these very special childhood memories.

The investment you've made in Chris and all the kids served in Children's Services create opportunities to learn how to participate in activities as well as learn skills related to self-esteem, relationship building, and advocacy.

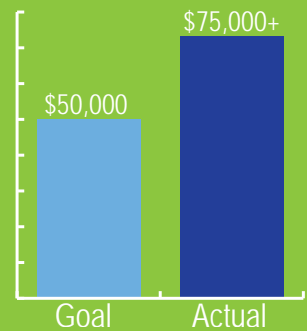
Each of these skills and activities increase the child's ability to demonstrate independence as he or she grows.

Thank you for investing in the children served by EPI.

Thank You!

We are so grateful to the many supporters of Exceptional Persons, Inc.

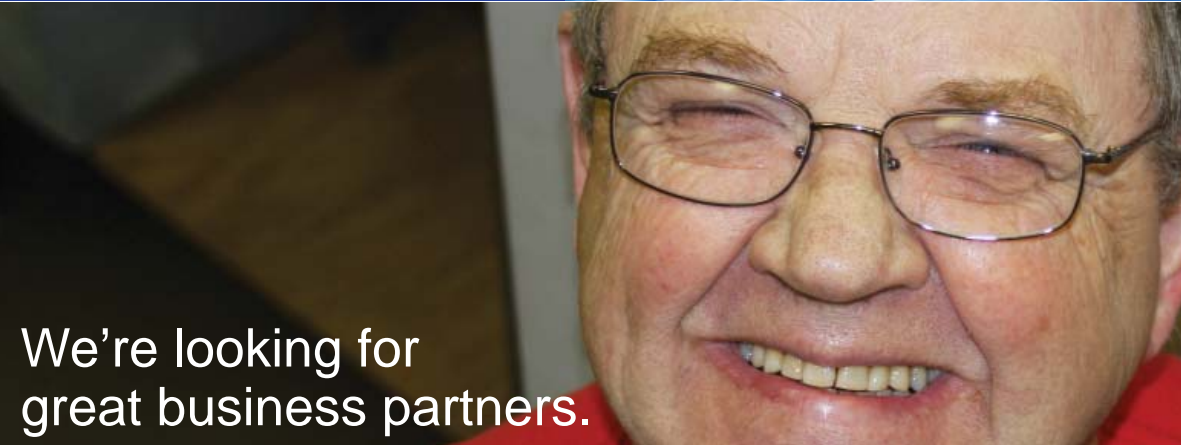
Recently, many chose to show their support by contributing to the Exceptional Persons Foundation annual appeal. With your help we exceed our goal of \$50,000 and raised over \$75,000 for EPI programs. Thank you!



With all of us coming together we can make a real investment in the lives of many with disabilities.

Fund Created at CFNEIA

The Exceptional Persons Endowment Fund has been established at the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa. Donors are eligible to receive a 20% state tax credit through the Endow Iowa tax credit program for gifts to endowments at qualified Iowa Community Foundations.



We're looking for great business partners.

Quality, trained workers are ready to bring added value to your workplace.

We serve a number of individuals who are ready and willing to work for your organization. And our employment services staff are there, as needed, every step of the way.

Read on about the benefits of hiring our trained workforce.

1. Employ qualified and enthusiastic staff (this enthusiasm has been known to spread to other employees).
2. We match the preferences and skills of our workforce to your needs.

3. Persons in our job development program have a high attendance record.
4. We continue regular contact with you, including on-site visits and phone calls, to ensure employment is going smoothly.
5. We're available to provide training to your staff helping them learn the best communication tools to work with your new employee.
6. You'll be showing the high value you place in diversity.

Give us a call to learn more about partnering with EPI's Employment Services.

Volunteering with EPI could mean a free ticket to Disney

Disney wants to inspire one million people to volunteer a day of service to a participating organization in their communities. EPI is a participating organization and we have many volunteer opportunities.

Disney wants to celebrate volunteers' good works by giving each of them a 1-day,

1-theme park ticket to the Disneyland® Resort or Walt Disney World® Resort, free.

Volunteer opportunities at EPI include:

- Children's Activity Volunteer
- Children & Adult Meal Volunteer
- Photographer

- Retail Store Display Designer
- Retail Store Assistant
- Adult Day Program Clerical Volunteer

As Disney says, "There's no better time to make a dream come true for others..." Contact us for more information or to begin your volunteer experience.

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Our Mission

Exceptional Persons, Inc. (EPI) makes a positive difference for people living with disabilities, enhances community child care and strengthens families.

Upcoming Events at EPI

- Exceptional Bargains will be open on the following dates:**

March 18 from 1:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
 March 19 from 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
 March 23 from 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. - Clearance Sale

April 9 from 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
 April 23 from 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

May 7 from 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
 May 21 from 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

June 11 from 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
 June 25 from 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Workshop: Employment Matters for those with Multiple Sclerosis**

Saturday, March 20 at EPI from 9:00 a.m. - Noon. The workshop will cover opportunities and challenges for persons with MS to continue or return to work. No cost to attend. Please pre-register by calling (319) 232-6671.
- Mark your calendars: 5th Annual 5K Run, Walk & Roll**

Saturday, September 18 at George Wyth State Park

Receive emails announcing our sales by signing up at www.episervice.org. You can also get updates by following us on Facebook or Twitter.

(319) 232-6671 | www.episervice.org



760 Ansborough Ave
PO Box 4090
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