

# EPI EXTRA

Winter 2022

## IN THIS {extra} ISSUE:

Now Offering 12 Hour Shifts  
Your Year-end Gift Makes a  
Difference to Many

Exceptional Persons, Inc.



## LIVING OUR MISSION

Connecting people, creating opportunities, and  
nurturing growth since 1957.

**WWW.EPISERVICE.ORG**

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# ABOUT US

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

MAGHAN BOWMAN  
Quality Improvement & Outcomes  
Director

SARA DRISH  
Human Resources Director

MARY JANSSEN  
Children & Family Services Director

JAMES PERRY  
Chief Financial Officer

KATIE SLADE  
Executive Director

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

STEVE LINDAMAN - President  
Veridian Credit Union

JORDAN ALBORN - Vice President  
Financial Advisor

GIA SHANNON - Treasurer  
Guild Mortgage

MIKE ISAACSON - Secretary  
VGM & Associates

DEB LILLY - Past President  
Hawkeye Community Foundation

KIM FETTKETHER  
The Veridian Group

DAN LEVI  
Levi Architecture

JULEA NEHER  
Volunteer

KYLE ROED  
CPM Holdings, Inc.

STACEY SMITH  
Mercy Health

DODIE YOUNG  
Volunteer

## EXCEPTIONAL PERSONS FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LARRY K. FOX - President  
Volunteer

FRANK ESSER - Vice President  
Volunteer

HEATHER GUNDERSON -  
Treasurer  
BerganKDV

MATTHEW GARY - Secretary  
US Bancorp Investments

CHRIS FEREDAY - Past President  
PDCM Insurance

JORDAN ALBORN  
Financial Advisor

STACEY BENTLEY  
Community Bank & Trust

KIRSTEN JUHL  
University of Northern Iowa

WADE ITZEN  
BankIowa

ELIJAH LEE  
Lee Walth Management

DEB LILLY  
Hawkeye Community Foundation

STEVE LINDAMAN  
Veridian Credit Union

HILLERY OBERLE  
UNI Foundation

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EPI's Giving Tree Tradition*

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT!

SCAN HERE TO READ  
EVERYTHING  
IN BETWEEN THE ISSUES.



This summer I celebrated my 14th anniversary serving this great mission at Exceptional Persons, Inc.

In those 14 years, my husband and I renovated a home just outside of Hudson (and we survived to tell the tale!), my three children have grown from “little ones” to tween and teenagers (in fact my oldest will graduate high school this spring).

My journey at EPI has been equally rich and is synonymous with “my family”. I have been blessed to work alongside people who have shaped me in ways I can’t adequately put into words. Shaped me as a mother, daughter, friend and colleague, and as a person.

I’m nostalgic by nature, so it’s not new for me to reflect on EPI’s rich history, the conversations I’ve had with family members (many who have been with us for decades if not our entire 65 years), to pause with pride on our evolution and the work we do.

***As I start my journey in a new role as Executive Director, I can feel the way in which I view the world sharpening. A new energy, determination ... as if a fire has been flamed.***

It’s true, we are faced with many challenges as an industry, society, nation. It’s equally true we have cause for much celebration. While I could fill this newsletter with the many celebrations I see around EPI, it’s the people that make the top of my list. From the people we have the privilege of serving to our talented workforce who lead with *heart, stewardship, creativity, and integrity.*

I am incredibly honored and humbled to serve alongside our teams who are determined to make our little corner of the world a little better, a little brighter for the people we serve.

## KATIE’S CORNER

CATCH THE LATEST NEWS FROM OUR  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, **KATIE SLADE.**



# PEOPLE ARE THE HEART OF EPI



## NOW OFFERING 12 HOUR SHIFTS **BY SARA DRISH**

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are the backbone of the workforce behind community living and services supporting individuals in achieving greater independence. For more than thirty years, the DSP workforce has been one of the most unstable workforces nationwide. Recently, national statistics showed that annual turnover rates for DSPs were at 50%, in comparison to the average 3% turnover rate across all jobs. The economic crisis of COVID-19 has further challenged the industry.

After much study and creative thinking, we set out to try something new by approaching our schedules differently. Scheduling staff in 12-hour shifts and offering reduced number of days worked per week. Our goals are simple:

- **Consistency for Persons Served.** Our first goal is to reduce the number of staff coming and going from a person's home allowing staff to become an expert in the services for each person they support, improve communication among the person's team, and greater ability for each person to direct their service.

- **Real Downtime for DSPs.** Burnout is one of the biggest reasons our workforce turns over. Now, for the most part, many of our staff will be scheduled to work three or four days a week, leaving three or four days scheduled off a week. We're also finding these schedules are more attractive to job seekers, allowing working parents to trade days on/off and even making more of a commute advantageous.
- **A Place for Everyone.** At the same time, we know 12-hour shifts won't fit the needs of everyone, and that's ok. We have a place for everyone, whether it's filling in when time off is used or aiding a site at a busy time when more than one staff is needed.

We began offering 12-hour shifts in July, starting slowly, working with small groups at a time and adjusting as we went. We have been pleased with the outcomes we're seeing and feedback we're hearing from persons served and our DSPs.

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# LET'S STAY CONNECTED



**LIKE US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!**  
Just by sharing our posts you help engage others with EPI!



**SIGN UP FOR OUR EMAIL NEWSLETTER**  
Stay up to date on the latest happenings around EPI.



**SEND US YOUR EMAIL**  
If we don't currently have your email, we'd love to! Send an email with your info to [communications@episervice.org](mailto:communications@episervice.org).



## **WELCOME EPI'S CFO, JAMES PERRY**

After an extensive search, we are pleased to announce James

Perry as our Chief Financial Officer.

James comes to EPI with many years of experience, a Bachelor's in Finance from University of Northern Iowa and a Master's in Financial Management from Upper Iowa University. His background and desire to serve others proves he is well equipped to oversee financial operations and support EPI's mission of connecting people, creating opportunities, and nurturing growth.

Outside of time spent here at EPI, James is actively involved as a board member for the Waverly Public Library, a member of the Waverly Exchange Club, and teaches Economics and Finance as an Adjunct Professor at Clarke University out of Dubuque, Iowa.

*"We are excited to welcome James to the EPI family. His extensive background in finance and public policy as well as his heart for serving others will be an asset ensuring our agency's financial sustainability into the future,"* said Katie Slade, EPI's Executive Director.

*"I am grateful to be a part of such a wonderful organization lead by an amazing, passionate group of people. The mission, vision, and culture at EPI are truly inspirational. I look forward to accomplishing many projects here at EPI while maintaining financial stability for many years to come,"* shared James Perry, EPI's new CFO.

Please join us in welcoming James!

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*Know someone who would be a great fit at EPI? Scan here to view our career opportunities!*





# EXCEPTIONAL PERSONS FOUNDATION



## YOUR YEAR-END GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO MANY **BY MADI RUMMEL**

As 2022 comes to an end, those of us here at EPI are taking time to look back on all we have accomplished this year with the help of our incredible community. We are blessed with so many who faithfully and selflessly give - allowing us to serve those in need. As we continue striving to provide the highest quality of services, the need for support has never been greater.

Making a year-end contribution to the Exceptional Persons Foundation ensures individuals right here in your community have access to the resources and assistance they need while furthering greater independence.

You still have time to help support EPI's critical services when other funding gaps arise.

### Here's how you can help:

- *Make a cash contribution today.* Scan here to make your gift online, or mail a check prior to December 31st. \*Reminder: the CARES Act allows for a \$300 charitable deduction without tax itemization.



- *Use your IRA distribution and receive tax benefits.* Talk to your financial advisor about making a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA. Individuals 70 1/2 and older can donate to charities directly from their IRA without treating the distribution as taxable income.
- *Use the envelope found within this newsletter.*

If you have any questions, please contact our development office at 319-232-6671.

### GIVING TREE WAS A SUCCESS - THANKS TO YOU!

During the holiday season we are often reminded of who and what we're grateful for. While the last few years have been filled with uncertainty at times, one thing we can be certain of is just how much we are encouraged by the tenacious and strong-willed spirit within all of us here at EPI and beyond.

*With your help, the Giving Tree was able to support all 90 people in need.*

# YOU CAN HELP



## Planned Giving

Please include the

Exceptional Persons Foundation in your will and estate planning to ensure EPI services will live on forever.



## Qualified Charitable Distributions

Consult with your financial advisor on how to make a tax free donation to EPI as part of your IRA required minimum distribution!



## Want to Make a Donation?

Your generosity means so much - thank you! Donations allow us to fulfill our mission when other funding runs short. We accept donations anytime. Visit us online at [www.episervice.org](http://www.episervice.org).



The Giving Tree began over 15 years ago as a way to meet modest needs of individuals served by EPI which would otherwise go unmet.

Whether you shopped online, locally, or donated a cash gift and let us do the shopping - we were blown away with your support of holiday cheer.

## Who's eligible to be on the Giving Tree?

All individuals with needs on the Giving Tree are people who would otherwise not have a gift to open during the holiday season.

## What were some of the items requested on the Giving Tree?

This year's Giving Tree needs remained modest. There were a variety of items like winter coats, socks, or tennis shoes. Some individuals are moving into their own apartment for their first time and would love getting settled in with cleaning supplies, simple bedding, or pots and pans. Then we also left room for a few wants like a good book, movie or craft!

## A very special thank you to the following businesses who hosted a Giving Tree at their offices:

- *CBE Group*
- *Discerning Wealth*
- *PDCM Group Insurance Benefits*
- *Veridian*

We thank you all for your lasting support in this wonderful tradition and sincerely wish everyone in our extended EPI family a happy and healthy new year!

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Exceptional Persons, Inc.



## OUR MISSION

**Connecting** people, **creating** opportunities, and **nurturing** growth since 1957.



## OUR VISION FOR TOMORROW

Working together we will realize a future where all people are recognized and valued – encouraged and supported to live, work, and grow – in their communities.



## STAY UP TO DATE

Our goal is to stay in close contact with you by sending out bi-weekly email communications to help keep you informed. Scan the QR code above if you'd like to receive our latest news faster!



## QUESTIONS?

Contact our Communications Specialist, Bethany Giachino, with any questions about our newsletter.