



# EPI News



**“When I think of  
Barbara I think of her  
dedication...”**

*- Mrs. Bunge, 1975*

## The Gift That Keeps Giving

We are pleased to share with you a very generous gift in the amount of over \$627,000 has been left to the Exceptional Persons Foundation Endowment by Barbara W. Emerson.

Barbara was born on October 19, 1921, in Marshalltown, Iowa. She later married Ralph Emerson. The two moved a couple of times until settling in the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area for a number of years in part because their daughter, Barbara Diane Emerson, was placed at the Woodward community.

Later in their lives, Ralph and Barbara moved to Phoenix, Arizona. Where Barbara later passed away on January 30, 2015, at the age of 93.

“When I think of Barbara I think of her dedication to all of the mentally disabled, of her willingness to expend efforts wherever necessary to bring about a better way of life for the individual and his/her family. Her motivation seemed to have provided for others what was not available to

her and her family.” Written by Mrs. Bunge, who knew Barbara from their work with the ARC, in a letter shared with us dated September 16, 1975.

Barbara played an integral role in EPI's creation. In fact, she and Helen Henderson have been credited with recruiting EPI's first Executive Director, Bill Brown, in 1957. She then worked alongside Bill as his secretary for many years. She not only gave of her time to EPI but to countless other organizations in the area.

Barbara's gift to the permanent endowment will benefit EPI for years to come - assuring that persons with disabilities served by EPI will have the supports they need well into the future.

These supports include finding and keeping a job, safe and affordable houses to call home, respite services, and much more. Perhaps supporting the very life Ralph and Barbara once dreamed of for their daughter.

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For more ► ► ►  
information visit  
[www.dhs.iowa.gov](http://www.dhs.iowa.gov)

*Want to  
Learn More?*

The Iowa Department of Human Services website has up-to-date information. Scroll to the bottom of the Medicaid Modernization webpage to find a "Stakeholder Toolkit."

You can also contact the Iowa Medicaid Member Services Unit at 1-800-338-8366. Representatives are available Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.

*Contact with  
Newsletter  
Questions:*

BETHANY THOMAS  
Communications &  
Development Specialist



## Legislative Watch

### Selected Managed Care Organizations

As we've previously communicated, most Iowa Medicaid programs will be joined together in a single managed care program called **IA Health Link** as of January 1, 2016. The new IA Health Link program is designed to give current Iowa Medicaid members access to high quality care coverage through a managed care organization, or MCO.

While Exceptional Persons, Inc. (EPI) does not have influence over these IA Health Link/Medicaid Modernization initiative decisions, we do want to be a resource for you. We will continue to share what we can as we continue learning alongside of you.

#### **Is IA Health Link the same as the Medicaid Modernization Initiative?**

Yes, the program is now called IA Health Link. Other names you may hear include: Medicaid Modernization, Iowa Managed Care Program.

#### **When does this take effect?**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is transitioning most Medicaid members to a new managed care program, now called IA Health Link, as of January 1, 2016.

DHS has stated all members will have six months to two years to remain with

or change their current provider(s), depending on the Iowa Medicaid program in which they are currently enrolled. Members may keep their current medical health providers, mental health providers, and case manager until at least June 30, 2016, as long as their provider(s) choose to enter into a contract with the MCOs.

#### **Why the new program?**

The main goals of IA Health Link are:

- Improving coordination and quality of care that Medicaid members receive
- Become a healthier state
- Help Iowa work towards a balanced, predictable state budget

#### **What managed care organizations were selected?**

On Monday, August 17, 2015, DHS announced their intent to award to four bidders:

- Amerigroup Iowa, Inc.
- Amerihealth Caritas Iowa, Inc.
- UnitedHealthcare of the River Valley, Inc.

While EPI will share what and when we can, your best source of information will be the Department of Human Services and the selected Managed Care Organizations.



## Keeping Your Precious Cargo Safe

Did you know? Child Care Resource and Referral of Northeast Iowa employs two Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians.

The technicians can assist you with correctly fitting your child into their seat and safely fitting the car seat into the vehicle. Below are some of their tips.

**Rear-facing car seats** are to be used from birth until age 2. They are not to be placed in front of an air bag.

**Front-facing car seats** are to be used from age 2 - 5 years old or until the weight and height requirements specific to your car seat have been reached.

**Booster seats** are to be used until a child reaches 57 inches tall.

Use a **high back booster seat** if vehicle is missing the headrest for optimal head protection.

**Seat belts** can be used when the child reaches 57 inches tall and the lap belt lays directly across the child's upper thighs (not the stomach) and the shoulder belt should lay across the chest (not the neck).

**Harness straps** should be kept snug and flat at or below the child's shoulders if in a rear-facing seat and at or above shoulders if forward-facing.

**The chest clip** keeps shoulder straps in the correct position and should be level with the armpits.

**Pinch the strap at the child's shoulder.** You shouldn't be able to grasp extra strap between your fingers,

the strap should stay snug.

**The plastic shell & styrofoam break down over time.** Locate the date of manufacturing or expiration sticker on the seat or stamped in the plastic shell of the seat.

If there is no expiration date visible, dispose of the seat once it reaches 6 years old.

**Do not use the seat if it's been in an accident.** To destroy the seat, remove cloth, cut all straps, and dispose in the garbage so it cannot be used again.

**Aftermarket products** are items that aren't included with the seat at the time of purchase, such as, harness strap covers. These have not been crash tested with the seat. Please use caution when using these products.

◀ ◀ ◀ Contact Kim Tiedt or Char Wahl at 319-233-0804 with questions or to make an appointment for a car seat fitting.

Visit [cert.safekids.org](http://cert.safekids.org) to find a car seat technician outside of the Waterloo area.

### *Direct Support Professionals of the Month*

TRANG CONRAD  
January 2015

STEPHANIE NELSON  
February 2015

NAOMI WRIGHT  
March 2015

LEXY ROZMUS  
April 2015

HILARY HUEBSCH  
May 2015

BRIAN CROUCH  
June 2015

CINDY HILL  
July 2015

*Congratulations!*



Thank you ►►►  
for your gifts to the  
Exceptional Persons  
Foundation.



## Just Briefly

Here's what you might  
have missed between  
the issues.

### EPI Board of Directors

WADE ITZEN - President  
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STEVE LINDAMAN  
Veridian Credit Union

FRANK MAGSAMEN  
BH County Supervisor

CLARK PORTER  
Porter Family Farms

CRAIG WHITE  
BH County Supervisor

### Foundation Kickoff

August 5 was a sunny, warm summer day and the perfect day to kickoff EPI's Foundation's annual appeal campaign.

The Exceptional Persons Foundation supports EPI's greatest needs like, children's services, employment services, the essential needs funds, and so much more.

### Giving Tree

Fall is officially here which means the Giving Tree is nearing. Every year around the holidays we decorate trees with tags that include modest needs and desires for persons with disabilities - adults and children - whose requests would otherwise go unmet.

Stop by our Ansborough office beginning November 23 or contact us on Facebook to grab a tag and spread some joy this year. Your generosity will make spirits bright for persons and families right here in the Cedar Valley.

### Growing Business Partners

We work hard finding employment within the community for anyone who is able and willing to work. We believe employment is key to gaining

community membership and social relationships.

The hard work pays off! Our list of business partners who provide equal employment opportunities to persons with disabilities continues to grow. We currently have over 30 business partners in the Cedar Valley.

For more information about employing a person with a disability, contact us at (319) 232-6671. To view this growing list of business partners please visit our website at [www.episervice.org](http://www.episervice.org).

### Fall Prevention Month

September was fall prevention month. Did you know? Rates of falls are rising, and they are the most common accident causing brain injuries. With a healthy diet, regular exercise, and support from correctly fitted medical equipment, falls can be prevented.

Visit [www.cdc.gov/steady](http://www.cdc.gov/steady) for more prevention tips and educational materials on falls.



## Direct Support Professional Recognition

The alarm clock rings at 6:30 am. While we were sleeping, Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) throughout our communities were working through the night. The foundation of our organization, our DSPs, are there helping persons served.

**“This is a life they do not have to be a part of, but they chose to make a difference in my son’s life.”**

– Mother of a person served.

DSPs provide support to persons served in gaining independence, community involvement, completion of critical tasks, and much more.

**“To call DSPs rock stars is an understatement.”** – Program Manager at EPI

It takes someone great to be a DSP. That’s why one week each September is dedicated to recognizing Direct Support Professionals all over the world.

But, the celebration of DSPs doesn’t stop there. At EPI we recognize a DSP each month.

We are truly blessed to work with these incredible hardworking DSPs and appreciate all they do.

◀◀◀ “He likes me to stay active, so we play a lot of sports together.”

### Exceptional Persons Foundation Board of Directors

COREY CLARK - President  
Point Builders LLC

RUSS CURTIS - Vice President  
Volunteer

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Volunteer

## More Than You See: April 1

Our More Than You See dueling pianos, silent auction benefit has a new date and location. Make plans to join us on **Friday, April 1 at Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center in Cedar Falls.**

Our hope is to create an opportunity for people of all abilities to come together, get to know each other, and see beyond first impressions to the unique talents from within.

**MORE** THAN YOU *see*

**FRIDAY**  
*April 1, 2016*

PRESENTED BY:

**DanDeery  
Motor Co.**

**6 PM**

**GBPAC**

**\$35**

TICKETS

RESERVE  
ONLINE

USE DISCOUNT CODE EARLYBIRD  
[www.episervice.org](http://www.episervice.org)



## Current Career Openings

Billing & Coding  
Lead

Bus Driver

Child Care  
Consultant

Direct Support  
Professional

Group Leader

Job Coach

Program Manager

## Agency Leadership Team

MARY JANSSEN  
Children & Family  
Services Director

DEB JUNGLING  
Business Director

LISA PATERNO  
Human Resource  
Director

SUSAN SEEHASE  
Services Director

KATIE SLADE  
Communications &  
Development Director

CHRIS SPARKS  
Executive Director



## Stress - It's Good for You?

by Diane Holmes,  
LISW

Heightened levels of stress-related hormones produced during a crisis have been blamed for problems with physical and emotional health. New research has found, however that stress hormones are not always detrimental. In fact, those same hormones have been administered to help people recover from Post Traumatic Stress and resulted in better outcomes following surgery.

When people are diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), they often experience a stress response. Commonly the initial shock and confusion are followed by searching for information to improve their understanding, as well as talking with someone who has experience with MS. In her book entitled, *The Upside of Stress: Why Stress is Good for You, and How to Get Good at It*, Kelly McGonigal, Ph.D., a health psychologist, points out that stress also motivates people to connect with other people. That desire for connection is driven by the

hormone produced in the pituitary gland, Oxytocin, which is designed to “build and strengthen social bonds.” Oxytocin increases the ability to understand what other people are thinking and feeling, enhances empathy and intuition, and increases trust, the desire to help, and increases courage, which dampens the fear response.

At a recent MS Services Support Group meeting, those attending identified what motivates them to come month after month. They value being able to talk about very personal concerns knowing their confidentiality will be respected. Because of their common experience - MS - they feel understood. The group provides a safety net in which members give and receive support, share information, and use each other as a sounding board. They describe the environment as accepting and respectful despite diverse perspectives. Some, who have been attending the group meetings for more than 25 years,



laughingly described themselves as the “elders” who feel a sense of wisdom because sharing their experiences have helped others.

But, it is not just people who attend the group meetings who see the benefits. Family members, most of whom have not come to a meeting, see the improved mood, enjoyment of connecting with other people, and the knowledge gained at the meetings. Some have seen such improvement in their family member who has MS that, even after they are no longer able to drive themselves to a meeting, the family member will rearrange their schedules to take them. Recently the minister at the church where one group meeting is held told me he enjoys having the group there. He sees the personal connections and most of all, loves to hear the laughter coming from the room where we meet, quite contrary to what one would expect from discussing a topic so serious as Multiple Sclerosis.

*Special thanks to the people attending the Bremer/Butler MS Support Group who contributed to this article.*

## Support Group Meeting Schedule

### October

\*No Meetings this Month

### November

- Bremer/Butler, 11/11 - 10:30 am
- Waterloo, 11/18 - 11:00 am
- Tama, 11/25 - 9:30 am

### December

- Bremer/Butler, 12/9 - 10:30 am
- Waterloo, 12/16 - 11:00 am
- Tama, 12/23 - 9:30 am

### January

- Bremer/Butler, 1/13 - 10:30 am
- Waterloo, 1/20 - 11:00 am
- Tama, 1/27 - 9:30 am

### February

- Bremer/Butler, 2/10 - 10:30 am
- Waterloo, 2/17 - 11:00 am
- Tama, 2/24 - 9:30 am

## MS Support Group Meeting Locations

### Bremer/Butler

Redeemer Lutheran Church, 2001 W Bremer, Waverly  
(2nd Wednesday)

### Waterloo

EPI, 760 Ansborough Ave, Waterloo  
(3rd Wednesday)

### Tama

Senior Center Community Building,  
103 S. Church, Toledo  
(Last Wednesday)

### Sources:

McGonigal, K.,  
*Spirituality & Health*, May/June 2015  
adapted from  
McGonigal, K.,  
*The Upside of Stress: Why Stress Is Good For You, and How to Get Good at It*

### Latest Business Partners

- A-Line Iron & Metals
- Den Herder Veterinary Hospital
- Fresh Start Janitorial
- J's Homestyle Cooking
- Perkin's
- Red Lobster
- Simpson Furniture
- Steamboat Gardens

*View the complete list online.*

Exceptional Persons, Inc.  
760 Ansborough Ave  
PO Box 4090  
Waterloo, IA 50704 - 4090

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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.



## Wish List

- Canvas & oil pants
- Tickets to local entertainment
- Cleaning products
- Towels
- Pots & pans

A complete wish list can be found online at [www.episervice.org](http://www.episervice.org).



## 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 cash donations anytime. Visit our website at [www.episervice.org](http://www.episervice.org) and click "donate now."



## Cornerstone Giving

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



## Mark Your Calendar

**October 7** is the Healthiest State Walk at noon. Lace up those walking shoes and get moving! Start from wherever you are or find a walk to join near you at [iowahealthieststate.com](http://iowahealthieststate.com).

**October 24** is Trunk or Treat from 10 to 11 am at EPI - 760 Ansborough Ave, Waterloo - for a fun way to trick or treat!

**April 1** is the new date for our More Than You See dueling pianos, silent auction benefit. Beginning at 6 pm, the event will be held at Gallagher Bludorn Performing Arts Center in Cedar Falls. Reserve your seats online today at [www.episervice.org](http://www.episervice.org).