

Spring 2018



# EPI News

Exceptional Persons, Inc.



*Photos from the  
ANCOR conference  
in New Orleans*



## Shannon Henson: Iowa's DSP of the Year!

Once a year, the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) recognizes one DSP of the year for Iowa out of hundreds of nominees.

ANCOR painstakingly chooses each winner by the DSP's ability to advocate for persons served, effectively showcase leadership skills to their peers, bridge social relationships for persons served, and support persons served with creative thinking.

We would like to proudly congratulate Shannon Henson on becoming EPI's fourth DSP to receive this outstanding award!

In the two short years that Shannon has been with us she has consistently proven herself to us and our business partners as someone who goes above and

beyond to assist multiple persons served to find and keep a job.

Shannon was honored at April's ANCOR conference in New Orleans in front of many other DSPs and staff from organizations like EPI.

The ANCOR conference is a time to motivate, nurture, and inspire all attending. We can confidently say that those attending were inspired by Shannon's story.

Angela King, ANCOR's President, shared with us, "Through ANCOR's National Advocacy Campaign, we are doing everything we can to shine a light on the critical work you do and sharing stories [like Shannon's] with Congress, Administrative Agencies and the Executive Branch, so we can advocate for fair pay and benefits."

▶▶▶  
More  
information and  
helpful resources  
can be found at  
[www.ancor.org](http://www.ancor.org)



### Cornerstone Giving

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

*Contact with  
Newsletter  
Questions:*

BETHANY GIACHINO  
Communications &  
Development Specialist

# DISABILITY RIGHTS ARE CIVIL RIGHTS

## Legislative Watch: HR 620

U.S. House of Representatives voted to set back accessibility for Americans with disabilities by decades with the passage of HR 620, the ADA Education and Reform Act.

To quote the CEO of American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), Barbara Merrill, “as an association whose mission is to advance the ability of our members in supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to fully participate in their communities, we see HR 620 as a threat to one of the most basic aspects of participation, which is access.”

This bill makes it harder for the people we serve to remedy certain architectural barriers that are in violation of the American Disability Act.

If HR 620 passes the Senate, anyone claiming discrimination would require a notice and cure period. First having to provide a written notice and wait 60 days for a response, then an additional 120 days for something to be done before being able to take legal action.

As the bill now advances to the Senate, please continue to watch for us to share information on ANCOR action alerts and other updates.

We will be posting blogs, sharing on our social media accounts, and sending eNewsletters to keep you informed.

Visit [www.episervice.org](http://www.episervice.org) if you haven't already signed up for our eNewsletter and would like to.







## More Than You See: Oh, What a Night!

Our 5th annual More Than You See was a huge success! We are so grateful to everyone who joined us for a wonderful night to support a very important cause. More Than You See was created to raise awareness that all people are more than what meets the eye. The event's purpose is to celebrate people of all abilities and recognize what each one contributes. It was also a time for people to come together to be entertained – and that's just what we did.

The ballroom at the Hilton Garden Inn was filled with laughter, singing, and dancing from people of all walks of life. Guests enjoyed dueling pianos from the wonderful Howl2Go, bid on exciting silent auction packages, and joined forces to raise funds to provide at least 25 move in packages for individuals who come into EPI's services with nothing more than the clothes they are wearing.

This year we raised over \$42,000 to support EPI's mission of connecting

people, creating opportunities, and nurturing growth. Funds raised will support critical needs such as employment services, housing improvements, and essential needs of individuals supported by EPI.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, donors, volunteers, and guests who joined us at this year's event! We are blown away by your generosity and are so thankful for your continued support to help further our mission.

Be sure to follow EPI on Facebook to see more photos from the event!

**Special thanks** to our returning Presenting Sponsor of More Than You See:

**Dan Deery  
Motor Co.**

## Thank you Sponsors

### Piano Sponsor

- PDCM Insurance Community Bank & Trust

### Loyal to the Cause Sponsor

- Canadian National Railway

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- Mudd Advertising
- VGM Group, Inc.

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## Employment Services Grant Awarded

Thanks to the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa (CFNEIA), EPI's Employment Services were awarded \$13,750 specific for Enclave Services.

EPI offers several Employment Service options for individuals who are looking to find and keep a job in the community. EPI's Enclave program provides individualized job skills training and on-the-job learning experiences for those we serve. This grant allows us to continue to offer this crucial service and ensure those who want to work, can.



## Raising Brain Injury Awareness. One Thursday at a Time

March was Brain Injury Awareness month and to help raise awareness many of our staff joined in with Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa and wore purple on Thursdays throughout the month!

Thank you to everyone who participated, posted images, and shared hashtags on social media!

## Just Briefly

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



## Friends of the Community Foundation Visits an Employment Services Job Site

We recently had the opportunity to host our friends of the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa to talk about our Employment Program.

Thank you for visiting and a big thanks to our employment partner, Dan Deery Toyota for letting us stop by with the group!



## Fred Butterfield 1959 - 2018

Fred Butterfield, 58, of Waterloo passed away in late March.

Fred loved vehicles, caring for and showing off his pets, and going to Waterloo Black Hawk hockey games. We are deeply saddened by the news of his passing. Fred will be missed by all of us here at EPI.



## Do you Have “Stuff” to Donate?

Spring is in the air, which means it's time to clean out the closets and other areas of the house and get rid of the things we don't need! It feels so good to fill bags of items we no longer have a need for, and it feels even better to donate them to benefit people in need. That's where EPI comes in!

Did you know that EPI has an account at Stuff, Etc. Quality Consignment in Waterloo and your donations can support the individuals we serve?!

While the individuals we serve do have many needs and we greatly appreciate donated items, the majority of the items we receive don't immediately match up with the specific needs of the individuals we serve.

Unfortunately, we simply don't have the space to accept items that don't have an immediate home. Donating to Stuff, Etc. is the perfect solution!

### Here's how it works:

- Drop off your donations (clothes, furniture, household items, etc.) to Stuff, Etc. in Waterloo and let them know that you'd like the proceeds

to go to Exceptional Persons, Inc.'s account - no appointment necessary!

- When your items sell, EPI will receive 50% of the proceeds. The proceeds are then passed on to the individuals we serve in the form of vouchers to shop for items that match their specific needs - like cookware or an outfit for a job interview.

We are so excited about this opportunity for the individuals we support to have the ability to shop for and choose items that match their preferences.

The ability to choose is an extremely valuable gift. So, as you're purging through your house this spring, consider donating your items to Stuff, Etc. to benefit the persons served by EPI!

Thank you for your generosity and happy spring!

## Exceptional Persons Foundation Board of Directors

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## Current Career Openings

Bus Driver

Direct Support  
Professional

Direct Support  
Professional - Night  
Attendant

Integration Specialist

## Agency Leadership Team

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Services Director

DEB JUNGLING  
Business Director

LISA PATERNO  
Human Resource  
Director

KATIE SLADE  
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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.

## MS Support Groups

### May

- Bremer/Butler, 5/9 - 10:30 am
- Waterloo, 5/16 - 11:00 am

### June

- Bremer/Butler, 6/13 - 10:30 am
- Waterloo, 6/20 - 11:00 am

### July

- Bremer/Butler, 7/11 - 10:30 am
- Waterloo, 7/18 - 11:00 am

### August

- Bremer/Butler, 8/8 - 10:30 am
- Waterloo, 8/15 - 11:00 am

## Meeting Locations

### Bremer/Butler

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

### Waterloo

EPI, 760 Ansborough Ave, Waterloo  
(3rd 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 for  
Employment  
Services*

- Pizza Ranch
- Lowe's
- Applebee's
- Freddy's Frozen Custard and Steakburgers
- Brown Bottle (Cedar Falls)
- Ross Dress for Less
- Courtyard Marriott

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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



### Our Mission

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



**August 18** Join Project I Am Not Ashamed creator, Ross Trowbridge, in raising awareness for Mental Illnesses. From 1 pm to 5 pm on August 18, Ross would like people around the world to create a sign naming their mental illness, and go out into the community.



### Our Vision for Tomorrow

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



### 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 our website at [www.episervice.org](http://www.episervice.org).