



# foundation

## ANNUAL REPORT 2018





# CONNECTING PEOPLE

A MESSAGE FROM **CHRIS SPARKS**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Connecting people has been the backbone of EPI from the very beginning. A handful of parents and community members came together wanting more for people with disabilities.

They dared to carve a new path rather than accepting an institution miles away as the best solution to support families.

They set about collaborating with a number of community resources - advocates, donors, other community organizations - creating services to help people live, work, grow, and be successful in their own community.

And, boy did they! The successes we've had the opportunity to be a part of over the years have been astounding.

It's now 60 years later and in many ways we feel like the founding pioneers of EPI - once again facing the need to forge a new path or watch in disbelief as restrictions are imposed on

people we care about, people capable of so much more.

Nobody comes right out to say "we're restricting you or your services". Rather it looks like a gradual, or in some cases not so gradual, decrease in approved service or options for the individual. Loss of transportation here, less day habilitation there, residential supports decreased substantially everywhere.

**To be clear, we want people to be as independent as they possibly can. But, we also want them to have enough support to be productive - and safe.**

So, where does the proverbial "buck" stop? With providers, often non-profits, like EPI. It feels a little like Sophie's choice - facing a difficult situation with equally undesirable choices.

For EPI - it looks like this on a daily basis - times 300 individuals. When service is cut or reduced for a person we serve, we're faced with limited choices. We can...

1. Take up the difficult task of trying to help the person be successful with less support. The risk? What if it's not enough? Or even worse, what if they get hurt?

2. Advocate for enough services. The challenge? Alone, we can't get the kind of traction needed for change.

3. Continue the service we believe is essential to a person's wellbeing at our own expense. The risk? Our financial stability. As a non-profit, the only way to do so is through fundraising. Even then...What if we can't raise enough money to support all of the unmet needs? Where do we draw the line? How long can we continue to do so?

This isn't a political rant. And we are not afraid of change. There is no "villain" to point out. Like our founders, our future successes are dependent on connecting with the community - **on you** - joining with us. This is our call to take action!

**Volunteer your time.** Become a friend. Perhaps you go to the same church - maybe a fellow parishioner could use a ride.

**Use your voice to advocate.** Not just once, but relentlessly. We **MUST** do better or the work of the last 60 years - the work of helping people with disabilities belong and be contributing members of their community - **could be lost.**

**Please donate and let it be known this is a cause you believe in.** The more people we can reach to join our cause, the more successful we'll be in helping people be safe and successful in their community.





# CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

## A STORY ABOUT **SHANE'S** SUCCESS: MADE POSSIBLE BY **YOU**

Finding a job is a stressful task for most anyone, but Shane knew it's what he wanted to do in order to gain greater independence. Shane began working with EPI's employment program in 2015 with the ultimate goal of finding a job in the community. The path wasn't always smooth for Shane - he was quick to overthink things, hesitant of change, and sometimes skeptical of the entire process.

Shane began on a work crew through our Enclave program to develop prerequisite skills necessary to find success in a

community job. Such skills included problem-solving, communication, and the ability to follow instructions. Shane worked with job coaches to push himself out of his comfort zone and learn to embrace change, and that's just what he did.

Shane quickly progressed through the job development process and gained helpful knowledge for resume building, interview preparation, and assistance determining the type of job he was

looking for. He got a job with Pizza Ranch in August 2017 and it's exactly the job he had hoped for. Shane's employer is thrilled to have him on their team.

**"IF I COULD CLONE SHANE, THAT WOULD BE GREAT! HE'S AWESOME, AND I COULDN'T BE HAPPIER TO HAVE HIM ON OUR TEAM," SAID TODD PEARCE, GENERAL MANAGER.**

Shane is celebrating his one year anniversary at Pizza Ranch. He feels comfortable riding the bus to

and from work, he exceeds the expectations of his employer, and he loves earning a paycheck that embodies his newfound independence. Shane now receives minimal support from EPI staff, and he's gained the independence and confidence he's always longed for.

Shane's favorite part of his job? "Everybody works together...we're all a part of the team and they say I do a good job."

**// WE'RE ALL A PART OF THE TEAM //**



**YOUR  
DONATION  
AT WORK**

**13,135**

**HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT PROVIDED**

**114**

**INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED**

# NURTURING GROWTH

**BY THE NUMBERS:** HOW YOUR DONATIONS MAKE AN IMPACT

## \$156,230.28 TOTAL REVENUE

### REVENUE SOURCES:

Unrestricted Donations	\$126,964.41
Donor Designated Donations	\$17,199.49
Exceptional Persons Foundation Permanent Endowment	\$10,000
Additional Revenue	\$2,066.38

### USE OF DONATED FUNDS:

Client Direct Assistance (Essential Needs)	\$10,000
Programmatic Support	\$86,802.17
Exceptional Persons Foundation Permanent Endowment	\$10,000
Donor Designations	\$17,199.49
<i>Fundraising Expense 7%</i>	

# ABOUT EXCEPTIONAL PERSONS, INC.

## MISSION

CONNECTING PEOPLE,  
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES,  
AND NURTURING GROWTH  
SINCE 1957.

## VISION

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.

## EXCEPTIONAL PERSONS, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### CHRIS SPARKS

Executive Director

### DEB JUNGLING

Chief Financial Officer

### KATIE SLADE

Organizational  
Development Director

### LISA PATERNO

Human Resource  
Director

### MARY JANSSEN

Children & Family  
Services Director

## Reach Out:

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### 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!