

Positive Outcomes

Fall 2019



From the Executive Director's Desk



Dear Family and Friends of North Star Community Services,

I've written past articles about the importance of our partnerships within our North Star communities; which continues to be increasingly valuable. However, today I want to write about the value of our partnerships with our employees. Each position at North Star is designed to fulfill specific responsibilities; while all employees are expected to uphold our mission...to "empower persons to realize potential, pursue dreams, and enjoy life."

The week of September 8-14th is recognized as National Direct Support Professionals week. It is a time to **CELEBRATE** and recognize our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). Yes, this level of appreciation should be daily; and we will continue to ensure that each employee knows how valued they are no matter what day or what week it is. But since there is a week dedicated to our DSPs, we are going to take advantage of it, and **CELEBRATE**.

North Star's DSPs are the heart and soul of our organization. Their daily commitment to persons served, and their families, is what enables us to be recognized as a leading provider. Our DSPs are the people who create opportunities and experiences for persons served, such as providing support so our actors/actresses could shine while performing *Shrek, The Musical Jr.*, or transporting someone to Dubuque to participate in a trip to Arizona to visit the Grand Canyon and attend a major league baseball game.

You may ask, "why all hype?" Well, let me explain. The DSP position:

- often goes without a thank you;
- must stay calm when they are called names and told how unhelpful they are;
- are the persons who are trying to focus on a consumer's strengths and abilities in a system that focuses on deficits;
- often carries the weight of knowing that someone maybe isn't taking their meds; or that someone is at risk of being evicted from their home, with no place to go; and...
- on top of this, is paid a wage equivalent to, or less than what can be earned working in retail or fast food.

So again – let's **CELEBRATE** our DSPs for their commitment to ensuring the persons they are supporting are realizing their potential, pursuing their dreams, and enjoying life. Won't you join me in:

- taking a moment to say thank you, and expressing our appreciation for the work they do;
- reaching out to your legislator(s) and asking them to enact a direct support professional tax credit;
- supporting North Star via a monetary or in-kind donation, which will free up operational dollars which then can be directed back to North Star consumers and staff. If you have questions on what this could look like, please call me or Jodie Muller at 319.236.0901.

Sincerely,

Valerie Schwoegler

Who We Are: ADULT DAY SERVICES

Waterloo, Waverly
Newel Post
Canterbury Center

**SUPPORTED
COMMUNITY LIVING**
Serving people from Northeast,
North Central and Central Iowa
from offices based in:

Waterloo
Waverly
Charles City
Marshalltown
Mason City
New Hampton
Vinton
Toledo



Accredited for Community Integration
and Supported Living



SAVE A TREE

To be good stewards of our earth, not to mention saving some green, we would like to e-mail our newsletter to you.

Join our online community.
Send your e-mail address to:
jmuller@northstarcs.org

Congratulations, Haylie Roth!

Meet Haylie (Reed) Roth, who has been promoted to Service Coordinator in the Waterloo Supported Community Living (SCL) office. She came to North Star as an intern in 2016 for her field placement. After graduating from the University of Northern Iowa with her Bachelor of Social Work (BSW), she was employed as a Supported Community Living Specialist.



Haylie expressed, "After three years with SCL, I have been given the opportunity to serve North Star's consumers in a new way as Service Coordinator. I am so excited to be with North Star in this new position, being able to work with the most supportive co-workers, while I continue to pursue my passion of helping people."

A newlywed, Haylie lives in Waterloo with her husband, Justin, who she married on May 4th (on Star Wars Day!). Off the clock, she enjoys spending time with loved ones, watching "trash T.V.," and playing with her pets: a three-year old black Lab named, Leia, and a six-year old cat named, Pollyanna. Haylie shared her future goals include completing her Master of Social Work degree to earn her Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW).

Welcome, Dan Michaelson!



Meet Dan J. Michaelson who recently joined North Star Community Services as the IT System Administrator in Waterloo. Dan was born and raised in Southern California, graduating from Villa Park High School in the city of the same name. He graduated with a business degree from Orange Coast College in

Costa Mesa, California.

Dan relocated from Dallas/Fort Worth, where he lived since 1999. He shared, "I've been working in the IT field for over 40 years, and it's taken me all over the world. I've had some extraordinary experiences and met some wonderful people. I have wanted to relocate to Iowa for many years now to be near my family, and was very fortunate to find a job with North Star." Dan has one son and four grandchildren (three boys and one girl). He is an amateur composer with a home studio and enjoys golfing, and the outdoors in general.

Dan states, "I was drawn to North Star, not only for the IT opportunities, but for the wonderful work they do with those who need a little help to make their lives as happy and comfortable as possible. Not only do I love my job, but I love what my job does for others. It doesn't get any better than that!"

Meet North Star's Management Team (second in a series)



Haley Krall

Director of Services
(13 years)

Q. What are your job responsibilities?

I oversee the Waterloo, Vinton, Toledo, and Marshalltown Supported Community Living offices. I am also in charge of quality assurance for the agency.

Q. What is your favorite thing about working at North Star?

I have been at my current position for a year, but I have been with North Star since 2006. I love my co-workers and the people we serve. I truly believe in the services we offer at North Star.

Q. What are you reading?

Mainly picture books or the "Captain Underpants" series. My kids, Jaylan (11), Briley (4), Carson (10 months), and I, all read together on a daily basis.

Q. Do you have a favorite T.V. show or movie?

I know this sounds terrible, but "How to Get Away with Murder" is my favorite T.V. show.

Q. What is your favorite go-to treat?

A trip to Target is a treat for me. I sometimes get a latte and shop with my daughter, Briley. We have a great time!

Q. Do you have a favorite song that makes you turn up the radio and sing-along?

"Baby Shark." My daughter loves it!

Q. Where do you like to go out to eat?

My husband, Jeff, and I enjoy going to Mulligan's. They have a yummy shrimp rangoon pizza.

Q. What is your favorite hobby?

I enjoy spending time with my kids and visiting my parents and siblings.

Q. What is a fun fact about you?

I grew up on a farm with two brothers and a sister. We had all kinds of pets from dogs to ostriches. Currently, the only pet at home is Mario, a hamster.



Dawn Powers

Director of Newel Post
(22 years)

Q. What are your job responsibilities?

I oversee North Star's Newel Post Senior Day Services program, which provides support to individuals with age-related disabilities.

Q. What is your favorite thing about working at North Star?

I feel blessed to have a job I enjoy and love going to every day. There are many things I enjoy, but my favorite is being able to connect with the families of clients who are living with dementia – I love being able to help them any way I can.

Q. What are you reading?

I have stack of books on my nightstand I say I am going to read, but don't.

Q. Do you have a favorite T.V. show or movie?

I am not a T.V. person. I actually went one summer without even turning on the television!

Q. What is your favorite go-to treat?

Going shopping or getting a massage at Jiva SalonSpa.

Q. Do you have a favorite song that makes you turn up the radio and sing-along?

Being an 80's girl, I love the "80's Big Hair Bands," and I often turn it up, and I always sing-along.

Q. Where do you like to go out to eat?

Spring Lake. It's a mom and pop restaurant/bar along the Mississippi River, north of Prairie du Chein.

Q. What is your favorite hobby?

Camping, and anything to do with water: kayaking, boating, hanging out at the beach. I'm a born and raised "Mississippi River Rat!"

Q. What is a fun fact about you?

I do love watching the Green Bay Packers play football - one thing I will turn the T.V. on to see!



Laugh often, dream big, and reach for the stars!



Meet North Star's Board of Directors (second in a series)

North Star Community Services is governed by an all volunteer Board of Directors. There are currently twelve dedicated men and women serving on the board who work to advance North Star's mission both today, and for a sustainable future by making decisions for the prudent use of our assets, including finances, facilities, and people.



Jeff Dow

Jeff Dow joined North Star's board of directors this spring. He is employed at CUNA Mutual in Waverly as a Business Resiliency Consultant. Jeff grew up in Plaistow, New Hampshire and attended Timberland Regional High School.

He has a B.S. in Government from the United States Coast Guard Academy, a M.A. in Leadership from the University of San Diego and recently started an on-line program working toward a M.S. in Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

Jeff has lived all over the country but moved to Iowa in 2010. He now resides in Waterloo with his wife Lisa, of six years. They have a Shih Tzu/poodle mix named Baxter, who is an 11-year old rescue dog. Jeff shared that he "LOVES to read...really...I read a lot, and drink coffee while doing it." Jeff completed NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) twice, relating that, "neither effort will ever see the light of day, but I did write 50,000 words in a month two times."

Jeff stated, "I served in the Coast Guard to help people, and I joined this board because I wanted to have an impact somewhere. I'm THRILLED to be part of this organization. I love North Star's work and it's mission; which really came through during Shrek (I don't get too emotional, but I cried when they came out for the encore)."



Kimberly Eastland

Kimberly Eastland is currently serving as the president of North Star's board of directors. She is a retail lender at Veridian Credit Union. Kim was originally from Granite City, Illinois (a St. Louis suburb), but attended both Central

High School and West High School in Waterloo. She is currently attending Hawkeye Community College, pursuing a degree in Business Administration.

Kim lives in Waterloo with her husband, Jeffrey, a daughter, Ally, and a son, Zackrey. She also shares her home with one beagle, one cat, and one foster kitten. In her free time, Kim enjoys spending time with her family and friends, attending Irish festivals and other musical or sporting events, and taking trips in their Jeep Wrangler.

Kim related, "I was very fortunate to be introduced to North Star through a co-worker that had been on the board. North Star provides essential services for a special group of people in the community in a caring and compassionate way; allowing those individuals to live full lives. I am proud to be a part of an organization that values all individuals, including the families of persons served, and the agency's staff. My time with North Star has been amazing, and I look forward to continuing to provide my time and services to this wonderful organization."



Meet Dustin, who is being supported through Waterloo's Supported Community Living (SCL) program. Newer to SCL services, North Star has been serving him for nine months, and Dustin is making good progress towards one of his goals, which is exploring community activities that he would enjoy and look forward to. Signing up to help backstage for June's performance of "Shrek, the Musical, Jr.," Dustin was assigned the role of moving sets and scenery during the show. He really enjoyed the performances, and looked forward to attending rehearsals, also stepping-up to help guide the actors when someone needed assistance. He related, "I was really tired after

the first rehearsal, but I think I did a good job!" Since his work on "Shrek," Dustin is hoping to attend more theatrical performances in the area, and now he will understand how much work goes into a production.

Golfers “Chipped In” to raise funds for North Star!

July 26th was a beautiful, sunny Friday, and also the day that 113 golfers and a team of volunteers converged on Gates Park Golf Course in Waterloo for North Star’s Van G. Miller Memorial Golf Outing. The event, now in its 23rd year, is held annually to raise funds to benefit more than 550 people who participate in North Star programming. Several North Star participants were on hand to kick-off the day by performing their favorite song, “Freak Flag,” from the recent performance of *Shrek*. Rebekah Penning, Chelsey Linza, and Taryn Ackerman (pictured left) sang the National Anthem. Congratulations to the foursome: Brad Grieves, Troy Creery, Bruce Westemeier, and Dan Oltrogge, who were the overall winners with a score of 59.



The generosity of numerous sponsors made the event possible. A huge thank you to Premiere Sponsor, Hogan Hansen; “Eagle Sponsor,” John Deery Motors; Drink ticket sponsors, The Carrier Family and PDCM Insurance; and Par 3 sponsors: Chain of Lakes Marine, Denso Inc., Mutual of America Insurance, Next Generation Wireless, and the Dale & Valerie Schwager Family.

Thank you to the 19th Hole sponsors: Financial Decisions Group, Green State Credit Union, Home Instead Senior Care, Kaiser Corson Funeral Homes, Talk to Me Technologies, Van Meter, Veridian Credit Union, and Western Home Communities.

North Star is grateful for the hole sponsors including: Artesian Earthworks, BankIowa, Charles City Long-Term Care (CCLTC), Curran Plumbing, Dupaco Community Credit Union, Enterprise Fleet Management, Gates Park Golf Course, Greenwood Pharmacy & Compounding, Huff Contracting, Jameson’s, JV’s Arc of Cedar Valley, Kelly Turner, Karen’s Print-Rite, Magee Construction, and Woodruff Construction.

Additional thanks go to Bowls of Love, Hy-Vee, and Steege’s Meats for providing some tasty treats for the golfers, and Print Innovations for the great signage. Thank you to Blue Barn BBQ, Kwik Star, Martin Brothers, Tyson’s, and Vienna Beef for the generous donations of food for event.

One lucky hole-in-one golfer could have won a great boat, courtesy of Chain of Lakes Marine, although no one accomplished the feat this year. By all reports everyone enjoyed a day of fun, fellowship, games and prizes, food, and of course – golf. SAVE THE DATE! Next year’s golf outing will be July 24, 2020. Hope to see you on the course.

Shrek is an Ogre-the-Moon Hit!

On Wednesday, June 5, 2019, the stage at the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center was filled with fun fairytale antics as Shrek, Donkey, Fiona, Lord Farquaad, and the rest of the characters took to the stage to bring North Star’s rendition of the story, “Shrek The Musical, Jr.” to life. More than 2,400 people enjoyed one of two shows. It was evident that the audience enjoyed the heart-warming production as they laughed, clapped, sang-along, and even cried a little.



Directed by Mr. Greg Holt, “Shrek, the Musical, Jr.” was the seventh inclusive community theater production for the agency, and featured an ensemble cast of 86 actors with a wide range of abilities. Additional North Star participants and staff members, along with 38 community volunteers worked several months to bring the project to light. The dedicated volunteers were integral to the production, filling roles both on-stage and behind the scenes.



The awe-inspiring sets and props were designed by Mr. Bill Close, and the scenery included Shrek’s swamp, the kingdom of Duloc, Fiona’s tower, the Dragon’s keep, barn, cathedral, and more. The largest set, the Duloc Castle, measured 20 feet tall and 22 feet wide!

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“Shrek, the Musical, Jr.” celebrates individuality, and provides the perfect metaphor of how someone perceived as different, and maybe even a little intimidating, ends up living his best life, happily ever after, on his swamp, with a beautiful princess. The show was an ideal demonstration of what we strive for at North Star; to help people with disabilities to live their best life, as independently as possible, in a home they choose, and to reach for and achieve their dreams. To quote lyrics from the closing song from the play, “What makes us special makes us strong.” Sometimes, dreams really do come true!



North Star had some generous supporters and sponsors that made this theatrical production possible. Special thanks for grants from the Otto Schoitz Foundation, Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, Iowa Arts Council (a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts), the U.S. Bank Foundation, Wells Fargo, Veridian, and the Quota Club of Waterloo. Additional thanks go to Memory Maker’s Photography by Eileen Crotty and the Cedar Valley Rotary.

In 2008, North Star Community Services first conceptualized its inclusive theatrical project to bring together individuals with a wide range of abilities and skills in an innovative way. Individuals served by North Star come together and work side-by-side with community volunteers to create and perform an outstanding full-scale theatrical production for the public. So that everyone has the chance to succeed, North Star developed the use of “character shadows” (staff or volunteer) who stand behind the actor to help support where needed with lines, cues, music, etc. These productions have allowed everyone involved to use the process as a meaningful form of self-expression and personal growth. And, nearly 12 years later, the project continues to create a community presence for both North Star and its participants, helps to foster community relationships, and serves as a fun, inclusive experience for the public.

Save The Date



WAVERLY CENTER’S ANNUAL FALL SHOW

- **Date:** Tuesday, October 8, 2019
- **Time:** 10:00 a.m.
- **Place:** St. Mary Church
2700 Horton Rd., Waverly
- Free and open to the public



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A Day on the Mighty Mississippi

Persons served at the Canterbury Center took a recent trip to the Mississippi River. Pat, Steve, and Brian (*pictured left to right*) joined staff member, Chris Gengler, on a fun ride across the river on “The Pride of Cassville” Car Ferry. The oldest operating ferry service in Wisconsin has been making the crossing from Millville, IA to Cassville, WI since 1833! It takes 15 minutes to make the river crossing. Chris relates, “We enjoyed the ride down the river. I enjoyed watching everyone smile. Brian in particular enjoyed watching the other boats. What a beautiful day for all of us!”

