

LIMITLESS

Supporting people with developmental disabilities as they experience life with unlimited possibilities.



LIFE UNLIMITED NEWSLETTER | FALL 2020



NEW FUND HELPS EMPLOYEES FIND HOPE AFTER HEARTBREAK

"It's surreal to watch your home burn," Denice Bartley said.

As if 2020 hasn't come with enough stress, pain, and uncertainty, imagine being awakened in the middle of the night by billowing smoke and uprooted from your home for months during a global pandemic. Denice, who provides supports and health services for individuals with disabilities at Life Unlimited, knows this feeling all too well. Her townhouse was damaged in July when a large fire broke out in the adjoining home.

"I'm a tough old bird, but dang, this is just so hard," Denice said. "There was a knot in my gut for at least three days after the fire."

Facing thousands of dollars in damages and being displaced anywhere from three to six months until the townhouse can be gutted and refinished, Denice wasn't sure where to turn. Then she recalled receiving an email from Life Unlimited about its new Employee Assistance Fund, which was implemented earlier this year in response to COVID-19. The program is funded by generous donors and is designed to help staff during unforeseen times of need. Following a simple application submission, Denice's request was quickly approved to help her get back on her feet.

CONTINUED INSIDE

WELCOME

We've spent most of the year adapting and coping with the negative effects of COVID-19; nevertheless, the Life Unlimited staff, leadership, and our entire community have banded together to persevere and protect the individuals with disabilities we serve.

We are thankful for you all and hope you enjoy these stories and updates from around the agency. As always, find us on social media for additional news, updates, and helpful resources.

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"This assistance fund was created to offer support in moments like this—when life throws a real curve ball," Chief External Relations Officer Mark Bertrand said. "We are honored to know Denice and to help her and others who have had unexpected financial needs. Our staff makes everything we do possible, and this is one meaningful way we can show them we will always have their backs."

Denice is anxiously hoping to be back in her home in time to celebrate Thanksgiving and grateful for the donors, community members, and administrators who made this fund possible. She tells fellow staff members to ask for help when they need it.

"I would encourage anybody having a huge, life-altering issue—COVID-19, fire, whatever it may be—to apply for this," Denice said. "It truly is a kindness and shows how much this agency appreciates us. This emergency fund just saved us; it really did."

Life Unlimited is continuously accepting donations for the Employee Assistance Fund. Your gift can make a life-changing difference for other frontline workers like Denice. **Give now at lifeunlimitedinc.org/DSPsupport.**



Denice received beds and bedding items as part of a generous community support donation from IKEA. Pictured: IKEA Communication & Event Specialist Autumn Wokutch (left) and our Director of Development Andrea Adams (right).

GIVING THANKS

In a year with so much turmoil, we have been fortunate to have caring staff, donors, and community members rise to the moment to support the individuals we serve. **We are forever grateful.**

FURNITURE DONATION

Peter Gram and his family donated new furniture to one of our homes in Liberty where his sister lives and receives supports. It is beautiful in person, and the ladies living in the home certainly love the new look.

Thank you, Gram family!



GRATEFUL FOR NEW VANS

A recent grant from the Clay County Developmental Disabilities Resources Board (DDRB) funded two new vans. Reliable transportation continues to be a crucial need for us and allows people with disabilities access to important services and opportunities in the community, including education, employment, recreational activities, health care, and housing.

Thank you, DDRB!

OUTDOOR EXCURSIONS

When social distancing and separation have become the norm, our wonderful direct support professionals (DSPs) always make sure the individuals we serve can get outside, enjoy nice weather, and socialize a bit. These moments can make lifelong memories.

Thank you, DSPs!



EVENTS & UPDATES

DSP RECOGNITION WEEK

Direct Support Professional Recognition Week was September 13-19. We honor these heroes—our frontline workforce that supports people with disabilities—both during this weeklong, nationwide celebration and throughout the year, especially in the face of unprecedented challenges from the pandemic. We are inspired by you. We are proud of you. We support you. **Show your gratitude for DSPs now at lifeunlimitedinc.org/DSPsupport.**



VIRTUAL BOWL-A-THON

We've taken our Sarah Oyen Classic Bowl-A-Thon online this year with socially distanced bowling from home. Funds will go toward Life Unlimited's Therapeutic Recreation Programs and make sure in-person activities can resume when the world reopens. **Learn more and help Sarah reach her fundraising goal at lifeunlimitedinc.org/Oyen-Classic.**

FLU SHOTS FOR STAFF

Because the health and safety of the individuals we serve is always our chief concern, Life Unlimited's leadership has made flu shots mandatory for all staff to help minimize the spread of illnesses this fall and winter. Flu shot clinics will be held in late October in advance of the peak of flu season. **Staff will receive a free family meal as thanks for helping us all stay safe and healthy.**

October 20 & 22



HATS OFF TO MOTHERS

RECOGNIZING RESILIENCE. HONORING ACHIEVEMENTS.
CELEBRATING MOTHERS.

NEW

DATE



HATS OFF TO MOTHERS

After much consideration regarding the safety and well-being of our community, and with guidance from health officials, we decided to cancel the 2020 Hats Off to Mothers luncheon. We'll be back though and hope you will plan to join us when we celebrate on April 28, 2021. **Learn more and get your tickets at lifeunlimitedinc.org/HOTM.**

BEST OF THE NORTHLAND

We're honored and thrilled to be recognized on the 2020 Best of the Northland Kansas City list. Thanks to all who voted! The complete list of all the results is available at mycouriertribune.com/bestofthenorthland.



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GET INVOLVED



ADVOCATE FOR DISABILITY CAUSES

Legislators at all levels are meeting and discussing economic relief efforts and how the country will move forward from COVID-19. The decisions they make now will likely directly impact us and the services we provide for people with disabilities for years to come. It's more important than ever to speak up and fight for what matters to you. Use our new advocacy tool to contact legislators directly on important issues and get involved at a grassroots level. Your voice matters for the individuals we serve.

Take action at lifeinlimitedinc.org/advocacy.

WORK WITH US

Job seekers, if you're looking for more than your typical 9 to 5—a career that truly makes a difference for others—you've come to the right place. Simply scan the QR code below with your phone's camera. It's the first step to changing your life. **Apply at** lifeunlimitedinc.org/careers.

