

LIMITLESS

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



LIFE UNLIMITED NEWSLETTER | WINTER 2021



MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT

The holidays looked different for many families this year. After monitoring the increasing community spread of COVID-19 and following recommendations from local health organizations, the Life Unlimited leadership team made the difficult decision to suspend all visits, including holiday visits, to mitigate infection risks.

"This was a heartbreaking decision that we did not want to have to make but know it's in the best interest of the people we care for," Chief Program Officer Amy Taylor said.

To ensure people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) could have a sense of normalcy for the holiday season, despite being away from family and friends, our teams decorated homes, had movie nights, made crafts, and delivered holiday meals from Hy-Vee to our homes and hundreds of individuals with I/DD. We also celebrated the hard work of our direct support professionals (DSPs) with an employee appreciation parade, where employees received meals for their families and wellness gifts. A special guest with a red suit and white beard even dropped by to spread holiday cheer.

"The health, safety, and happiness of the people we serve are always our top priority," Vice President of Community Living Mary Davis said. "We are elated to see our community and staff come together to make sure they still have memorable holiday moments, especially when we have to be away from loved ones this year."

WELCOME

2020 was tough. We adapted quickly and upended our lives to protect each other. Oddly enough, being apart brought us together. We found new ways to connect and strengthened our bonds with staff, community members, and people we serve who have disabilities.

You'll see that unfold in the stories in these pages and if you follow our social media sites. We can't thank you enough for your support through all of this. We felt the love near and far from all of you, our amazing donors and our community members, and we can't wait until we can come back together.

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“ OUR DAUGHTER HANDLED THE NEWS OF VISITS BEING STOPPED REMARKABLY—AND SURPRISINGLY—WELL. A STAFF MEMBER ASSURED HER THEY WOULD GET THROUGH THIS TOGETHER, AND SHE TOLD ME THAT WAS A BIG COMFORT TO HER. SHE KNOWS LIFE UNLIMITED IS TRYING TO MAKE THIS TIME SPECIAL FOR ALL ITS RESIDENTS, AND THAT MEANS A LOT TO HER PERSONALLY. WE ARE SAD ABOUT THE SITUATION, BUT HER BEING AT PEACE HELPS HER FATHER AND I BE MORE AT PEACE. ”

— PAMELA SNOW, A MOTHER OF A WOMAN LIFE UNLIMITED SUPPORTS

Throughout the pandemic, individuals with I/DD across the country have faced separation from their families, friends, and communities. Depending on their disability, they may have difficulty maintaining a safe distance, wearing a mask, or even understanding why the precautions and safety measures are needed.



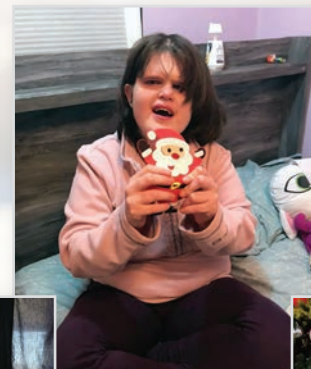
Because people with I/DD are at a higher risk for life-threatening complications from COVID-19, Life Unlimited has taken a strategic and proactive approach to limit exposures since March. We were the first disability agency in the area to close day programs and other services at the onset of the pandemic, and direct support professionals in homes are required to wear two layers of protection—both a face mask and plastic shield—during all shifts.

“We know suspending holiday visits and other restrictive decisions are very difficult for everyone involved, but we feel we need to make some sacrifices now so we can all celebrate together when the pandemic is behind us,” CEO Julie Edlund said. “We can’t wait to hopefully have lots of celebrations together in 2021!”

In the meantime, we hope these smaller in-home festivities and other fun activities kept the holiday season merry and bright for the people with I/DD we support. **Read more at lifeunlimitedinc.org/holidaymeals.**

A SEASON OF Warmth & Good Cheer

From seasonal crafts to hearty meals to movie nights, the people we support kept things festive this year. Thanks to all our dedicated DSPs who planned creative, cool, and cozy activities to make these winter months feel much warmer.



GIFTS TO LIFE UNLIMITED IN 2020

We want to recognize—and celebrate—our 2020 donors. Take pride in knowing your support empowers disability services and fuels our fire to help people achieve a life with unlimited possibilities.

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If you have questions or would like to make a donation, please contact Andrea Adams, director of development, at aadams@luinc.org or 816-983-2204. Thank you to all who have supported us during this challenging year!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2020!

How do we express our gratitude for helping us get through 2020? It's impossible to fathom being here without the support you have given us throughout the pandemic. From raising tens of thousands of dollars to help DSPs in need to making our first-ever virtual bowl-a-thon a huge success—and so much more—you've stepped up individually and as a community for people with disabilities. The Kansas City community is truly special, and there's nowhere else we'd rather be.

THANK YOU, KANSAS CITY
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HEAR OUR ROARS

At Life Unlimited, we are called to protect, fight for justice, show courage in the face of adversity, and lead. It makes sense our staff mascot is a lion. He's fierce but friendly and embodies all we stand for, exemplifying our guiding principles to:

1. Demonstrate an unselfish concern for the well-being and happiness of others.
2. Be open, authentic, and truthful.
3. Respect the dignity of every person and every role.

Our culture is built around celebrating each other's' wins and accomplishments, which is why we nominate our fellow Life Unlimited team members to receive ROARS Cards. Each letter represents our core values to be **Responsible, Open, Accountable, Respectful, and Selfless**. Employees who receive the cards are honored within their teams and eligible for prize drawings at our staff meetings.

We will begin to share these triumphs with you and highlight staff members who demonstrate these values and make Life Unlimited a roaring success.

You can read descriptions of the values, nominate someone for a ROARS card, and learn more at lifeunlimitedinc.org/ROARS.

ROARING INTO ACTION



Ryan Hicks,
Facilities &
Maintenance
Director

"Ryan spent most of his day with one of our clients because he was interested in the maintenance field. He carved out time in his extremely busy schedule to answer all the questions he had and was encouraging to him by giving him advice and wisdom from his own life experiences. I am grateful to be working with Ryan as part of our Life Unlimited team. He loves the individuals we serve, and it shows." — Holly Binkley, Job Coach