

# Dear Friends of ACT,

It was Monday morning after Thanksgiving. Into my office came Minna, who to my surprise was bearing a gift for me: a box of sweets she helped make over the Thanksgiving holiday. Believe me, they are great. But not as great as the feelings of delight we both experienced.

She was thrilled about sharing what she'd made. And it was clear she'd had a very enjoyable Thanksgiving.

The simple act of making food and offering it to another is universally known as an act of hospitality, care, and generosity. Receiving a gift like this feels great, too. For me and those around me who work so closely with the individuals we support at ACT, those good feelings are heightened when we consider that the giver has little or no financial resources and in some cases no family whatsoever. Her generosity springs from a place I can barely imagine and have never experienced.

What a way to observe Thanksgiving! Just to step back and acknowledge and be grateful that we have so much. Minna did it, even though she (seemingly) has so little. It reminds me of the

rather striking title to a book by William Lynn Smith, *We Didn't Know We Were Poor Until Someone Told Us*.

Counting your blessings and sharing generously are strong themes you hear about during the holidays. So too is anticipation, looking forward to something you know is going to be wonderful.

To be honest, while I was surprised by the sweets I'm nibbling on now (and will share with others), I was not surprised that Minna's Thanksgiving was a joyful time of special memories and closeness with those around her.

Before Thanksgiving, one of our managers, Vicki, dropped by to wish me a Happy Thanksgiving. I asked her if she had any special plans. "Work," she said. I'll admit, I added the tone of dread to our conversation. But she said, rather emphatically, no! She was looking forward to spending time with a couple of ladies in one of our Community Living houses. They were going to celebrate. They were going to share. They were going to create a special and memorable time. She was anticipating it.

What a treat it is for me to work every day with selfless people who forego holiday gatherings with their own families and with a sense of anticipation and warmth create a special holiday time with one of the more than 50 persons we support in Community Living homes, many of whom lack any family involvement.

I hope each of you has a wonderful holiday time, full of generosity, anticipation, and cherished closeness with family and friends. I join our Board of Directors and staff in wishing you a very happy holiday season.

Until next month,



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ACT WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE 2017

# COMOGIVES CAMPAIGN IN DECEMBER



Heath's hope is to lend his washer and dryer out to another person in need when he is able to purchase another washer from his own earnings.

Barbi loves trains. After taking her first trip on a train to Kansas City, last year her love for trains only grew. She pointed to Chicago and said, "I want to go there next!"

She worked hard and saved for a year and almost had enough to go, CoMoGives funds made it possible. Barbi was able to enjoy a 3-night stay near the Navy Pier, a ferris wheel ride, a boat ride, and of course, Chicago's famous deep dish pizza.

Minna also got the opportunity to travel thanks to CoMoGives funds – for her birthday, and for only the second time in her life, she spent the night in a Kansas City hotel and savored breakfast in bed. She also got to take in everything the Kansas City Zoo has to offer!

Thank you! Thank you to everyone who has supported ACT through the years. None of this would have happened without your generosity.

Beginning December 1 and extending through the end of the month the CoMoGives campaign will be active and accepting donations once again. We are excited to be a part the 2017 campaign. We are anticipating tremendous community support, and, of course, the good work that will be done.

During the last three years ACT has raised over \$50,000 through CoMoGives for people with disabilities.

Medical needs were met, lifelong memories were created, and first time experiences were made possible through this campaign.

Funds from last year have continued to be a lifeline for many people who receive ACT's services

CoMoGives donations helped Gary, Dennis, Derrick and Kelly go to Camp Wonderland, an unforgettable experience for people with disabilities.

Josh, who struggles with his weight, was able to buy his first ever kitchen table and chairs, and

a pedometer. A behavior therapist suggested these items to aid him on his road to health. He is now down more than 11 pounds!

Gabrielle needs a particular vitamin not covered by insurance. She has it every day now thanks to CoMoGives.

Veronica bought a new mattress; Allan, new bedding and a TV for his new house.

Heath will be able to purchase a much needed appliance for his house. Upon moving into a new place, he quickly discovered his washer and dryer didn't work. Now, he will be able to skip the laundry mat and wash his clothes in the comfort of his own home.



# STEP'S SIXTH CLASS IS UNDERWAY

With seven students (all of whom are male) this year's STEP (Seamless Transition through Enhanced Partnership) class at Boone Hospital Center is the biggest ever.

Maurice, Aimable, Demetrius, LaTavious, Evan, Nick, and Justin have nearly completed their first semester in the program at Boone Hospital with great success.

"This is a great group of students," STEP Career Specialist Barb Wright says. "Each has hit the ground running in his position."

Maurice is working in Distribution, stocking isolation closets in the central and south towers. Isolation closets are marked for staff caring for patients who are a contamination risk.

To do this job, Maurice must have the quantity of every single item needed in the closets memorized. And he needs stamina to do it. There are 132 closets to check and stock. He averages a mile and a half a day on this task.

Aimable's internship is in Central Services. He is responsible for getting surgical tray carts from the Operating Room down to Central Services for sterilization. Then he returns them to the OR.

"This is a big deal," Wright explains. "To have access to the OR is an honor."

He also assembles intubation kits, rolls medical tubing, and wraps pans for sterilization. In his downtime, he uses his organization skills to tidy equipment.

Demetrius is in his element keeping the hospital nice and clean. He cleans 11 bathrooms and the employee lounge throughout the day.

On top of liking to clean, he is also very safety conscious, never forgetting to put out safety signs. "He does a great job!" a Boone Hospital employee comments.

LaTavious has the title of House Orderly. He works hard to keep the whole hospital stocked with oxygen tanks and wheelchairs. He also transports patients wherever they need to go.

LaTavious has done double duty to succeed. He is efficient and careful with the oxygen tanks while being personable with patients.

Evan, known as the pun king, has three jobs! He replenishes and cleans the patient pantry in the South Tower, stocks patient rooms with linens, and cleans five staff lounges.

Of the three, his favorite is cleaning the pantry because he enjoys making coffee and the routine this job offers. He also gets a lot of recognition from the staff for his hard work. "Have a pun-tastic day!" Evan jokes.

Nick works as a Cafeteria Attendant. This is the first year this job has been offered. His coworkers love it so much, that they got him a personalized broom and dust pan.

As the first person in the position, Nick has developed the routine and set the expectations for the job. He works hard every day sweeping and vacuuming, and cleaning tables, chairs, booths, and windows according hospital standards. His goal is to have the cafeteria spotless for the lunch rush.

He has also become the unofficial cafeteria greeter, which suits Nick's friendly demeanor.

Justin covers not just one floor but three! He cleans around 20 bathrooms, the STEP classroom, and a few offices and break rooms.

To Justin, this is a great job because he likes to clean. The sanitizing guru's standard greeting is an elbow tap, not a handshake.

He is not shy about sharing his desire to earn a paycheck. "I want to make money!" Justin declares.

Each one of these interns is working toward independence, doing the job without the help of a job coach. Each year, the goal is to have no supports by February.

They are all well on their way, phasing out their coaches little by little as the weeks go by.

"This has been a fun group," Wright says. "This has been the first class of seven and the first class with 2 sets of best friends...which has been fun."

**KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK, STUDENTS!**

## ACT EMPLOYEES ARE PART OF THE CONSTRUCTION TEAM UPDATING ACT'S BUILDING



We told you in October about our building's facelift. But we didn't tell you that ACT employees have done a great deal of that work.

Darrell Derritt, Dennis Collier, and Patrick Miller and have been working diligently to update the building.

They installed additional wiring for new offices and workstations, wired and installed Smart TVs in all of the program areas, updated the copy room with a modern look (including a new ceiling and floor), repainted the front of the building, and replaced cove base throughout the offices.

We've got a new Training Specialist, Ben Tilley, on the ACT team. To provide the best training possible for our employees, we believe it's critical to have a state-of-the-art training facility located adjacent

to Tilley's office. That's been a major (and very exciting) part of the construction project.

Instead of training across the street in a rented building, employees will take their training in the room formerly used as a program area for the Day Program. Our ACT employees replaced the ceiling and floor, and wired and installed an impressive SMART Board.

We can't wait to show off their work once construction is complete.

**THANK YOU DARREL, DENNIS, AND PATRICK! ACT IS LOOKING GREAT BECAUSE OF YOU.**

## WORK ANNIVERSARIES

Many people in our ACT family celebrated impressive work anniversaries this year!

**MARK HASSEMER, 40 YEARS**

**DON LAFFERTY, 25 YEARS**

**TERRI KRUGER, 25 YEARS**

**MARSHA SCHAFFER, 15 YEARS**

**CARL DALEEN, 15 YEARS**

**LOIS MARSTON, 10 YEARS**

**CHANELE MALVEAUX, 10 YEARS**

**JAMESETTA JACKSON, 10 YEARS**

**TARA SHADE, 10 YEARS**

**A. TAYLOR DERRITT, 10 YEARS**

**ADAM HAYS, 10 YEARS**

**THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION.**

## SHOP AND DONATE!

You can now donate to ACT by shopping at Gerbes, Schnucks, and AmazonSmile and JustGive.org!

At Gerbes and Schnucks, simply apply for their community/rewards program, pick ACT as your designated charity, and shop away!

When shopping at AmazonSmile, create an account, pick ACT as your charity, and again, shop away!

JustGive makes donating to charitable organizations easy. Go to their website and search Alternative Community Training to donate. You can even pick to give one time, monthly, or to put on a registry.

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ACT!**

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

# DECEMBER

December 1 - 31 - CoMoGives Campaign

ACT's  
CoMoGives  
Kick-off party at  
Logboat Brewing  
Co. 3-6pm

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ACT's CoMoGives Yoga  
Class with Katie Schutte  
at Human Performance  
Institute 10am-11am

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ACT facility based offices  
closed for Christmas

# JANUARY

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ACT facility based offices  
closed for New Year's

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Check our Twitter @ACTofCoMo and our Facebook [fb.com/ACTofCoMo](https://www.facebook.com/ACTofCoMo) for more details

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