

# Dear Friends of ACT,

I'm going fishing next week. So it's hard to concentrate as I write this. Expect this to be brief and to the point.

In my December letter last year I talked about Community Life Engagement (CLE). CLE is about supporting people with Intellectual and other Developmental Disabilities (IDD) in non-work involvement in the community as part of a meaningful day.

You may have never thought about this before. But I'm sure you'll agree, each of us wants a meaningful day.

It's doing things in the community that we all do when we're not at work. A meaningful day might include volunteering at church or a charity, going to the library to pick out a mystery novel, playing or exercising at the recreation center, taking a class, walking the trails, picnicking in the park, sipping a cold refreshment at a local establishment, or enjoying live entertainment. Some people love the thrill of a trip to the casino, while others get great joy and fulfillment from delivering a hot meal to a grieving family.

We presented these ideas and our approach at a recent state conference. The response was tremendous. People from around Missouri have come to visit us. They want to see our day program and learn about this meaningful day idea.

Some said that what they saw was not a day program. It didn't fit with what they had in mind. We like that.

Without even visiting us, someone recently declined services in our day program. That person wasn't interested in our offering because it didn't align with what they had in mind.

Shakespeare said, "That which we call a rose. By any other name would smell as sweet."

We've got a great day program. It's founded on a presence in the community that reflects the individual choices and preferences of the people who receive our services. It continues to change and improve. But maybe it's time for a name change.

Our day program is not defined by day of the week, time of day, location, or other features that still define some programs in Missouri.

What do we do? Should we change the name? Regardless, it's a good problem to have.

I don't know what will happen. But I work with a lot of smart people here at ACT. I think they'll figure it out.

In the meantime, I'm going fishing. Those, I know, will be some meaningful days!

Until next month,



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# ACT WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE 2017 COMOGIVES CAMPAIGN IN DECEMBER



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, bought a new kitchen table, 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 we are just halfway through the year!



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

## ALLAN HAS A NEW HOME IN COMMUNITY LIVING

On August 1st, Community Living got a new family member and Ae'Shionne got a new roommate, Allan.

He also enjoys working hard. "I like having a job where I am needed and being told I did a good job," Allen adds. Allan works at McDonald's.

Allan is from Mexico, MO. He already knew his housemate, Ae'Shionne. They met playing softball in Special Olympics. They both love sports and are thrilled to be living together.

He can't wait to start decorating his room with posters of his favorite movie star, Al Pacino.

Welcome to your new home, Allan!

Allan says sports, vacations, and playing in the Special Olympics are his favorite things. He recently returned from Lees Summit where he played in a Special Olympics softball tournament. He had a blast.

Allan is very social. "I like interacting with people and making new friends," Allan says.



# MEANINGFUL DAY BREAKS DOWN BOUNDARIES AND EXPANDS OPPORTUNITIES

Before 2017, our programs operated separately and independently. They were even separated by the space they occupied in our building. Typically, people seeking services picked one program over another, rather than picking and choosing the particular program features they wanted ala carte.

But that didn't work for some people. Some needed and wanted more than one service to reach their goals.

We are now presenting and offering of our programs and services differently. This makes it more likely a person will choose anything and everything she or he needs.

We call it (for now) Meaningful Day.

"It is about us being available and meeting individuals on their terms," Craig Valone, Director of the Day Program, says. "We want to give people the opportunity to have a more fluid day and to take advantage of everything we offer."

Persons seeking services define their Meaningful Day by envisioning what they want their days to look like, then choosing services accordingly.

"Why should a person be limited to one program versus another?" Director of ACT Career Services (ACS) Jessica Mahon asks. "Instead, we want to learn the dreams, hopes, and goals of the person seeking our services and go from there."

This shift is not happening just at ACT. It is happening in provider agencies all across the country.

What's it like?

If a person receives supports from ACS and works part-time, he or she can also choose to participate in our Day Program part-time.

In the Day Program, the person might choose to volunteer and participate in a cooking club. This provides an opportunity to further develop soft skills and gain valuable experience.

At work, the person starts to reach goals with more ease. His or her employer notices and increases the person's assigned work hours.

With more work comes more income. That income gives the employee more flexibility and freedom to spend and make choices. He or she may choose to move into his or her own home along with needed support.

The person now lives more independently. This is his or her Meaningful Day.

This outcome is achieved not by restricting services to a specified place, or a limited time of day, or only on weekdays. This outcome is not achieved by staying in programmatic silos. Rather, people who need services can access them early in the morning, late

in the evening, on a weekend, in the community (not our building), and with the people they choose.

Mahon says, "There is a quote: 'How we spend our days is how we spend our lives.' We want to provide a meaningful day so they can live a more meaningful life."

"One of the people Norma supported couldn't say my name properly. When he tried, he called me Tangarae. So Norma started calling me Tangarae. She didn't do this to make fun of him but to let him know that it was okay that he couldn't say my name correctly, that I would be okay with it, and that I would answer any time my name was said that way. He also referred to Norma as

Moma. For the time I was blessed to be a part of Norma's life, that is how we greeted each other."

She continued this work she loved until her health no longer allowed her to.

It's hard to imagine that a replacement for someone who is so committed to the well-being of others could ever be found. But we know that person is among us. Maybe 35 years from now we'll be acknowledging his or her amazing contribution.

Good bye, Norma Jean.  
We will miss you.



## ACT WELCOMES TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS



**B**rooke Orscheln and Jennifer Eng recently joined ACT's Board of Directors.

Brooke is originally from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She attended Stephens College and earned her B.S. in International Business at Columbia College.

Brooke started her career in real estate development of medical offices buildings and rural hospitals. Her projects took her to more than 20 states while living between Dallas, Birmingham and Nashville.

Her move back to Columbia in 1999 resulted in a successful banking career, first at Central Bank of Boone County as Assistant Branch Manager then at The Bank of Missouri as Assistant Vice President and Retail Supervisor.

Most recently, she has been enjoying early retirement.

She enjoys volunteering for causes she is passionate about. Brooke has been the Treasurer for the Foundation for the Missouri DECA for eight years. She coordinates the Logistics Committee for Great Circle's Diamond Night Gala, and is also a member of the Downtown Optimists.

Brooke was approached to join the ACT board by her neighbor and board President Dr. Rez Farid. Having a grandson with autism, Brooke was immediately drawn to ACT's mission.

In March she will celebrate five years of marriage to John Orscheln. Between them, they have nine kids, 14 grandkids and a teacup poodle named Sophie. Brooke has found great satisfaction organizing and keeping up with her newly large family. Jennifer was born and raised in Columbia. She graduated from the University of Missouri School of Journalism in 2008, and the University of Missouri Law School in 2011.

After graduation she moved to Kansas City, where she is an associate attorney at Polsinelli PC, focusing on product liability and complex commercial litigation.

Jennifer is married to Columbia native Ryan McFarland. They share an interest in traveling, specifically road trips throughout the U.S., and cheering on their favorite local soccer team Sporting Kansas City. They have a dog named Buddy they can't live without.

Every spare minute she has, you can find Jennifer working on her yoga practice so she can earn her yoga teacher certification. That will allow her to share her love of yoga with others.

Help us welcome Brooke and Jennifer to our Board of Directors.



## WORK ANNIVERSARIES

We like to celebrate our ACT family. Congratulations to each of these wonderful ladies; November marks their one-year anniversary with ACT!

**TINA AKERS,**

**LINDA LUGENGE**

**RACHAEL JACKSON**

**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!

**A**t 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.



# NOVEMBER

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 <i>Veterans Day</i>
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	<i>ACT Facility Based Offices Closed for Thanksgiving</i>		25
26	27	28	29	26	27	28 <i>National Day of Giving #GivingTuesday</i>
29	30					



# DECEMBER

CoMoGives Campaign



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

2	3	4	5
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Check our Twitter @ACTofCoMo and our Facebook [fb.com/ACTofCoMo](https://fb.com/ACTofCoMo) for more details

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