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Dear Friends of ACT,

www.actservices.org

As we look forward to October, National Disabilities Awareness Month, I'm accepting the challenge issued by the U.S. Department of Labor with its announced theme for the month, "A strong workforce is an inclusive workforce: What can YOU do?"

The theme makes it personal and immediate with the question "What can YOU do?"

Please take a look at a brief video and a report (not so brief) featuring Walgreens distribution centers, some of which employ as many as 600 workers, 40% of whom have chosen to disclose their disabilities.

In my experience, a change in behavior often begins with a change in mind. Walgreens is changing minds as the word gets out about how they are including people with disabilities in their workforce.

They are shattering some of the longest and most strongly held myths with some easily understood facts:

- In 10 out of 31 work locations studied, team members with disabilities (TMWD) were more productive than those without. In 18 work locations productivity was equal. In only 3 of the locations studied did TMWD demonstrate lower productivity.
- Job turnover for TMWD was 48% less than the remaining population.
- The lost day average per case for TMWD was 40% lower than the rest of the population.
- Workers' Compensation claim data showed that for costs for medical treatment for TMWD were 67% less than the contrasting population.

The authors of the study conclude what Walgreens has found out: there is a strong business case for including individuals with disabilities in the workforce.

When you view the video, don't miss the image at 1:29 that shows a huge sign on the wall with the word "them" surrounded by the red circle and slash. It's a wonderful representation of the idea that there are no "outsiders", no "others" who should be excluded. In a way, it's a perfect symbol for ACT's vision of an inclusive community where everyone belongs, participates and is accepted.

So, what will you do? Please consider at least passing on this information to people you know who hire.

If presuppositions about safety, productivity and cost have been stopping you from including people with disabilities, I hope you'll stop for a moment and use this information to imagine what it would be like if the place where you work included people with disabilities. As John Lennon might say, "it's easy, if you try."

Walgreens VP for supply chain and logistics, Randy Lewis, did it. We can too...for the clear benefit of employers and employees.

Until next month,



Mark Hassemer
Executive Director, ACT



ACT's Community Living Program Welcomes New Program Manager, Tricia Mumma

Congratulations to Tricia Mumma on her new role as Program Manager.

She started her new job on August 20th.

She's been an ACT employee for five years, the entire time as a Program Supervisor.



Tricia Mumma

Before coming to ACT, Tricia worked at other agencies in mid-Missouri. She has 13 years of experience supervising staff.

Tricia joins two other Program Managers in Community Living. Together, they are responsible for a total of 21 homes and, more importantly, the individuals who live there.

Tricia describes her life since

becoming a Program Manager with one word—busy. “Once I get my team in place, we’ll get in the groove,” she says. Until then she’s working hard at hiring, trying fill the vacancy created by her own promotion, along with two other openings on her team.

Tricia truly enjoys working for ACT. ACT’s commitment to giving individuals choice and independence makes a difference. “It’s really fun seeing the individuals we serve achieve their goals,” she says.

Recently, she and other Community Living staff worked with an individual who really wanted to be a part of a local church. They accompanied him to several churches over a period of months, until he found the church that was right for him. “Last week, he was baptized into his church,” she said. Now he knows people in the

church, and he’s supported there by other church members, just like others who attend and participate.

Tricia is also enthusiastic about ACT because of how ACT works with staff. ACT provides opportunities for career growth and often promotes from within.

Tricia’s promotion gave her the opportunity to promote Pam Adams, who has been a live-in staff person with ACT Community Living for nearly 10 years. Now she has moved up and taken additional duties as Program Supervisor.



Pam Adams

Congratulations to both Tricia and Pam in their new endeavors on behalf of ACT and the people we serve. ■

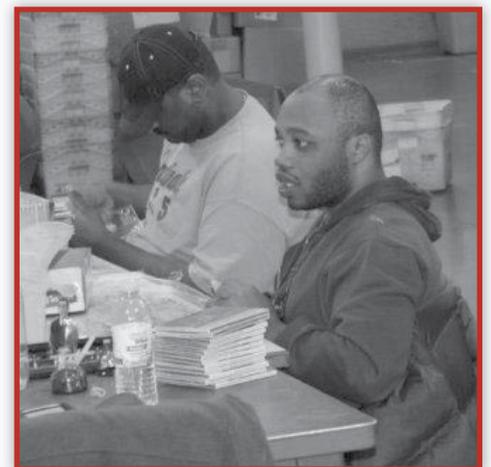
Job Opportunities

ACT is seeking positive and enthusiastic employees to provide assistance and instruction to individuals with disabilities.

If you are interested in a career supporting individuals with disabilities, join us and help make a difference in someone’s life. You must be willing to embrace challenges and accept great rewards. We invite you to consider ACT when seeking employment and/or work experience in the human services field.

ACT is an equal opportunity employer.

Visit actservices.org/jobs to view a list of job opportunities.



Volunteer Service Leads to New Employment for Mendy

After 18 years of continuous employment, Mendy suddenly found herself seeking a job in August, 2011. Last October she began receiving support with her job search from ACT Career Services (CS). ACT Career Services worked with her on interviewing skills, application completion, job lead discovery, and other job search tasks. In addition, we discussed with her the importance of exploring and cultivating personal networks when searching for a job. We suggested volunteer work as a great way to expand her network of contacts in the community.



Sheryl Wright (Mendy's supervisor) & Mendy

While continuing her job search, Mendy, with support from her residential staff at Woodhaven, began looking for a volunteer opportunity that would allow her to give back to her community and broaden her personal connections.

Soon Mendy started volunteering at MarineParents.com, Inc. in Columbia. MarineParents.com provides information and services for Marines and their families, operationally secure websites and

networking, and support for troops through outreach programs. Mendy joined other volunteers in packing boxes, care packages, sent to Marines stationed in Afghanistan, as a part of the Care Package Project™.

While volunteering, the employees at the organization quickly came to know Mendy, her wonderful personality, and her strong work ethic. When an opportunity for a custodial position (Mendy's desired job) became available, the organization recognized that they already knew someone who would be a perfect fit.

ACT Career Services worked closely with MarineParents.com, Inc. to help define the position more clearly and develop a task analysis to ensure Mendy met all of their businesses needs.

Mendy started her new job in May 2012.

Mendy's supervisor, Sheryl Wright, said the most important component of the service provided by ACT CS was "that both our needs and Mendy's needs are top priority."

Mendy absolutely loves her job. Her supervisors are pleased with her performance. And Mendy continues to serve as a volunteer at MarineParents.com. ■

Mentors, A Guide by the Side of New Employees

Imagine beginning work as a new employee at ACT's Community Integration Program. You've completed all of your mandatory training with the training specialists and you've worked with a supervisor or senior team member for weeks to learn the roles and responsibilities of a Direct Support Professional.

Now you're out in the community with four individuals you support and you have a fender bender in the parking lot at the grocery store. What do you do? How do you handle this situation?

Every thing that can happen in life cannot be addressed in training. So... what happens?

New ACT staff, even those who come to ACT with experience from previous employment, don't need to wonder, thanks to our mentors, Nancy Beatty and Marsha Schafer.

For four years, ACT has been providing new staff with the side-by-side guidance that can come only from working with an experienced mentor, someone who knows what to do and what not to do; someone who personally knows the individuals we serve.

Nancy has been mentoring new staff for two years. Marsha has been a

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mentor for the past year.

“I enjoy the work I do. It’s an outlet for the talents I have,” says Marsha. “I knew I could really help new staff in this job, since I was already doing this type of mentoring as a staff person working with new employees.”

Marsha and Nancy mentor new staff in the ACT Community Integration Day Program. (They do not conduct mandatory safety training for new employees. Nor do they provide the specialized training needed for individuals working on the job floor in ACT Recycling.) They work with staff on life skills, getting them ready to go out into the community with the individuals they serve. And they



Nancy Beatty

help new staff get to know people.

New staff are grateful. They’re happy to have someone who will spend the time needed to prepare them for the work that needs to be done. The



Marsha Schafer

feedback the mentors receive is very good. And the results are good, too.

One benefit of the mentoring program is consistency. In the past, new staff sometimes received mixed messages or picked up habits that were less than ideal.

The little things really matter. Thanks to the mentors in ACT Community Integration, new employees can get the guidance they need, at a pace that suits them uniquely, so they can support individuals in the best possible way. ■

ACT Career Services Staff Participate in 12th Annual Employment Summit

“We want the working environment here to more closely mirror the one individuals experience when they work in the community,” said John Savage, ACT Works Director.

Preparing individuals better to work in the community—that’s the reason ACT Works has added and filled two new Floor Supervisor positions. Davin Tipton and Bob Meier will begin working in their new roles in early October.

The new Floor Supervisors will have responsibilities for operations, scheduling, tracking production, and setting up work flow, just like a manager in any industrial production environment does. This change will allow the Production Training Specialists to focus their efforts on assisting individuals with developing skills.

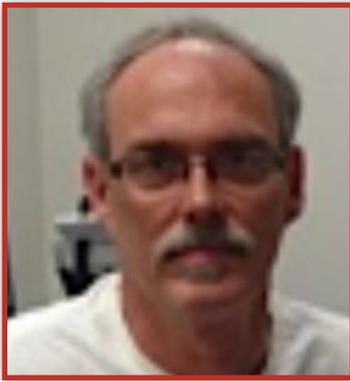
Mixing those functions, operational

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“I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.”

— Booker T. Washington

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Bob Meier

management and skills development assistance, can sometimes be confusing. It can be an impediment to individuals who might come to expect something different from their jobs in the community.

Bob Meier, who just relocated to the Columbia area, is completing his ACT block training requirements now. He has extensive experience working with individuals with development disabilities in Nebraska. He's excited

about building new relationships with the individuals served by ACT Works and blazing a trail in a position that has not been available previously.

Davin Tipton has worked at ACT as a Production Training Specialist. He also has gained operational experience in industrial settings while working as a job coach in ACT Career Services. He has 18 years of experience in the field. "It's my passion," he says of his work with the individuals we support.

"I have a strong connection to the guys on my crew now. I'd hate to lose them. But on the other hand, we want them to move on to better paying jobs in the community," Tipton says. "From a production standpoint it is hard to lose your best workers, but it is great to see them grow and have those new opportunities."



Davin Tipton

This vision for individuals working in the community and accomplishing the goals they have for themselves is what drives everything we do in ACT Works. Adding these new Floor Supervisor roles is another step toward better preparing the individuals we support. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 1 - October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

October 8 - New Hire Orientation at the Training Center.

October 8 - Therap/Documentation Training at the Training Center.

October 9 - Medication administration training at the Training Center.

October 10 - Abuse/Neglect Prevention training at the Training Center.

October 10 - Positive Behavior Support training at the Training Center.

October 11 - Workshop presented by Valerie Baker at Boone County Family Resources: "Securing the Future for Your Dependent with Special Needs,"

6:00 pm. Download flyer here.

October 11 - Medication administration training at the Training Center.

October 11 - Medication administration refresher training at the Training Center.

October 12 - CPR/First Aid at the Training Center.

For more events, please check out actservices.org/about-us/events

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 <http://www.actservices.org>

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