

# headway



AN UNQUESTIONABLE  
**COMMITMENT**

WHILE LIFE THROWS HIM  
OBSTACLES, RYAN JANSA IS  
FOCUSED ON HIS FUTURE

*also inside:*

Q&A: REHABILITATION CLINICAL LIAISON | MEET LOLO | PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION  
THE EXPERTS AT ON WITH LIFE | THERAPY GROUNDS UPDATE | FALL CONFERENCE

# On With Life, Inc. headway magazine

SUMMER 2018

## On With Life, Inc.

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### About the Cover:

Ryan Jansa, person served, and Jillian Jones,  
Outpatient physical therapist.  
Photo by Brice Musgrove, Images by Brice

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## a letter from our CEO

I recently had the pleasure of having lunch with one of our founding family members. We dined at a local restaurant and each received a fortune cookie. Hers read "Someone is interested in you," and mine read "You are embarking on a new journey." Both fortunes fit us to a T! I was a bit nervous about meeting with a founder – what do you say to someone who with several other committed families created something so great where nothing existed? Imagine working relentlessly to build a dedicated program for those living with a brain injury.

From these founding families came more chapters to our story, including our long-term care facility in Glenwood which was originally designed to respond to the huge lack of facilities for adolescents, young adults and adults who needed more care than a home environment could offer. Thanks to the leadership of local Glenwood business leaders, Dr. William Campbell and Marv Tooman, we were able to again fill a huge need and offer hope and comfort to our persons served and family members. Dr. Campbell still serves on several of our boards and always joins us with a song and a smile. Many of our persons served have been with us for many years and are no longer 'young adults,' but they still benefit from the compassionate and dedicated therapy and care offered by our team.

Our mission is to join hands, hearts and minds to help persons living with brain injury get "On With Life." Our continuum and team members are here because of this mission, and because of the hard work of our founders: Mary Berg, Daniel Brufloodt, Dr. William Campbell, Shirley Cook, Charles Denhart, Betty Rose Gerberich, Fran Herring, Kathy Rabe Herring, Paul Jorgensen, Renee King, Doris Konkol, William McMordie, Ruth Sandvick, John W. Smith, Bobbie Speer, Marv Tooman and Eli Wirtz. They began this journey many years ago based on the concept of hope, and I now thank them for the great honor of allowing me to be a part of this journey!

Jean Shelton, CEO

September 14

On With Life  
Brain Injury Rehabilitation  
Fall Conference  
FFA Enrichment Center  
Ankeny, IA

September 28

Celebrate Life  
Fundraising Event  
FFA Enrichment Center  
Ankeny, IA

October 18

Sips. Sounds. Support.  
Fundraising Event  
Vine Street Cellars  
Glenwood, IA



SUMMER 2018

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## FOUNDATION FEATURES

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Jon, person served at On With Life's Long-Term Skilled Care program in Glenwood, IA, can't decide if he wants to hang out in Iowa or Nebraska during a recent visit to the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge. Also known as the Footbridge, the walking path connects Council Bluffs to Omaha's Riverfront. Jon is pictured with therapeutic activity specialist, Jennifer Barbour.



On With Life Outpatient staff and persons served at the 2017 LSVT Parkinson's Program Reunion

## Parkinson's Association Optimism Walk at On With Life

On With Life is proud to host the inaugural Optimism Walk for Parkinson's Disease on Saturday, September 29, 2018! The walk will take place within the therapy grounds of the On With Life Ankeny Campus and is part of a nationwide movement to mobilize and inspire people to help put an end to Parkinson's Disease.

"We are honored to have the opportunity to host this event in honor of those we serve at On With Life and across Iowa who are living with Parkinson's Disease," said Tammy Miller, outpatient care manager at On With Life and current American Parkinson Disease Association Iowa Chapter board member. "It is an important part of our mission within the Outpatient program

to create programming and advocate for those living with the disease."

On With Life began offering a Parkinson's Disease LSVT Big and Loud program in 2013 and has helped more than 500 individuals living with the disease to increase function, increase independence and improve their quality of life. In addition to the LSVT Big and Loud programming, On With Life offers an LSVT/Parkinson's support group, a Parkinson's boxing program, adapted yoga classes and individual Parkinson's therapy programming depending on the needs of each individual.

*To learn more about the Optimism Walk or On With Life's Parkinson's programming, please visit [onwithlife.org/parkinsons](http://onwithlife.org/parkinsons)*



David, person served in the Long-Term program, enjoys visits from volunteer pet therapy dogs.

## On With Life to Add New Team Member

On With Life's Long-Term Skilled Care program in Glenwood, Iowa, will be adding a new team member to their program soon – a golden retriever companionship dog.

"Having an in-house pet will enhance our person-centered care approach at On With Life," said Belinda DeBolt, administrator of the Long-Term program. "The dog will be interacting with persons served and providing spontaneous engagement with them on a daily basis."

On With Life has a strong history of involving pets into the rehabilitation and

care of those served, including the use of pet therapy visits from outside volunteers and utilizing them in therapy interventions to increase engagement.

"The persons served and staff are already planning ways to welcome the puppy, including a contest to name the new puppy!" said Belinda. "We're excited to see how the dog enriches the unique program we've built here."

*Help us prepare for our new team member by checking out our Amazon Wish List at [onwithlife.org/puppylist](http://onwithlife.org/puppylist).*



# The Experts of on with life

The team of experts at On With Life have dedicated their careers to helping those we serve and are often invited to share their expertise on a national level. We'd like to introduce you to a few of our experts and share why they choose On With Life as their employer of choice.

To learn more about career opportunities at On With Life visit [onwithlife.org/careers](http://onwithlife.org/careers).



"I am encouraged to pursue additional certifications while working at On With Life. This allows me to grow professionally to provide the very best care possible for the individuals I'm privileged to serve."

**Andrea Cherry, RN, EMT,  
CBIS, MANDT**  
Nurse  
1 YEAR



"I have been fortunate to become close to our volunteers who generously give of their time and gifts – they are really special people. I am very grateful to work with such wonderful people who passionately serve our families and each other every day."

**Ann Lenaghan**  
Executive Assistant and  
Volunteer Coordinator  
9 YEARS

"Using the power of music to create experiences to help us express, move, motivate, relax or communicate with each other instantly is priceless. I am reminded daily what hard work and perseverance are all about from our persons served and their families."

**Amy Bishop, MT-BC, CBIS**  
Music Therapist  
16 YEARS



"As a CARF surveyor I reviewed a number of rehabilitation programs nationwide and would put On With Life up against anyone in this country in our proficiency in pursuing rehabilitation for persons with brain injuries and strokes."

**David Demarest, Ph.D.,  
CBIST**  
Neuropsychologist  
10 YEARS



"Working at On With Life reminds me how compassion gives everyone joy—not only persons served, but also team members who work here. Gentleness and kindness are shared every day."

**Belinda DeBolt,  
MHA, LNHA**  
Administrator  
1 YEAR



"I chose healthcare information technology as my career path for one reason – it allows me to connect more with people. I am grateful for the opportunity to help many of our persons served and families better understand the health insurance world during one of the hardest times in their life."

**Jillian Noah, CPC, CPB**  
Medical Billing and  
Coding Coordinator  
1 YEAR



"The atmosphere and quality of staff at On With Life are truly unmatched. From extensive training to conversations with my peers and persons served, I'm constantly learning as a professional and as a person."

**Magen Renner, CRTS, CBIS**  
Residential Support Lead  
2 YEARS



Sam (right) with friend, Julia, at law school graduation

## A NEW PERSPECTIVE

SAM NORDSTROM

*Post-Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation*

Admit: 08/17/17

Discharge: 11/10/17

*Outpatient Neuro Rehabilitation*

Admit: 01/03/18

Discharge: 3/29/18

Determined to overcome, Sam Nordstrom wouldn't let a brain tumor get in her way of finishing law school. Surgery to remove the benign tumor left her confused with virtually no feeling on the left side of her body. The doctors were able to relieve the pressure on her brain, but she was still unable to walk or move her left side.

Set on finishing her final year and graduating with her class at Drake University, Sam wanted the best possible rehabilitation. "I had heard great things about On With Life and knew that it was where I wanted to be," she says. "I couldn't wait to get there."

For Sam, it was important to keep with her active lifestyle during rehabilitation, so she coordinated a talent show for persons served and a food drive for the Animal Rescue League. She was also able to continue with

her law degree by finishing up coursework and taking a licensing test while at On With Life. Her therapists and nursing team were there supporting her every step of the way.

"One of the nursing assistants drove me to campus at 7:30 a.m. on a Saturday to take my licensing exam," Sam says. "I passed, which was a pretty big deal!"

Sam graduated from law school with high honors in May. She walked with her class at commencement just ten months after her brain injury, and she credits On With Life for getting her to where she is today.

"Just about one year ago I didn't know what my future would look like, but today I have a career to work towards that I'm really excited about," she says. "Things are really coming full circle."

## ACHIEVING NEW GOALS

**MATT DIERCKS**  
*Post-Acute Inpatient  
Rehabilitation*  
Admit: 10/05/10  
Discharge: 04/22/11

*Matt with his niece, Brynn,  
at the 2017 Iowa State Fair*



Matt Diercks knows firsthand that life can change in the blink of an eye. A motorcycle accident left him in a coma for more than four months, including some of his first days at On With Life. His father, Jeff, remembers how terrifying those first months really were.

“Being told your son has a brain injury is one of the hardest things you could ever hear,” Jeff says. “When you first start out, you just don’t know where you’re going to be. It was a long haul, but luckily Matt was up for the challenge.”

After emerging from his coma, Matt began reaching milestones in record time. The one-on-one therapy he received at On With Life helped him turn the corner and eventually walk on his own. One activity that he particularly enjoyed was aquatic therapy.

“He loves the water and has his whole life, so his therapists seized any opportunity they could to work with him in the pool,” Jeff says.

These days, Matt continues to achieve his goals. His passion for the water grew into a business where he provides tours of the Mississippi River on his pontoon boat. Both his business and job as a driver for Enterprise give Matt an opportunity to meet new people every day.

Matt formed close bonds with his team at On With Life, and he even attended the wedding of one of his nurses. Matt and his family still try to get back to On With Life and give thanks to the people who changed his life.

“On With Life is more than great – they’re the best,” Matt says. “They made me who I am today.”

## LIFE COMES FULL CIRCLE

**DILLON SCHNITZLER**  
*Post-Acute Inpatient  
Rehabilitation*  
Admit: 04/06/17  
Discharge: 07/12/17



*Dillon and his son, Ivan*

Nobody knew what Dillon Schnitzler’s recovery would be after a motor vehicle accident in 2017 left him in a coma. The young father suddenly had little memory of life before the accident. His family fought for him to get to On With Life for life-changing rehabilitation.

Adjusting to On With Life was difficult for Dillon, but his family called him every night and inspired him to keep working toward recovery. He is still grateful for the compassion his team at On With Life showed him, even in some tough moments.

“The staff at On With Life were incredible,” he says. “I could be challenging to work with during my recovery, but my team was so caring and kept me focused on recovery.”

Dillon’s therapy at On With Life helped him regain the skills he needed to return to his job as a machinery operator at a manufacturing plant. He is thankful that his therapy team pushed him to keep going, and he was impressed with how much he has achieved.

“The fact that I’m able to walk on my own and remember how to perform the tasks I did on the job is remarkable,” Dillon says. “Nobody would have guessed I would be able to continue at my job.”

Dillon’s time at On With Life also helped him refocus on what was important in his life, including his son. Today, he cherishes the time he gets to spend with his family and credits On With Life for rebuilding him as an individual and a father.

“If I wouldn’t have come to On With Life after my accident, I’m not sure where I would be right now,” Dillon says. “My therapy helped me become the person I am today.”





Ryan, Lolo and his Outpatient physical therapist, Jillian Jones



Ryan during an inpatient therapy session with therapists Megan Ihrke and Amy Bishop

# AN UNQUESTIONABLE COMMITMENT



While life throws him obstacles, Ryan Jansa is focused on his future.



Ryan and his family relaxing outdoors during his Inpatient stay at On With Life

There were so many questions when Ryan Jansa was found clinging to life with severe head injuries in an Iowa City alley in the early morning hours of May 14, 2016.

*What happened? How did he end up there? What was his prognosis? Was he going to make it?*

*With all the questions swirling, there was one thing that there was no question about: Ryan's willingness to fight.*

The 24-year-old had been out with friends the night before. He was separated from his group as the night wound down and, to this day, it is unclear what happened to him. Ryan arrived at the hospital in a coma, a condition he remained in for days. After enduring several surgeries to alleviate the pressure and swelling in his brain, he recovered to the point that he could begin the arduous process of rehabilitation.



## Making Progress

With his family by his side, Ryan began his rehabilitation at On With Life in Ankeny. When he arrived it was unclear what level of function he would regain. One thing therapists and support staff knew, he wasn't in the fight alone.

"I could tell instantly that Ryan was special with how his family described him when we first met," says Amy deBuhr, DPT, CBIS, CCI, Ryan's primary physical therapist when he arrived in Ankeny. "Their love, devotion, and positive attitude proved that Ryan would be successful in his rehab."

Now two years removed from the accident, Ryan is thriving as he continues to put his life back together.

"What I appreciate most in life is being able to do all the little things that I used to take for granted, that I wasn't able to do after my accident," Ryan says. "This injury really helped me to see all the things that really matter in life."

## Making Connections

Being surrounded by family and a care team that was focused on helping him recover was crucial for Ryan. When he arrived at On With Life, he was completely

*This injury really helped me to see all the things that really matter in life.*



dependent on others to take care of even his most basic needs.

Ryan had to re-learn to eat, read, write, walk and talk. Looking back on his care, he says it was the connections he was able to make that motivated him to work as hard as possible to get back to living independently.

"There were so many staff members I bonded with," Ryan says. "Everyone there was so friendly and personable. The CNAs all helped take care of a lot of my personal needs, I bonded well with the kitchen staff, and the therapists were always amazing. Everyone worked together to help me be more independent again."

The bonding was a two-way street. Amy recalls vividly how impressed she was with the commitment Ryan's family made to his recovery.

"His family was very easy to get close to and having Patti (Ryan's mother) in sessions every day made getting to know Ryan easier, especially when he couldn't communicate at first," Amy says. "They were open and honest and positive, but also realistic in Ryan's journey."



Ryan and On With Life staff celebrate on his Inpatient graduation day

## Seeing the Signs

But even with the tall task of helping Ryan get back to living life on his own terms, Amy says she saw signs early in his care that made her confident he was going to leave On With Life in much better shape than he arrived.

"When Ryan started following commands for movement and writing for

communication I knew he was going to make great progress," Amy says. "Once he was able to communicate, his sassy personality, sense of humor, and zest for life was evident. This made working with him each day a blessing. It also aided Ryan in his progress and helped him get to where he is today."

Ryan also recalls a milestone in his recovery. One that many would dismiss as minor.

"My most memorable thing at On With Life was the excitement I had when I was able to move my left leg for the first time," he says. "It was a team effort to get me back to doing everyday tasks again." Ryan's mom, Patti Jansa, was an important part of that team effort. "Ryan came to me and said 'Whatever it takes, I want to fight for my life back,' and we all supported that every step of the way" Patti says. "The On With Life staff gave him the tools and confidence to know he could accomplish anything - they helped him realize he had a life to fight for."

## Focused on the Future

Amy says there are no sure things when it comes to traumatic brain injuries, but that she saw something special in Ryan.

"Every brain injury is different, and Ryan is certainly unique in the fact that he recovered well both physically and cognitively," she says. "I still see him working hard every week in Outpatient to continue his rehabilitation which further proves his determination to succeed."

"I can't thank everyone involved in my therapy, the staff and my family, enough for all they did to help me get on with my life," Ryan says, choosing not to dwell on that fateful night in the spring of 2016 but instead to look forward to what life offers him moving forward.

"It has really given me a new purpose in life," he continues, "and I am grateful for the life that I now have."



Ryan and his mom, Patti, during an Outpatient session

# people making a **DIFFERENCE**



**Walnut Creek Church  
volunteers**

## **Walnut Creek Church**

Instead of celebrating a long three-day weekend with a party, a group from Walnut Creek Church in Des Moines has spent the last five years giving up their Memorial Day weekend to volunteer at On With Life. It's part of their Mission to the City program, where members of the church set aside their busy

schedules for a week and serving Greater Des Moines with thousands of hours of community service.

"Mission to the City is a concentrated effort to serve our community through many different facets. We aim to introduce our people to all the different needs of the community around us with a hope to cultivate a heart to serve and bless," said Shaly Moyal, Administrator and Conference and

Events Coordinator at Walnut Creek Church. "We chose On With Life because Alison Whitaker, a speech language pathologist at On With Life, suggested it. We aim to serve in places where our people are already connected, getting to love those with whom they interact."

Mission to the City has been instrumental in helping with various landscaping and exterior projects at On With Life.

"The group has watched On With Life grow and expand over the past five years in the same way we've watched their group grow and expand with marriages and children," said On With Life's environmental planner, Cindy Friedrichsen. "They are an amazing group doing amazing things in their community."

*Interested in volunteering? Visit [onwithlife.org](http://onwithlife.org) and complete our volunteer inquiry form.*



## David Zielke, Board Member

As CFO of The Iowa Clinic, David Zielke recognizes and appreciates the importance of small, independent healthcare organizations like On With Life. He joined the On With Life, Inc. Board of Directors in 2011, and On With Life has grown and expanded under his strategic planning expertise.



David Zielke

### What drew you to the On With Life mission?

The organization draws you in, and you very quickly feel a part of it. This isn't just volunteering for a community organization – this is something different, unique and special that's led by the servant leadership of the staff. Their compassion and dedication to the individuals they serve are inspiring.

### What inspires you to continue serving on the Board of Directors?

I enjoy special projects that make a difference. I like change and looking at how we can take an impossible challenge and making something good. This is a fascinating challenge for me, as we look at how we can best provide for the future. On With Life will thrive with its commitment to innovation, growth and change.

### What are your goals for On With Life?

On With Life is uniquely situated across the country with its expertise in brain injury. People will travel wherever they are going to receive the best care, and that's On With Life. On With Life deserves a much grander reputation beyond Central Iowa, and we're poised to do it. I'm really excited about the future of On With Life.

## First United Methodist Church

What started as an opportunity for first-time runners to train for a 5k together has turned in to an annual race that benefits On With Life's programs and services. The First United Methodist Church in Ankeny holds Miles for Miracles, an annual 5K race that welcomes runners of all abilities to complete and give back to a local non-profit.

"We chose On With Life because a member of our church was served at On With Life. Her recovery was truly a miracle," said Marcie Mulford, ministry support specialist and education assistant. "We witnessed first-hand the great work being done by On With Life, and it inspired us to give back."

While the race is open to anyone in the community, including seasoned runners, Marcie says her favorite part is watching first-time runners complete their first 5k.

"The first year we chose On With Life as our recipient, we invited persons served to participate in the race. One woman was so determined to finish the race; she kept going even in the pouring rain, but she finished the race," said Marcie. "As I cheered her on at the finish line, I felt so proud and joyful to be a part of her victory."

*Learn more about the 2018 race on October 7 by visiting [www.ankenfirst.org](http://www.ankenfirst.org).*



Lori, past person served, and therapist Sarah Becker during a previous Miles for Miracles event.

## GET TO KNOW

### Janice Plew

Rehabilitation Clinical Liaison



Janice and husband, Kevin

#### Experience:

Registered Nurse with experience in Post-Anesthesia Care, Telephone Triage, Physical Medicine and Rehab/Orthopedics, Clinic Management, and Home Care. Rehabilitation Clinical Liaison at On With Life for one and a half years.

#### Education:

Associates Degree in Nursing, Des Moines Area Community College, Certified Brain Injury Specialist

#### Family:

My husband, Kevin, and I live in Ankeny with our American Staffordshire Terrier, Nassir.

#### Three Interesting Facts:

- I grew up on a small farm in Monroe, Iowa.
- I decided in the second grade that I was going to be a nurse.
- I like to read, craft, and ride my motorcycle.

Q+A



Janice Plew  
RN, CBIS

*Selecting a rehabilitation program following a stroke or traumatic brain injury can be a very hard decision. Taking some time to understand options is an important part of the process for any family. There are various settings that offer programs for inpatient rehabilitation. Janice Plew, On With Life's Rehabilitation Clinical Liaison, discusses the various rehabilitation levels of care, including the unique level offered at On With Life.*

#### What are the different levels of care provided in rehabilitation facilities?

**A:** There are three common levels of care for those individuals needing rehabilitation including acute rehabilitation (often in a hospital setting); long-term acute care (often in a hospital setting); and skilled nursing facilities (often outside of a hospital setting). The major differences between these settings includes the amount of therapy received, the level of medical needs of those served, the frequency of physician visits, nursing hours per person served, areas of specialty expertise and length of stay.

#### Q: What is the rehabilitation level of care provided by On With Life?

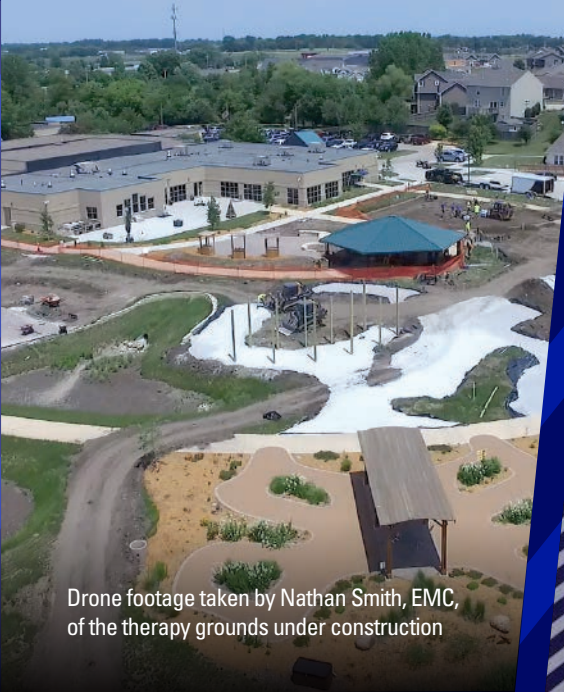
**A:** On With Life is a particularly unique program as we are a hybrid of the traditional levels of rehabilitation and our sole focus is brain injury (such as stroke, traumatic brain injury, tumor or aneurysm). We provide 3-5 hours of therapy a day in our intensive inpatient rehabilitation program, similar to a hospital-based acute rehabilitation program. Our physicians and rehabilitation nursing

services can manage medically complex cases, similar to a long-term acute care hospital. We are located outside of a hospital with longer lengths of stay, similar to skilled nursing facilities.

#### Q: What is CARF accreditation and why is it important in selecting a rehabilitation program?

**A:** CARF is the acronym for the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. It is an international, independent, non-profit organization that provides accreditation services worldwide. Programs that receive accreditation meet rigorous quality standards and have demonstrated their commitment to being among the best rehabilitation facilities available. Most rehabilitation facilities have a general CARF accreditation for rehabilitation. Because of On With Life's uniqueness, we are the only freestanding program in the world that has earned accreditation by CARF as a "Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation Program in Brain Injury for Adults and Children."





Drone footage taken by Nathan Smith, EMC, of the therapy grounds under construction



PLEASE PARDON OUR PROGRESS...

as we create a one-of-a-kind therapy grounds space for our persons served and their families! Thank you!

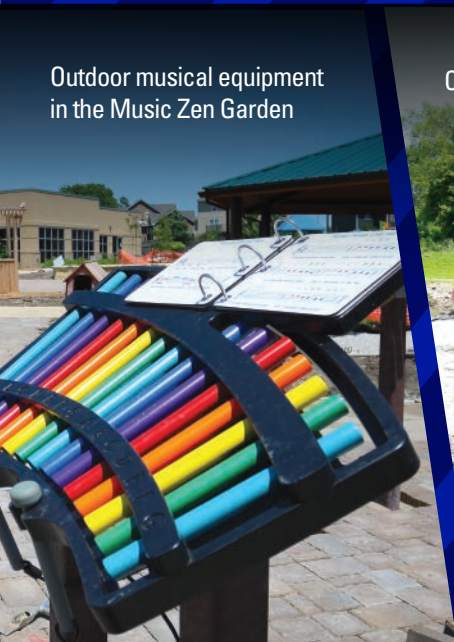


Now completed - the all-inclusive playground and obstacle course

# GROUNDS EXTRAORDINAIRE

On With Life's Ankeny campus is currently undergoing a 1.5-acre grounds expansion project that will create one of the largest dedicated outdoor therapeutic spaces in the United States.

The project was made possible by generous donations to our On With Life Foundation and includes an all-inclusive playground, enabling garden, 32-foot pavilion, amphitheater, basketball court, music zen garden, putting green, butterfly garden, agricultural exploration area, maze area and obstacle course. Much of the space will be completed by the fall of 2018.



Outdoor musical equipment in the Music Zen Garden



Country Landscapes crew, our landscape partner on the grounds project



Basketball court inlay within the amphitheater area



## Supportive Community Living

On With Life's Supported Community Living (SCL) program was created to provide specialized support to allow persons who have experienced a brain injury or other neurological impairment to maintain and improve their independence. Our community living specialists collaborate with the person served, his or her family, support system and case managers to develop a coordinated plan focused on maximizing personal skills.

### ADAM SANDLIN



A self-proclaimed Internet junkie and comic book fan, Adam Sandlin lights up a room with his good sense of humor. When he's not searching for his next adventure, he likes to spend his time visiting with friends and crafting through the Workspace at Iowa State University and the Society for Creative Anachronism. It's safe to say that Adam's creativity knows no bounds – he once sculpted a ceramic zombie gnome for a member of his support staff!

With the help of the Supportive Community Living program, he has gained the confidence to socialize throughout the community. "I'm not as shy as I used to be," Adam said. "Now I answer questions before my staff does. They help keep me organized, and they help me get out more." Steve, a member of his support staff, immediately agreed. "He can make friends wherever he goes."

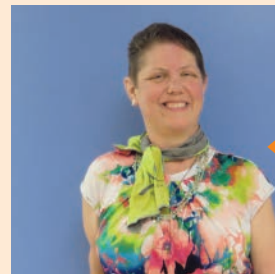
### ANNE MARKHAM



Whether it be on social media or in person, Anne Markham loves connecting with others and sharing her story. A cancer survivor and advocate for those with disabilities, she finds joy in several hobbies, such as reading, photography, modeling, fashion and spending time with her nieces and nephews. Anne uses social media to share snippets of her life with others. Her team in the Supportive Community Living program even helped her start her own blog, "Living the Post-It Life," as a way for her to write about her journey.

Anne's love for On With Life shows – literally. As part of a budgeting project, her staff helped her pick out a blue and white ring to show her appreciation for a program that has given her so much. "On With Life makes everything easier," Anne said. "I know that I'm going to be taken care of, and I love that this organization feels like a family. No matter what program you're in here, you're going to have some of the best of the best. Everyone is there for you no matter what."

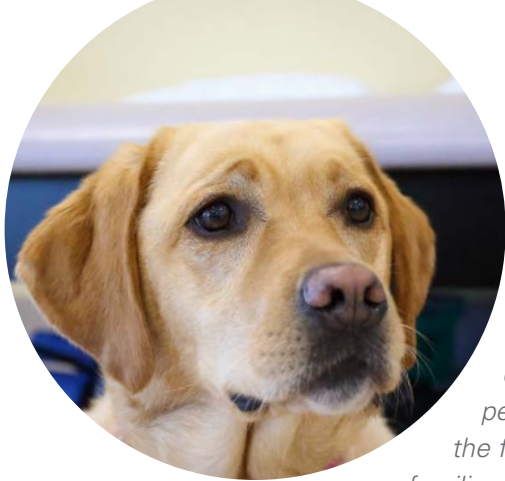
### RHONDI MACHIN



No matter the occasion, Rhondi Machin has a smile on her face. Her passion for getting out into the community shows – it seems that Rhondi knows everyone, and everyone knows Rhondi. The Supportive Community Living program helps her lead an exciting life doing the things she loves: dancing, water aerobics and her job at Skiff Medical Center, where she has been employed as a housekeeper for more than 25 years.

Rhondi credits the Supportive Community Living program for giving her and others the freedom to enjoy new experiences, like encouraging her to take a trip to Hawaii and compete in the Special Olympic State Games. "When somebody is there for you, you can do anything," said Rhondi. "People served here at On With Life can do anything they set their mind to."





*When On With Life's four-legged employee, Lolo, walks into a room, she instantly lights the place up. Her energetic and curious personality puts smiles on the faces of persons served, families and staff.*

"You can't help but lighten up when you see Lolo," says Jillian Jones, physical therapist and one of Lolo's handlers. "She brings happiness to the people she meets."

Lolo came to On With Life in 2014 with the help of the Iowa Association for Justice. She works with persons served in both inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, making therapy functional for each individual – a major goal for the therapists at On With Life.

"If someone has sustained a brain injury, it can be hard for them to understand how a simple and repetitive therapy task is helpful, so using Lolo makes more sense," says Jones. "When working with her, there's a purpose to what you are doing, because taking care of our dog is something that needs to get done."



## HOW DOES LOLO ASSIST WITH THERAPY AT ON WITH LIFE?

### SHE ENGAGES.

Jones recalls one person served who, thanks to Lolo, had a breakthrough in mobility. "He would make a repetitive movement with his left arm that we couldn't get him to break from," she says. "The first time he engaged that arm differently was when he threw a ball to Lolo."

### SHE MOTIVATES.

Lolo can give persons served a reason to work toward challenging goals. "We were working with someone who was unable to use their voice to speak and he wasn't motivated to use an eye-gaze system to communicate, but once we programmed the computer to give commands to Lolo, he was excited to use the system and interact with her," says Jones.

### SHE COMFORTS.

For persons served who experience pain during therapy, Lolo can be a great distraction. "I remember one person served who struggled with stretching," says Travis Rasmussen, a certified occupational therapist assistant at On With Life. "When we would put Lolo at his side, she would instantly calm him down and allow us to work harder with him."

### SHE TEACHES.

When preparing to return home, pet care is a priority for many. Lolo helps them practice activities like taking a dog on a walk. "When people walk with her, it makes therapy more dynamic and unpredictable because she wanders whichever way she wants," says Rasmussen.

To learn more about Lolo and her role at On With Life, visit [onwithlife.org/Lolo](http://onwithlife.org/Lolo)



## a note from our development specialist

I am continually honored to meet and learn more about each of our supporters. It is no secret that On With Life is special, and if you or a loved one has been served by On With Life, you especially know this to be true. We are grateful every day that you have chosen to give back and “pay it forward” to current and future persons served. You see the need, and you want to help. I look forward to continuing to meet those who have been personally impacted and those who simply want to make a difference for those we serve. As we continue to grow and serve more and more individuals, it will take support from all of us together to make our vision a reality.

I would welcome the opportunity to connect with you about how your individual passions might align with On With Life’s fundraising initiatives. I can be reached at **(515) 289-9611** or **sara.wilson@onwithlife.org**.

*Sara Wilson*

Sara Wilson, *Development Specialist*

The **On With Life Foundation** launched an annual fund in 2017 with contributions providing unrestricted dollars to ensure our persons served have the equipment and environment necessary to succeed. We appreciate your consideration in support of our mission!!



**52%** EMPLOYEES DONATE TO THE ANNUAL FUND

**395**

# of Total Donors  
as of 6/30/18

**GOAL!**  
to reach 750  
total donors

**53%**  
as of 6/30/18

Make a difference, and  
help us reach our goal!  
[onwithlife.org/donate](http://onwithlife.org/donate)



While each gift to the **Annual Fund** is appreciated, individual donors who contribute \$1,000 or more will receive membership into the **Circle of Life Society**, which includes special recognition and benefits.

**30**

Circle of Life  
Members

60% to 2018 goal

## On With Life appreciates:

- **Polk County** which provided a \$100,000 community development grant in support of the therapeutic grounds project.
- **Telligen Community Initiative** which awarded On With Life a \$50,000 grant to create a complex concussion clinic.
- The **Grzybowski, Keller and Nemmers families** who contributed to the Music Zen Garden.
- The **Robert Michael Greenwood family** who donated to On With Life in support of the Outpatient program and Family Guest House.
- **Love Family Affiliated Fund** which made a \$2,000 donation to support the Long-Term Skilled Care program upon opening a new store in Glenwood.
- The **Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines** which supported On With Life with a \$3,500 capacity building grant to conduct long-term strategic visioning.
- **PMMIC Insurance** which gifted \$10,000 to the On With Life Foundation in honor of On With Life Board Member Eli Wirtz’s service on the PMMIC Insurance board.
- The **Chris Norton Foundation** which granted \$15,000 to On With Life to help purchase an interactive integrated therapy system.
- All volunteers who give an average 15-20 volunteer hours each month. Congrats to Janelle Conley for reaching 1,000 total volunteer hours!



PLEASE JOIN US FOR ON WITH LIFE'S  
FOURTH ANNUAL FUNDRAISING AND RECOGNITION EVENT,

CELEBRATE  LIFE  
**JOIN THE  
Journey**

Funds raised through Celebrate Life will enhance On With Life now and into the future through unrestricted support of innovative program development, specialized therapy equipment and healing environments.

Individuals and businesses are invited to help make Celebrate Life a success by sponsoring the event and/or joining On With Life for the evening! It will be a true celebration and an evening full of food, fun and powerful stories.

**Friday, September 28 | 6:00 PM**

FFA Enrichment Center, Ankeny

[Onwithlife.org/celebratelife](http://onwithlife.org/celebratelife)

**Charlene and Don  
Lamberti**  
honorary co-chairs



**Therapy demonstration  
stations, brief awards  
program, meaningful  
video, live auction**

Sponsorships  
**start at \$300**

Individual tickets  
**\$100**



## Sips. Sounds. Support.

On With Life is excited to announce our first fundraising event in Glenwood on

**Thursday, October 18**

Join us at Vine Street Cellars for wine and music by Donnie Duysen while we celebrate the importance of music in working with our persons served.

Proceeds from this event will go toward the purchase of outdoor musical equipment for the Long-Term program's OWL's Nest sensory garden.

**Tickets are \$20/each** and more details can be found online at [onwithlife.org/sips](http://onwithlife.org/sips).

# philanthropy IN ACTION

## Dee, Gary and Katy Lynk

Nearly ten years ago, the Lynk family changed forever when on December 16, 2008, Dee Lynk came upon an accident. She got out of her vehicle thinking she would help whoever was involved. It turned out to be her daughter, Katy.

Katy, then 26, sustained major trauma which resulted in a significant brain injury. Gary, Dee's husband and Katy's dad, recalls how she was hooked up to anything and everything. Their doctor recommended sending her to On With Life.

"We had never heard of it," said Dee. "We were scared to death, but our doctor said, 'if this was my daughter, I would take her to On With Life.'"

Katy was transferred to On With Life five weeks after her accident, still in a coma. She woke up at the end of March and ultimately was served in On With Life's Inpatient program for five months before coming home with her parents to their Marshalltown home in July 2009.

One of the things the Lynks remember is Katy was one of a group of five between the ages of 16-26 all being served at On With Life at the time.

"They all five came in a coma, and they all walked out the door," Gary said. "It was amazing to have them all there

together, fighting to get their life back."

Since Katy's stay, Dee and Gary have made annual contributions to the On With Life Foundation.

"We continue to give in appreciation for what On With Life has done for Katy," said Gary. "She would not be near as far along as she is without On With Life – it's set the foundation for everything she has been able to accomplish. Plus, we want to help some way in paying it forward for families like ours."

Dee continued, "We go to the reunions and we walk the halls. We see family members and we think, 'we were there and we know what it's like.'"

Because of their deep appreciation for On With Life and their desire to ensure the programs exist for those in the future, the Lynks have dedicated a percent of their trust to be transferred to On With Life.

"Our future gift will help sustain a program we care deeply about," Dee said. "We want to make an ongoing gift, even after we are gone."

*If you would like to visit with staff regarding a current or future planned gift for On With Life, please contact **515-289-9611** or [foundation@onwithlife.org](mailto:foundation@onwithlife.org).*



Gary, Katy and Dee Lynk



## Cyn Ewald

In the late 1980s, Cyn Ewald was a leader of her daughter's Girl Scout troop and participated in a rock-a-thon event to benefit On With Life. The event was created by Becky Collins, a senior in high school at the time, in memory of a friend who was killed in a car accident and in honor of another friend who survived the same car accident. The rock-a-thon took place before the initial On With Life facility even existed. Little did Cyn know that On With Life would later become a more permanent part of her life.

"It was rewarding to be a part of a good cause before the doors were even open," Cyn said. "Later, after the building opened, the Girl Scouts would come help with various holidays and we all felt proud to be a part of an organization doing great things for people in need."

Years later, Cyn's involvement with On With Life grew when she joined the accounting team in the summer of 2000. Today, Cyn has been a valuable On With

Life employee for 18 years. In addition to giving her time and talents to the organization, Cyn and her husband, Steven, are generous supporters of the On With Life Foundation as well.

"We see miracles every day at On With Life," said Cyn. "It takes a lot of time and dedication on part of the persons served and an enormous amount of nursing and therapy hours, one-on-one, to make those miracles happen."

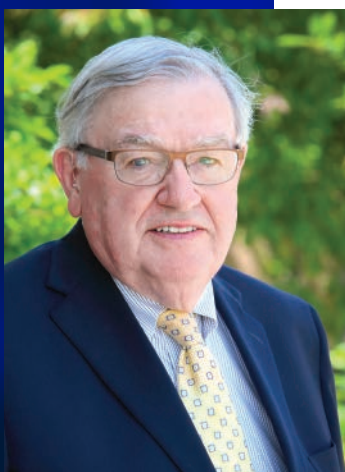
Both Cyn and Steven support this work because they know the donations provide the resources needed to make On With Life a one-of-a-kind organization.

"We all should care," said Cyn. "Everybody out there has or will have a connection to someone who has had a brain injury."



Cyn Ewald

## W.T. and Edna M. Dahl Trust



Dahl Trustee Paul Tyler

W.T. and Edna M. Dahl made a commitment years ago to be benefactors in support of nonprofit projects in Central Iowa, and On With Life is grateful to be included as a beneficiary today. The W.T. and Edna M. Dahl Trust generously donated \$100,000 to construct an amphitheater as part of On With Life's developing therapeutic grounds project.

The accessible amphitheater area will be a spot where survivors and families can enjoy several outdoor activities. It will offer therapists the ability to conduct group therapy sessions; it will host educational seminars, family gatherings and special events; it will be an area for therapeutic basketball, tennis and kickball activities with a moveable basketball hoop and rebound wall.

Trustees Jerry Jones and Paul Tyler had been familiar with On With Life prior to the grant request and believe the Dahls would be supportive of the project.

"We think the outdoor therapy project is a needed service, and we are pleased to be able to lend our support," said Paul. "We are certain that Edna and W.T. would be proud to be a part of the On With Life endeavors."

Although the Dahl Trust has been in existence since 1987, it was initially a charitable remainder trust and did not become a private foundation until Edna's death in 2007. Since first awarding charitable grants in 2008, it has funded approximately 150 grants totaling about \$8.7 million in the aggregate. Funding has included a wide range of projects in the Greater Des Moines area including numerous capital improvements and program funding, as well as grants to elementary and secondary schools for a variety of needs and to numerous providers of food, mental healthcare and shelter.



715 SW Ankeny Road | Ankeny, Iowa 50023

Joining hands, hearts and minds to help persons living with brain injury get **On With Life**.

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18TH ANNUAL • ON WITH LIFE

# BRAIN INJURY REHABILITATION FALL CONFERENCE

SEPT  
14

2018

FFA Enrichment Center  
DMACC Campus  
Ankeny, Iowa

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER :

Brent E. Masel, MD – “Moving the Field: Re-Conceptualizing Brain Injury as a Disease”

Intended for healthcare providers, the On With Life Fall Conference brings together experts from around the U.S. to discuss recent trends in the field of brain injury. Topics will include the psychosocial impacts of concussions, the impact of cognition on physical function, the psychological impact of trauma, leadership and professionalism, neuro-visual rehabilitation and a case study.

## COST:

**\$75** Early bird registration by August 24. **\$85** after August 24. Other CEU fees may apply

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
AND TO REGISTER, VISIT:

[onwithlife.org/conference](http://onwithlife.org/conference)