

ON WITH LIFE, INC.

headway magazine

715 SW Ankeny Road Ankeny, IA 50023 1-800-728-0645 headway@onwithlife.org ONWITHLIFE.ORG

ABOUT THE COVER:

On With Life Physical Therapist Logan Wallace aids Mackenzie Nash as she works towards her goal of walking again after a spinal cord injury.

Photos by Images by Brice

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Letter from the CEO

A GROWING MOVEMENT OF CHANGE

On With Life's commitment to our community goes well beyond our many employees who volunteer throughout the area. We work to normalize the idea that not everyone has to be alike. Our concept of community leadership includes bringing forward the voice of those who cannot speak, showing the way for those who struggle to move forward and accepting ourselves for who we are.

Disability can be interpreted as 'not-normal' but one's abilities should be able to stand on their own without comparison. Critical review of these words is part of a growing movement to change community perspective and 'other-abled' is an example of a word brought forward to replace 'disability.'

This concept is important to our neuro-population, especially in light of how one's community accepts and interacts with other-abled individuals. Studies suggest that over 80% of the brain injury population reports significant negative change in their social status and social interaction. Let's change this by creating a welcoming community that recognizes the value of each individual's unique contributions. Let's take the 'dis' out of disability.

Jean Shelton - CEO

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Persons served, along with their families, were able to trial several video games and adaptive equipment during On With Life's first adaptive game night in November 2022 in partnership with Eastern Seals. Due to popular interest, similar events will be planned for 2023. Watch On With Life's Facebook page for upcoming dates!

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

On With Life added six new members to the Board of Directors in the fall of 2022.



DR. ERIN BARNES ON WITH LIFE, INC.

Clinical Associate Professor and Department of Counselor Education University of Iowa



LUISITA DONA MCBURNEY ON WITH LIFE, INC.

Senior Compliance Officer State of Iowa, Iowa Public **Employees Retirement System**



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Owner Taylor REPC



BRETT FISHER ON WITH LIFE, INC.

Head of Investment Product Strategy Principal



KIM BUTLER HEGEDUS ON WITH LIFE FOUNDATION

Executive Vice President Chief Lending Officer Community State Bank



PAULA NAMED **FORTY UNDER 40** HONOREE

Paula Duve, physical therapist and clinical team lead at On With Life's outpatient clinic in

Coralville, was selected as one of the Corridor Business Journal's Forty Under 40 award honorees in 2022. This award recognizes young professionals who have made a significant impact in their organizations and community. Congratulations, Paula!



WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

On With Life's website is now fully accessible! When using the site, you can

select the accessibility icon in the bottom lefthand corner of the page to access various adjustments to enhance your experience while exploring On With Life's website. Accessibility options include light/dark contrasts, a screen reader, keyboard navigation and more.

Try out these features at **ONWITHLIFE.ORG**

RECREATIONAL HERAPY

Recreational therapy may simply look like a variety of fun activities, but On With Life's recreational therapists and therapeutic activity specialists are strategic about how recreational activities can be utilized as therapy, from simple movements to



On With Life's inpatient recreational therapy team hosted a "RAGBRAI" event where persons served were able to track miles in a variety of ways including biking, walking and hand pedaling.

Persons served from both On With Life's inpatient and long-term programs partipated in outings to the 2022 Iowa State Fair.

Long-term staff members and persons served worked together to create and show off a fun float using their new bike for the Glenwood homecoming parade.

Recreational therapy often teams up with other disciplines for functional therapeutic activities, such as cardio group.

Hobby fairs are a biannual event at On With Life where therapists work with persons served on displays that express their interests to share with fellow persons served and staff members.

The long-term team engaged persons served last summer by creating a unique slip and slide experience for them.



BRIAN

SCHNOOR



I love to see someone's face light up when they find a wood burning they like.



To learn more about On With Life's brain injury program ONWITHLIFE.ORG/TBI

Thriving Through Woodworking

SUPPORTED COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM

Admit date: Spring 2017 | Discharge: Current

fter a brain injury, Brian Schnoor had tried several **1** Supported Community Living (SCL) programs in the Des Moines area before finding a good fit with On With Life. He appreciates how the services are catered to his wants and needs and has found good friends with the SCL specialists he works with. Plus, over the past couple of years, he has enjoyed sharing one of his special talents with the On With Life community.

Brian had always enjoyed woodshop classes throughout high school and with the help of his parents, was able to continue this passion while living with them. When moving into his own apartment, however, he did not have the space for the tools needed to continue. Rather, he found himself carving designs into sticks and transforming wooden thread spools into mini totem poles.

Upon moving into a home with a garage and a basement, Brian was able to store the proper tools and equipment

> to continue bigger projects. He taught himself how to trace, hand carve and burn designs into various pieces of wood and began producing dozens of carvings and wood burnings in 2022.

"My woodworking reminds me of my Grandpa Schnoor," said Brian. "He was

a big woodworker and built his own house. He loved the small table I made him in high school and I think he would be proud to see what I can do now."

While he can't share his current work with his Grandpa, he has found joy in sharing with staff members and fellow persons served at On With Life. At the 2022 Annual Reunion, several attendees could be seen walking around with Brian's creations.

"I love to see someone's face light up when they find a wood burning they like," said Brian. +

A New, New Normal

OUTPATIENT NEURO REHABILITATION

Admit: June 2022 | Discharge: July 2022

🏲 his is your new normal."

These are the dreaded words that Elizabeth Huey heard from multiple doctors for years after a car accident that resulted in two brain bleeds. After the accident in September 2017, Elizabeth wasn't able to walk, fully communicate, care for herself or play with her kids. She was unable to continue her job in the Iowa National Guard and was losing hope quickly.

"Many doctors prescribed me with medication after medication and told me this was my new normal, but my husband and I couldn't mentally accept that as the final answer," said Elizabeth. "Finally, one doctor requested therapy at On With Life."

It was almost five years after the accident when Elizabeth first came to On With Life's outpatient clinic in Ankeny. While slightly skeptical at first, she quickly gained confidence and motivation. In just the first few weeks of therapy she was able to

ELIZABETH



leave her wheelchair behind and find a solution to her numerous vision issues. From

there she moved onto reading techniques, time management, and even some National Guard worthy workouts. This variety of therapy and progress had Elizabeth feeling the best she had felt in years.

"Imagine going from being bound to a wheelchair to having your life back. This would not have been possible without the people at On With Life," said Elizabeth.

Elizabeth graduated from the outpatient program in just under two months with the new normal she had hoped for. She is now walking and talking confidently, enjoying time outdoors with her children, and striving to be the best mother and wife she can be. +

An Opportunity for Change



Admit: April 2022 | Discharge: August 2022

RESIDENTIAL NEURO REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Admit: August 2022 | Discharge: January 2023

OUTPATIENT NEURO REHABILITATION

Admit: September 2022 | Discharge: Present

en Weigel had just been diagnosed **D** with Guillain-Barré syndrome two months prior to being admitted to On With Life's inpatient program and when he arrived, he couldn't move his hands or feet without being in pain. Simply standing was a challenge for Ben due to his new diagnosis but through time in several of On With Life's programs, he was able to regain use of his hands and feet and work his way back to independent living.

"Therapy has been crucial to getting my life back," said Ben. "From standing to cooking, On With Life has helped me in every aspect."

Included in Ben's several goals was returning to work; however, rather than returning to his previous role working in

POST-ACUTE INPATIENT REHABILITATION compliance, he worked with his outpatient therapy team to explore other career paths. Ben had received his degree in marketing from Iowa State University but had never held a marketing position. He thought if he could relearn to walk, why couldn't he learn a new career as well?

> "I really love the idea of working in marketing because I love finding creative and innovative ways to reach out to others," said Ben.

> Ben was able to connect with On With Life's marketing team and take on a few projects that would help him develop a marketing portfolio. During his time as a resident in On With Life's Residential Neuro program, Ben helped collect photo and video content to be used on social media, and helped organize and promote a "can-struction" drive for On With Life staff as a way to celebrate the halfway point of the new outpatient center build. With Ben's help On With Life was able to collect over 100 cans for a local food bank. +



WEIGEL



To learn more about On With Life's complex neuro program, visit ONWITHLIFE.ORG/COMPLEXNEURO

People Making a Difference



oming up on her year as Worthy Grand Matron of the Order of the Eastern Star's Iowa Chapter, Cheryl Payne knew she needed to come up with an idea for a fundraising project. She had a few ideas, but wasn't settled on anything until she heard Gail McGaughy, an On With Life outpatient physical therapist, on WHO radio talking about On With Life's Parkinson's Disease program.

And that was it. Cheryl knew this was the route she wanted to take with the project. Cheryl had become passionate about Parkinson's after her father was diagnosed and she became his caregiver. She had experienced the disease up close and personal so upon hearing Gail's interview, she pulled over and began taking notes about On With Life. She brought the idea to the Worthy Grand Patron, John Whitatker, who had also experienced Parkinson's within his family, and the two of them moved forward with contacting and visiting On With Life.

"We decided we wanted to educate people, let them know that On With Life is there, ready and willing to help," said Cheryl. "We just knew we had to let the world know about this wonderful facility, the staff and the work they do."

They spent a year traveling to chapters throughout Iowa to talk about their goal and held multiple fundraising events from bake sales to a very successful golf outing that On With Life staff were able to participate in. In October 2022, the group presented On With Life with a check of

More than \$47,000 at their Grand Chapter Session, all to be used toward future Parkinson's programming.

"The generosity of our members is just so overwhelming - the Eastern Star hasn't raised that much money in years," said Cheryl. "So many people had a loved one, neighbor or friend with Parkinson's and shared my passion of making a difference in the lives of those who are suffering from the disease and those who care for them." +

 ${f F}$ or Mike Burke, the perfect volunteer opportunity meant being able to indulge in his love of yard work. He had been able to do so while living in North Central Iowa by tending to flower beds and weeding at a local

church, and he was searching for a new opportunity upon his move to Polk City.



MIKE BURKE

Fortunately, his daughter-in-law,

Jennifer Burke, is a speech-language pathologist at On With Life and was able to connect Mike with the right people.

Since May 2022, Mike has worked with the On With Life facilities team by tending to the therapy grounds. He comes in once or twice a week to lay mulch, trim bushes, weed, etc.

"I enjoy outdoor work and I feel grateful that On With Life allows me to fulfill that need of mine," said Mike.

This past fall, Mike was one of four On With Life volunteers to receive the Hometown Hero award, an award created by Modern Woodmen of America to recognize and appreciate the individuals who dedicate their time and talents to the organizations of which they choose. On With Life awarded Mike because of the impact his volunteering has on both staff and persons served.

"I know the persons served at On With Life enjoy the gardens, and it is rewarding to know that I play a part in keeping the grounds in shape for them," said Mike.

On With Life is excited to officially welcome back volunteers! For more information, please visit onwithlife.org/volunteer. +

eb Lee was interested in joining the board of an organization that had a strong reputation, was located in his community and could benefit from his background in healthcare



administration. Now, the 22-year resident of Ankeny and executive director of clinical operations and payor strategy/compliance officer of McFarland Clinic is serving as board chair for the On With Life Board of Directors.

WHAT MAKES **ON WITH LIFE SO SPECIAL AND UNIQUE?**

It is hard to put into words what makes On With Life so special, but there IS something very special about this organization. I see it when I attend meetings. I see it when person served stories are shared at Celebrate Life or on social media. I see it when staff members talk about what they do. Our staff are passionate about their work, they take pride in what they do, and they put persons served first every day. Seeing all of this makes me proud to be associated with On With Life and inspires me to continue supporting the organization and its mission.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE A **BOARD DIRECTOR?**

I recognize that persons served are not choosing to receive care at On With Life because of me or other board members. They choose On With Life because of the amazing staff members and volunteers throughout the organization. As a board member, my role is to ensure On With Life remains a strong organization, both clinically and financially, so that we can continue to be the provider of choice in brain injury rehabilitation for years to come. +



the Need Comr

Mackenzie Nash is getting amongst the planning and comes a major goal that s a year: a goal of walking of

On August 5, 2021, Mackenzie sustained a T12 spinal cord injury from a zip lining accident, severely impacting the use of her legs. Following surgery and an inpatient stay at a hospital in Nebraska, Mackenzie was referred to On With Life for outpatient therapy in September 2021.

In stride with On With Life's aim of meeting the needs of the community, the team came together to support Mackenzie and her primary goal of relearning to walk. Mackenzie says she felt confident that she was in good hands from the very beginning. In her initial evaluation Mackenzie was already mapping out her goals and defining barriers that could affect her progress with her therapy team.

married on October 21, 2023, and l anticipation of this exciting day he has been working towards for over lown the aisle with no assistance.

> "From day one I felt like my high-frequency, determined mindset was completely reciprocated by each and every one of the staff who have worked with me," said Mackenzie. "I've never felt like just another person served; every person I've worked with has been invested in me during my sessions."

And through these sessions, Mackenzie and her therapists were able to grow together. Between working with organizations such as American Prosthetics and Orthotics and using equipment at On With Life, the team was able to help Mackenzie make progress, especially with standing and walking.

When she first started at On With Life, Mackenzie required the use of a standing frame that fully supported her spine and allowed her to stand and stretch. It was six months before she was able to take that first step towards walking, acquiring a pair of KAFOs (knee, ankle, foot orthotics) that allowed her to walk with the assistance of a front-wheeled walker. It took awhile for her to gain confidence with the equipment, utilizing On With Life's overhead gait track to do so, but was eventually able to stand up and walk at home with assistance nearby.

Right: Mackenzie used a standing frame for support during her first several months of therapy at On With Life. Left: Logan supports Mackenzie as she works on taking a lap around the therapy grounds with her KAFOs and walker.

> Now, Mackenzie is working in therapy to transition from the walker to forearm crutches, getting her another step closer towards her wedding-day goal. Between her progress and determination, it's hard to believe doctors once said there was a slim chance Mackenzie would ever walk again.

> "I've brought close friends and family with me to physical therapy or have asked them to help me with standing and walking at home, and seeing their faces light up when I get up and walk is such an awesome feeling," said Mackenzie. "I can't count how many times people have told me that they are proud of me or that I have inspired them, and it means just as much as the first time I heard it."

> While relearning to walk has been at the forefront of Mackenzie's recovery journey, she had several other goals she aimed to meet through therapy, many of which she was able to accomplish early on. Since the accident Mackenzie has been able to return home, drive independently with the use of hand controls, and return to work as a registered nurse, now working for a cardiology office in a remote triage role. The progress she has made since her life-changing accident has been significant and impressive to all those who have worked with her.



Logan and Mackenzie prepare for another walking session using On With Life's overhead gait track.

"It has truly been a privilege to work with Mackenzie. She brings out the best in everyone around her and she pushes you to bring your 'A game' to every session," says On With Life physical therapist, Logan Wallace. "I appreciate that because I have grown both as a clinician and as a person. Mackenzie is a fighter and has never once given up on her goals. I am so excited to be a small piece of her journey."

It was Logan who asked Mackenzie what her goals were for her wedding as soon as Mackenzie got engaged. Once Mackenzie decided she wanted to be able to walk down the aisle without using her assistive equipment, Logan made sure she was constantly reminded of this goal, especially in times of struggle and frustration. This left an impact on Mackenzie, so much so that she asked Logan to be the one to walk her down the aisle on

her big day.

"My fiancé and I could not think of a better way to honor Logan and acknowledge the huge role she has played in our lives during this journey," said Mackenzie.

Between what was one of her hardest days and what will be one of her happiest has been a journey that while extremely challenging, has been rewarding for Mackenzie. She has defied odds and inspired many, and the sight of her walking down the aisle is sure to be an emotional one. As she continues to move forward, she hopes she can share her story to both educate and bring awareness to spinal cord injuries. +

Mackenzie shares her story with KCCI on the one year anniversary of her accident.

RAISING THE BAR

On With Life has identified the need for additional post-acute spinal cord injury (SCI) rehabilitation options in Iowa and in response has formed an SCI program development committee. This committee, led by **Spinal Cord Injury Coordinator Sam** Williams, has and will continue to enhance offerings in both inpatient and outpatient settings with the goal of becoming an accredited spinal cord injury specialty program.



Sam Williams

To learn more about On With Life's spinal cord injury program, including its goal to offer and enhance adaptive wellness programming options in Iowa, visit ONWITHLIFE.ORG/SCI.

PAYING IT forward

On With Life staff members are always putting people first at work, and several continue to do so outside of work as well! Here are a few ways On With Life staff give back in their communities.



I volunteer for Lasagna Love, a nonprofit organization that has volunteers make lasagna for people/families who need a meal. I chose this organization because I love to cook and this is the perfect opportunity to do what I love while also helping others.

LAURA CARLSON Medical Clinic Coordinator

C Every year my family and I work together around the holiday season to collect as many food items as possible - my son donated more than 300 items to the Mills County Storehouse this past year!

TAYLOR KLIMIUK

Rehabilitation Coordinator





I am a coach for Girls on the Run at Rolling Green Elementary school. Our team of 3rd-5th graders meet twice a week for practice where we focus on building self-esteem and other life skills through different activities and running. I enjoy coaching as I think it's so important for girls at this age to build confidence and learn how to navigate difficult situations.

KATIE GATHMAN Dietitian

Every year my husband and I throw a fundraising event - Macy's Miracle Christmas Party. The event collects gifts for Blank Children's Hospital and raises funds for both a family in need and a non-profit organization. We started this event once our daughter was in remission from her own cancer journey; it allows us to give back to Blank Children's Hospital and support other children/families.

ERIN MEYER Social Worker





I serve on the Board of Directors for the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Central Iowa Chapter. Philanthropy is for everyone, and my hope is to continue sharing the importance of time, talent and treasure contributed in various capacities across all communities through my role on the board.

RONNIE WELLS Development Coordinator

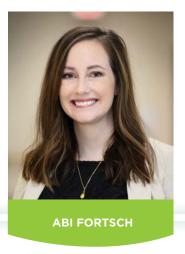
our expert

Get to Know

Abi Fortsch MA, CCC-SLP, CBIS







TITLE:

Speech-Language Pathologist and Certified Brain Injury Specialist

EXPERIENCE:

Five years at On With Life

EDUCATION:

University of Northern Iowa for both undergrad and graduate school

FAMILY:

My husband, Alex, and our two kids Charlotte (3) and Archer (1)

INTERESTING FACTS:

- + I love decluttering and organizing
- + My favorite music genres are hip hop and Christian
- + I enjoy thrifting



Aphasia, the loss of ability to understand or express speech, is a common side effect of a stroke, injury or disease affecting the left side of the brain. On With Life speech-language pathologists in both inpatient and outpatient programs work with individuals presenting with aphasia, and Abi Fortsch dives into what this looks like.

WHAT DOES AN **APHASIA DIAGNOSIS MEAN FOR A** PERSON?

Aphasia can present in both expressive language, meaning talking and writing, and receptive language, meaning understanding what a person hears or reads. Each area of language may vary in difficulty, and the level of severity looks different for every individual.

WHAT THERAPEUTIC **TECHNIQUES** ARE USED FOR **INDIVIDUALS WITH APHASIA?**

There are several therapeutic techniques used when working with individuals with aphasia, but some of the most commonly used at On With Life are melodic intonation therapy and semantic feature analysis. Melodic intonation therapy is used in collaboration with music therapy, and focuses on using music elements such as stress, melody and rhythm. We use specific cueing and singing to increase a person's expressive language.

Semantic feature analysis is a word finding treatment used to increase a person's ability to retrieve semantic features of a target word. For example, persons served are given a target word/picture, such as football, and generate properties of the word, such as sport, throw, kick or touchdown.

WHAT ARE SOME TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH SOMEONE WHO IS PRESENTING WITH APHASIA?

Talking slow, using short phrases, asking closeended or yes/no questions, and providing support through gestures and images can all be helpful when communicating with an individual with aphasia. Avoid talking louder than usual or speaking for them and filling in phrases. It is important to remember that their inability to verbally communicate does not mean they cannot understand you and if you need further resources, On With Life has plenty available that we are happy to share with you! +

LONG-TERM PROGRAM PREPARES FOR

ocation

TO POLK CITY

ince 1996, On With Life has Operated a Long-Term Skilled Care program in Glenwood, Iowa, which serves as home for 32 individuals who have experienced an acquired brain injury and require long-term services related to the complexity of their life-long care needs.

On With Life's Long-Term program is much different than many other Long-Term facilities in Iowa and even the nation. When the program first opened in the 1990's it was geared toward youth and younger adults who needed long-term care following an injury. Over the years the needs of the program and demographics served have changed (current age range of those served is between 23 and 69), but one thing has remained unchanged: the program's focus on the individual needs and goals of persons served.

Since opening, the Long-Term program has been located within a building on the State of Iowa run Glenwood Resource Center (GRC) campus. In early 2022, On With Life was made aware of the State of Iowa's plans to permanently close the GRC campus by the summer of 2024. This meant the future of On With Life's Long-Term program was suddenly unknown.

"When the State announced GRC's closure in April, we immediately pulled a work group together to

begin reviewing all options for our program," shared Jean Shelton, CEO at On With Life. "Our board was committed to maintaining this service as part of the On With Life continuum but the location of where this program could relocate was unknown."

Over the next few months, On With Life explored all possible options to determine the appropriate future location for the Long-Term program. In October 2022, On With Life made the decision to relocate the program to a recently closed nursing facility in Polk City, Iowa.

"The decision to relocate our Long-Term program to Polk City was not made lightly," shared Jean. "There were many factors and considerations that we had to take into account including the impact it would have on everyone involved, and of course the lives and needs of those we serve."

On With Life received approval from the State of Iowa Certificate of Need Facilities Council to relocate the Long-Term program from Glenwood to Polk City. On With Life was approved to relocate all 32 skilled licensed beds and add an additional eight for a total of 40 licensed beds at the new location. The facility in Polk City will undergo an extensive remodel in 2023 with a goal to be completed in early 2024. +







A NOTE FROM OUR **DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**



Throughout my seven years at On With Life, I have met and talked with some amazing friends and supporters of this life-changing not-for-profit organization. We are grateful to each of you for being a part of the On With Life community and helping to change the lives of individuals and families living with brain injury and other neurological conditions. Throughout the

past year, you have helped bring so many things to life: from supporting persons served and families to helping fund a much-needed construction project - thank you just doesn't seem like enough! Our cup is overflowing thanks to your thoughtfulness and generosity. And we know our persons served, families and staff members feel the same way! Together we have, and will continue, to raise the bar.

As we continue to partner with individuals and organizations who make a difference in our work, we look forward to doing more and more to help those living with brain injury and other neurological conditions. I would welcome the opportunity to connect with you in regard to how your individual passions might align with On With Life's fundraising initiatives.

(515) 289-9611 or sara.wilson@onwithlife.org

WELCOME, LIZ **BREGENZER**

To best support our growing programs, we are excited to share Liz Bregenzer has joined the On With Life Foundation team as development + volunteer coordinator. Liz is a Drake University graduate and comes to us from Make-A-Wish Iowa, where she worked as development coordinator.





Supporting On With Life does more than add space in a building or purchase equipment; it provides hope. Thank you for your support in 2022.

1,017

total **DONORS** **69**%

EMPLOYEES

donated

68

CIRCLE OF LIFE members

1,570

VOLUNTEER

hours

To read more about different ways you can support those On With Life serves, visit

ONWITHLIFE.ORG/WAYS-TO-GIVE.



The mural in the Ankeny building

Person served outings, such as this Iowa Cubs game for the Supported Community Living program

> The Giant Strides Capital Campaign and new build project





Your

at work



Funding for the annual reunion and t-shirts for attendees



oose to bed

Funding for employee recognition and engagement opportunities









Courtney Huber

COURTNEY HUBER

Courtney Huber, a speech-language pathologist at On With Life, says she has been incredibly blessed in her life to have many role models who embody generosity. "Whether through time, talent or treasure, I believe that we should always give of ourselves for the benefit of others," said Courtney.

Over the 11 years she has been with the organization, she has given of herself by working with or directly interacting with persons served in all programs in Ankeny, Coralville and Glenwood. In addition, Courtney has given financial support to the On With Life Foundation through the years.

"For me, the reason On With Life is special is that the miracles are real," Courtney said. "We all see and celebrate the stories of hope and triumph that are highlighted in our media. But for me, this year in particular, the miracles hit home personally. This year, I can say that because of On With Life, a longtime

friend from church was able to return home with his wife and young son. And because of On With Life, my son's soccer coach was able to return to the pitch."

Now, through her giving and generosity, Courtney has become the role model she once looked up to. She has increased her financial support and encourages others to do the same, seeing firsthand how donations can make a difference at On With Life.

"The people who make On With Life what it is - our persons served, our families, our staff and our volunteers - are constantly giving of themselves," Courtney says. "The On With Life Foundation is critical to supporting the hopes and dreams of all those who come in through our doors. Whether it is funding equipment, providing a place to stay or providing needs not covered by insurance, the financial support that you provide keeps miracles happening." +



Former person served, Tim, his family and representatives from Sammons Financial Group presenting a donation to On With Life

SAMMONS FINANCIAL GROUP

Sammons Financial Group's approach to charitable giving is a little different than that of most large corporations. The West Des Moines-based financial services company is employee-owned and supports organizations its employees are active in and passionate about. The On With Life Foundation is fortunate to have received nearly \$30,000 from Sammons Financial Group in the past two years.

"Over the years, multiple employees have had family members who received compassionate care at On With Life," says Tom Nucaro, vice president and chief tax officer. "This past year alone, two of our employees' families felt the impact of On With Life. The organization's work is life changing and a huge blessing to many families."

Tom, who also chairs the Community Involvement Committee at Sammons Financial

MCQUILLEN FAMILY

In March 2020, Beth and Matt McQuillen experienced a life-changing event when their daughter, Maggie, suffered a traumatic brain injury from a car accident. Later that year, Maggie was served at On With Life's outpatient clinic in Coralville. Anticipating going into her freshman year of college, Maggie worked through physical, occupational and speech therapy to help her regain function, prepare for school, and get back to the activities she loved to do prior to the accident.

On With Life was there for the McQuillen family, especially Maggie, with great support and resources at a time of need. They were grateful to have local rehabilitative therapy in their local community.

"Had it not been for the foresight and efforts of others to create and develop On With Life and the great programming it offers, our family's options would have been much more limited," said Matt.

"The staff at On With Life are so good at what they do," said Beth. "It is such a positive environment filled with 'can-do' attitude professionals. The entire team is collaborative, and they truly want only the best for the people they serve."

Because of their appreciation, the McQuillens are active supporters of On With Life, giving both financially and volunteering their time. In February 2022, Maggie served as the honorary co-chair for On With Life's annual Celebrate Hope event supporting the Coralville outpatient clinic. As part of that event, Beth and Matt McQuillen provided the lead gift to purchase a new piece of equipment called a Dynavision for the Coralville program. Just as others had done for the McQuillen family,



McQuillen Family

they chose to lead by example and build awareness in their network through the Celebrate Hope event.

"People are positive and charitable in nature and are supportive if they become aware and are given the opportunity," said Matt. "We are honored to help support the continued efforts to build on the vision of On With Life."

The McQuillen family never imagined they would be using the services of an organization like On With Life, but they are so very grateful it exists and happily support its mission. +

Group, explained that the company usually requires having an employee serving in the role of "internal champion" for an organization to be considered for funding. The committee meets once a month to review requests made by internal champions. Sammons Financial Group also has an annual Community Outreach Program where all employees may nominate their favorite charities to receive grant dollars. Through this program, assigned teams are given a budget each year to allocate to up to three charitable organizations. The teams decide how they will gather nominations, conduct the voting process and allocate the funds they are responsible to provide.

"We have some very creative employees, and they've made the process fun and engaging," Tom said. "Often our employees, or their family or friends, have received services from the organizations nominated."

Once the teams have selected their charities, they are presented to the Community Involvement Committee. In the five years since the program was launched, over 60 organizations have received funding. Approximately half of those had not previously been supported by the company but were identified because

of an employee's passion for the organization's cause. On With Life has been blessed by this program two years in a row.

"Our community is grateful to have a world-class facility like On With Life to help families cope with the often stressful and lengthy rehabilitation process associated with brain injuries," says Tom. "I encourage the community to learn more about this wonderful organization." +

The On With Life Foundation is grateful to the many individuals, corporations and foundations - those named below and those who have asked to remain anonymous - who supported On With Life's mission through charitable donations and grants received between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2022. It is the Foundation's goal to be 100% accurate in the spelling and inclusion of all contributors. If you have any questions or concerns about a listing, please contact the Foundation office at 515-289-9611 or by email at FOUNDATION@ONWITHLIFE.ORG. More information on ways to give can be found online at ONWITHLIFE.ORG/FOUNDATION.

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