

2018 ROI Core Values Awards Winners

On May 8, ROI Staff and their friends and families joined together at the Fetzer Center to celebrate the 2018 Core Values Awards. The following ROI staff were recognized for their outstanding dedication and service:

Alexandra Burgett Award for Excellence

Melissa Rios - Wisner
Arthur 'Martell' Brown - Old Post
Annie Hunter - D Avenue
Audrey Cesario - Wisner
Sandy Williams - Supported Living Alternatives

Advocacy Award

Teonna Johnson - Supported Living Alternatives
Holly Payne - Schuring Road
Ashley Raymonvil - Willowbend
Kelly Niemann - Administration

Spirit Award

Nicole Lee - Osterhout
Shannell Smith - Portage Road
Sam Brown - Great Lakes Center
John Bodjack - Great Lakes Center
Kim Word - D Avenue

Service Award

Malissa Weber - Wisner
Angele Cutshaw - Mandigo
Lucy Ruiz - Hoard
Eric Hall - Old Post
Lisa Perkins - Lands End

Team Award

Daniel Kamau - Supported Living Alternatives
Josue Miranda-Gonzales - Great Lakes Center
Merissa Greenfield - Supported Living Alternatives
Nicole Anderson - Supported Living Alternatives
Callie Symons - Great Lakes Center
Jane Cohoon - Mandigo



The Alexandra Burgett Awards for Excellence went to Annie Hunter, Sandy Williams, Arthur 'Martell' Brown, Melissa Rios and Audrey Cesario.



The Advocacy Awards went to Ashley Raymonvil, Holly Payne, Teonna Johnson and Kelly Niemann.



The Spirit Awards went to John Bodjack, Nicole Lee, Shannell Smith and Sam Brown (Kim Word not pictured).



The Team Awards went to Daniel Kamau, Josue Miranda-Gonzales, Merissa Greenfield, Callie Symons, Jane Cohoon and Nicole Anderson.



The Service Awards went to Malissa Weber, Lucy Ruiz, Angele Cutshaw, Eric Hall (Lisa Perkins not pictured).

2018

CEO NOTES

Reflections



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As ROI prepares for our Garden of Remembrance event (see below), I often think about the quality of life of the individuals we serve, and how the staff at ROI empower that. The front page of this edition of the ROI newsletter acknowledges the great work of some of ROI's "All Stars" who contribute to that quality of life.

And then, moments ago, this came across my computer screen announcing that someone we serve had passed away:

For those of you who knew Judy, you will know there was a "before Elisha" Judy and an "after Elisha" Judy. Judy had suffered horrific abuse as a blind, frail child. Her words were previously filled with fear and verbalization of self-harm or harm to others. That little lady was a scrapper! Under Elisha's leadership, we saw the Willowbend staff support Judy to a new life filled with love, giggles, and expanded communication. Gone were the ugly words of harm to others or self. I often saw her given extra care and attention by Ashley and Simone. Her favorite snack was chips. Her favorite

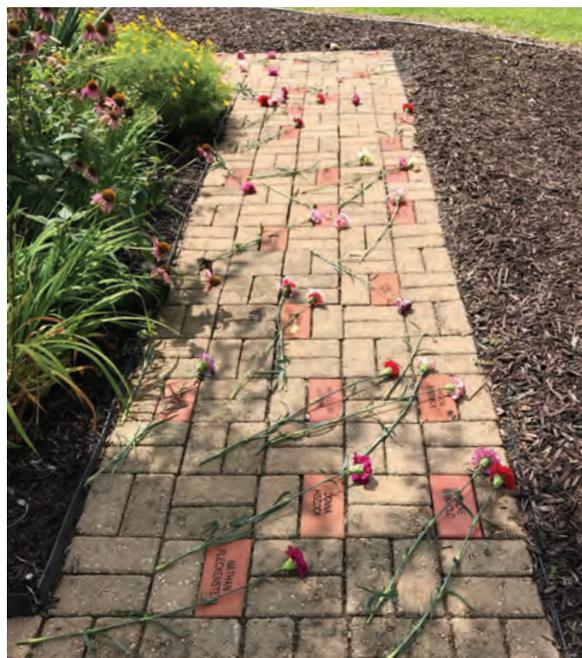
pastime was cuddling under a blanket. Elisha, Ashley, and Simone just "got her." Judy clearly felt safe and loved in her home. We will truly miss the woman she became.

Every time a staff shares a testimonial like this, it reinforces my belief in ROI's Mission and Core Values. A few of the Core Values that guide us the most in supporting people are:

- We place the needs of the individuals we serve as our highest priority.
- We recognize and celebrate the diversity of all people and treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- We are passionate about our work and dedicated to the individuals we serve and the agency we represent.

Those All Stars take ROI's Core Values and turn those values into better lives for people for whom we care greatly. People like Judy.

Scott Schrum
Chief Executive Officer



ROI GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE

Thursday,
August 16th at noon

Join us as we take time to honor those we've lost who were members of the ROI Family. Names of individuals engraved on special bricks will be placed along our garden path. Loved ones and staff are invited to attend. Light refreshments will be provided, courtesy of Abundance Catering. The Classic Trio will provide the elegant sound of flute, violin and cello for this special gathering at the ROI Administration Building at 1100 South Rose Street.



2018 ROI Hole Stroll raises over \$37,000!



136 golfers gathered on the greens at Heritage Glen Golf Club for the 25th annual ROI Hole Stroll on June 15. Over \$37,000 was raised to enrich the quality-of-life for the individuals we serve through the ROI Independence Fund.

“Our dream for Lynn was for her to reach her highest potential for living a quality life, and ROI has helped Lynn reach those goals,” said Karen Moss, guest speaker at the ROI Hole Stroll. Karen gave a heartfelt recounting of how her sister, Lynn, has been helped through services provided by ROI. Karen credits ROI with helping her sister stay happy, healthy, and independent living at Douglas House. Karen went on to say that “Lynn has the opportunity to make friends, participate in leisure activities, go on vacations, and build relationships with her housemates, and that creates peace of mind for our family.” Karen thanked the participating golfers and encouraged them to continue their support, saying the funds raised and the programs provided at ROI have tremendous impact on families such as hers.

A special thanks goes out to all our sponsors, participating teams, planning committee members and volunteers, as well as the many local businesses and individuals who gave generously to the raffle and silent auction.



A caravan of golf carts lined up at the start.



Guest speaker, Karen Moss, shared her story.



Silent auction packages from local businesses were a hit!

The Contest winners were:

- Closest to the Pin (Men)**
Tom Heyboer
- Closest to the Pin (Women)**
Beth Belleville
- Longest Drive (Men)**
Steve Schreuder
- Longest Drive (Women)**
Caitlin Stangl
- Best Corporate Team**
CTS Telecom represented by Sam Urban, Jason Bousso, John Carlson and Eric Szatkowski
- Team with the Lowest Score**
Golfers Anonymous Dropouts represented by Wayne Fuqua, Nina Nelso-Fuqua, Bill Lamond, Don Kirkconnel

2018 Presenting Sponsor



Eaton Corporation represented by Luivi Valero, Chris Ocedek, Duane Park, Deb Lewis, Bobby Robinette, Steve Zeigler, Jeff Leverton, and Matt Pederson

QUICK FACTS

Mission: We partner with individuals and families affected by autism to improve their quality of life through effective and efficient diagnosis, assessment, and behaviorally-based treatment.

Vision: We will be a model program for providing state-of-the-art autism treatment in the Great Lakes region.

 **17** children on the autism spectrum decreased challenging behavior and learned adaptive skills to prepare them to transition back to the home through the **Intensive Treatment Program**.

 **81** children on the autism spectrum developed new social and life skills through the **Outpatient Services program**.

The Great Lakes Center for Autism Treatment and Research (GLC) provides services for individuals with a diagnosis of autism from 15 months to age 21. Through the use of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), children are taught academic, adaptive and social skills to prepare them to lead full and successful lives. GLC offers intensive treatment and outpatient services.



Back by popular demand, the ice cream truck will visit our Portage and Galesburg locations on Fridays through August 24. The children and staff at our autism centers always look forward to these tasty summer treats, provided by the Summer Song Ice Cream Truck.



Harding's Friendly Markets Support Autism Awareness Month



During the month of April, our friends at Harding's Friendly Markets partnered with us once again to raise funds through their in-store promotions. The campaign (hosted in conjunction with Autism Awareness Month) raised **\$5,649.85** for the Great Lakes Center for Autism Treatment and Research! That's a grand total of **\$40,739.50** raised since our partnership with Harding's began in 2012! We are grateful for their continued support.

WISH LIST

- Used children's clothes
 - Boys and Girls sizes 3T-10
 - LAC needs girls clothes 3T - 10
 - Socks (18 months - small adult sizes), pants, shirts
- Art supplies
 - Paint and brushes
 - Colored paper
 - Crayons
 - Markers
 - Child size Scissors
 - Glue sticks
 - Pre-academic books
 - Foam stickers
 - Popsicle sticks
 - Paint smocks
 - Stringing beads and thick string
 - Pipe Cleaners
 - Tissue Paper
- Farm, zoo, jungle animal sets
- Squishy non-fabric toys
- Outdoor play equipment - play houses, etc. - LAC
- Outdoor play equipment - soccer balls and nets, kick balls, cones, (small items due to potential move to a different location)- TRAC
- Dollhouses & dolls
- Dollhouse sized furniture (i.e., tables, chairs, beds, etc.)
- Action figures - transformers
- Costumes / pretend play items (mainly for boys)
- Doctor sets
- Play vacuums
- Puzzles (anywhere from wooden insert puzzles to more difficult large piece puzzles)
- Noisy/Musical toys and pop up toys
- Mardi Gras Beads
- Wii-U Games
- Children's Books
- Large children's books (Jumbo size for group reading)
- Outdoor basketball hoop - LAC
- Board games for children (especially for children 8+) - Cooperative and competitive games - LAC, HAC, and TRAC
- Books for early readers and older children - LAC, HAC, TRAC
- Play-Doh and Play-Doh parts
- Bluetooth speakers
- Jumbo blocks
- Early learner cause and effect toys
- Laundry detergent
- Cleaning supplies

STAFF PROFILE

Lessons Taught and Lessons Learned

By Jen Strebs, Program Coordinator, Wisner House

As this year began, I celebrated my 21st anniversary at ROI and realized that I have spent half of my life as part of this team. As I think back on the experiences that have spanned that time, the people I have served and worked alongside of, and the challenges we have faced and overcome together, I am filled with gratitude.

As a young woman, I came to ROI because of the encouragement of several of my friends on staff who knew I would be a good fit. My intention was to take the job for a while as I finished my education, and then find my true career path. But, in just those first few weeks, the connections I made were powerful and the work I had the opportunity to do was important.

Coming to work day-to-day was more than about getting a pay check. It was about doing something that really mattered. I started in the very early mornings where I helped six adults in one of our group homes get up and complete their morning routine so they could head off to community programs for the day. One woman I served at the home stood watching for me at the picture window each morning at 6 am. I could see her cheering as I walked up to the door and, without fail, she would hug me as I came in, wishing me a good morning. Together we worked on learning to be independent with activities of daily living - sometimes simple things like zipping a coat, and sometimes complex things like dealing with fears or conflicts. I found that more than teaching the people I served, I was the one learning. I learned about determination, honesty, joy, and sorrow. I watched a son (who could not speak) weep when seeing his mother for the first time, after years spent in an institution had separated them. I watched a woman struggle and cry for hours uncontrollably in frustration one day, and saw her laughing in the sunshine with unfiltered joy the next. What I learned was finding myself in service to other people. Without realizing it, I was hooked!

Eventually, I found myself part of the team at Wisner House where I have been for 18 years. When I started, Wisner was a 16-bed facility that included a 3-bed crisis unit which helped people transition from psychiatric hospitalizations or unstable circumstances. To say the least, helping people in crisis was challenging. At Wisner, I met a man who'd spent years neglected in a basement, but I got to help start the process of re-integrating him into a social environment. Each individual story from the crisis unit was full of difficult struggle and histories of trauma. Many of those stories were beyond heart-breaking, but none of those stories were finished. ROI was there for them and together we celebrated a lot of hard-fought successes.

I remember sitting and talking with a man about his dreams in life. He dreamed of having his own place and living with his "sweetie pie," just like everyone else gets to do. Yet, he looked sad and then told me it would never happen because he was too disabled. But ROI is a place that helps people achieve their dreams and desires. It took time, patience and supports, but eventually the day came when I took he and his sweetie pie to sign the lease on their first place - a place of their own. I doubt I'll ever see someone filled with more pride than they were that day. I still see the two of them arm in arm, beaming, ready to start a new chapter in their lives. There again I learned the lesson - to never give up on my dreams.

Today, things have changed at Wisner. We serve 12 people who are all long-term residents. Some of them I have known most of my life. The home provides them each with a private bedroom which was once a rarity for a group home. Wisner is a place that has been a great honor to spend so much of my life. Through all the stories, the successes and the changes, weave the faces of the caregivers that have been part of this team over the years. It is the people we serve and the staff together that make ROI the special organization we are. Some of those caregivers I have met through the years remain, some move on, but all of them leave their mark here. I hope all of them remember their time here as important. In this world, nothing is more important than being part of positive change for others, and in that, seeing the positive change in ourselves. Struggles still lie ahead of us as individuals and as an agency. Yet, my time at ROI has taught me to believe we can find a way to overcome challenges together. I am thankful to ROI for giving me so much more than I could ever possibly give back.



Jen Strebs and Henry at Wisner House.



Residential Opportunities, Inc.
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Kalamazoo, MI 49001

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Mission

ROI partners with children and adults with disabilities and their families so they may live more meaningful, healthy, and independent lives in their homes and communities.

Vision

ROI will be recognized as the regional provider of choice for people with disabilities and a model of excellence for improving quality-of-life outcomes.

p: 269.343.3731 | f: 269.343.2940

www.residentialopportunities.org
www.autismtreatmentresearch.org



MAKE AN IMPACT with Planned Giving

Through planned giving, you can create a lasting impact on your community and make a difference for future generations to come. Contact Dana DeLuca at 269.250.8234 for more information.

Donate online at www.residentialopportunities.org/how-help