

THE INSIDER

Getting to know the PossAbilities Community

POSSABILITIES

Serving children and adults with disabilities

Positive Changes



For 23 years, Travis had been a participant in the PossAbilities Employment Services program. However, over the years his work load decreased and he was only working a few hours a week. Therefore, when the new STARS program was created, everyone knew Travis would be a good fit.

“In the program he can do a small amount of work and spend a large amount of time in the community,” said Paul Pedersen, PossAbilities Program Director.

But, before Travis could start the new program he had to make some difficult changes.

“Travis likes to stick to a routine,” explains Paul. “When the routine is broken, it’s hard for him.”

“I talked to Paul about it,” said Travis. “I wanted it.”

From that conversation forward, Travis embraced the changed. His first big step, cleaning out his desk in the Employment Services building.

“He gave up his space,” said Paul. “It had always been a struggle for him. He even threw stuff away, which is totally unlike him.”

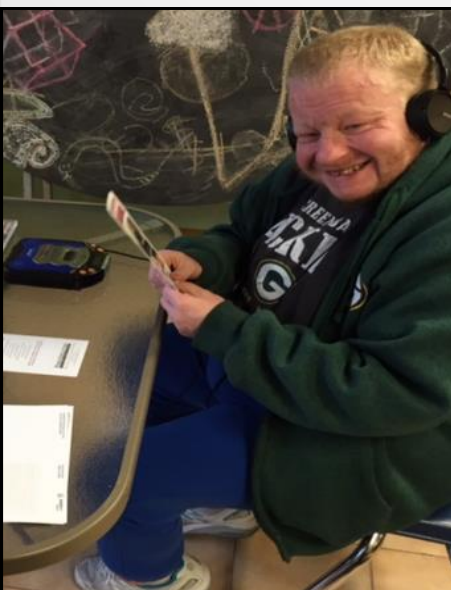
“I was excited,” claimed Travis.

The STARS program has allowed Travis to succeed in ways he never thought he could.

“It helped him change routine,” said Paul. “And to be sociable.”

Today, Travis is very engaged in the community. Over the last month, he rang bells for the Salvation Army’s Red Kettle Campaign, he went shopping at Sam’s Club and he went to the movie theater. Plus, he continues to work at the

jobs he held prior to moving to the STARS program.



Help us create more opportunities for participants like Travis by becoming a PossAbilities Provider’s Club Member.
www.PossAbilities.org



Looking at the Big Picture

Choosing a career is a big step and PossAbilities Participant, Becca, will be the first person to tell you this.

“I’ve filled out a lot of applications,” Becca said.

Four years ago she filled out an application to a retail store and landed a job. She was happy and successful, but then she said the atmosphere in the workplace changed.

“I didn’t feel positive,” explained Becca. “I wasn’t accomplishing anymore.”

Becca stuck it out, hoping things would change. But in February, the stress of the job took a turn for the worst.

“I had a panic attack at work,” said Becca. “I ended up quitting.”

Unemployed and overwhelmed, Becca joined the PossAbilities Discovery program. The program helps participants find meaningful employment by matching a participant’s skills and interests to area employers.

Through the discovery program, Becca has found a new job stocking shelves at HyVee. A perfect fit since Becca enjoys working with people, especially the elderly and children.

“I love HyVee,” said Becca. “The atmosphere is awesome.”

Also through the program, Becca has been exploring college degrees with the help of PossAbilities Employment Consultant, Tiffany Sanborn.

“We went to RCTC (Rochester Community and Technical College) to ask about degrees to work in a daycare or health unit coordinator,” said Becca. “And that’s what I love about the program. I don’t feel pressured about getting into one thing. I’m looking at the big picture,” smiles Becca.

In the future, Becca hopes to find a career working with children or the elderly and she knows the PossAbilities Discovery Team will help her get there.



Advocating for PossAbilities Participants

In December, PossAbilities invited all of the local legislators to tour the facilities. PossAbilities was pleased that Sen. Dave Senjem, R-Minn., Sen. Carla Nelson, R-Minn., Rep. Tina Liebling, D-Minn., and Rep. Kim Norton, D-Minn., were able to attend the tour and see how people with disabilities play an important role in our community. Also, legislators were able to meet and talk with participants and staff members.

“We asked for active support in championing the cause of people with disabilities,” said PossAbilities Executive Director, Eileen Wallace. “We believe people with disabilities are thriving, valued and engaged community members.”

The tour enabled PossAbilities leadership to discuss on-going and future financial and regulatory challenges and solicit support for solutions to those challenges. We are grateful for the open discussion we had with the legislators and look forward to connecting with all of them during the next Legislative session.

PossAbilities is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation committed to serving children and adults with disabilities through individualized, community based programs. We help people find and keep jobs, become engaged members of the community, contribute through volunteerism, and experience integrated social and recreational opportunities.

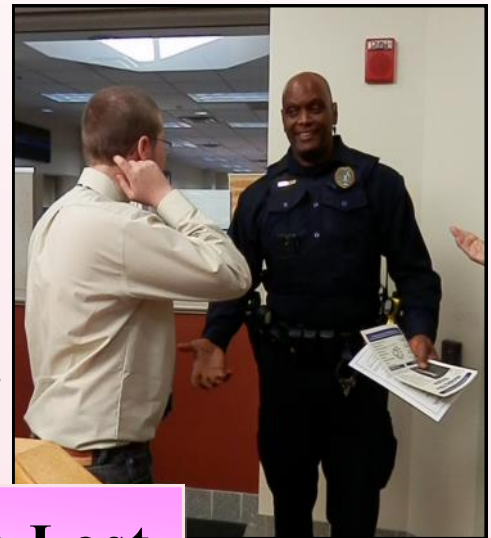
Community Connection

Olmsted County Sheriff, Kevin Torgerson, took a group of PossAbilities participants on a tour of the Law Enforcement Center. Participant Kelly, made holiday cards for the officers and passed them out during the tour.



Tracy just joined PossAbilities School to Work program. After graduating high school he plans to go to college to obtain a degree in Law Enforcement. During the tour, he met a K-9 officer for the first time.

Thank-you to all the officers and staff members for making the tour special for the participants.



Remembering Friends we have Lost

PossAbilities participants held a balloon release to remember three participants that passed away in the month of December. The Happy Birthday balloon is for Roni, who would have turned 38 on December 13th.



What else have we been up to?

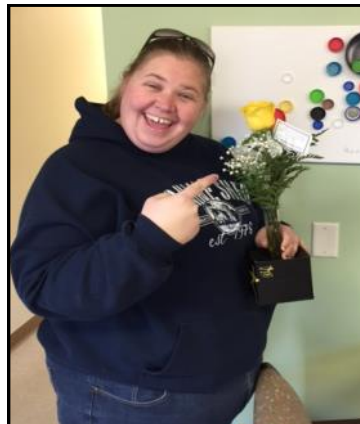
Ring in the Noon Hour!



Kate is the new LE II Program Coordinator



Connie is the new HR assistant



Michelle is celebrating 10-years at PossAbilities!



We're on the Web!
www.PossAbilities.org



Caroling at Rochester Ford



Dates to Remember

Wine and Roses
April 29, 2016
at Somerby Golf Club

PossAbilities Tours
January 21, February 9 and
February 18

For event information contact
Stacy Shones
sshones@possabilities.org
(507) 281-6116



Byron Pet Clinic honored participants with a jacket this year for all their hard work at the clinic.



PossAbilities received a \$50,000 grant and a \$25,000 match opportunity from the Otto Bremer Trust!
If you would like to make a donation, contact Kenn Roehl
kroehl@possabilities.org or (507) 281-6116