



2024 Year in Review

As we embark on a new year we here at MYEP look forward to exciting opportunities ahead of us. We are excited to see what we can achieve together in the year ahead. We truly appreciate the ongoing support and engagement shown by the MYEP network. The collaboration and connections with you all are cornerstones of who we are. Please read on and have a look at some of our proud moments from the past year that we are happy to share. May 2025 be an outstanding year for us all!

MYEP Executive Team:

Karen Scott

Karen Scott
Co-Executive Director/Finance

Kari Wilken

Kari Wilken
Co-Executive Director/HR

Meg. Gerber

Megan Gerber
Co-Executive Director/Operations

Chris Campbell

Chris Campbell
Co-Executive Director/Compliance

MYEP Earns PCE Accreditation

We are thrilled to announce that MYEP has achieved Person-Centered Excellence (PCE) Accreditation from the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). This milestone underscores our commitment to providing exceptional person-centered services. The accreditation visit took place from November 12th-15th, 2024.

The PCE Accreditation recognizes our dedication to enhancing the lives of those we support with choice, opportunity, and respect. Key areas discussed during accreditation included:

- **Health:** Ensuring physical and emotional well-being.
- **Safety:** Maintaining a secure environment.
- **Rights:** Upholding dignity and fundamental rights.
- **Positive Services:** Promoting personal growth and satisfaction.
- **Quality of Life:** Supporting holistic life enhancement.
- **Positive Business Practices:** Fostering transparency and efficiency.



MYEP met 41 out of 46 CQL Basic Assurances Indicators, demonstrating our high standards of quality and support.

During the Stakeholder Event, stakeholders—including parents, staff, executives, and individuals we support—set organizational priorities for the next four years. The Executive Team developed the following goals:

- Enhance employee preparation and engagement through improved hiring, onboarding, and communication.
- Foster meaningful relationships by aligning interests with community events.
- Improve health supports by better tracking medical histories.

As we celebrate this achievement, we remain committed to continuous improvement. The feedback from the accreditation process will guide us to further enhance our services, ensuring dignified lives full of choice and opportunity for those we support.

We thank everyone involved for their hard work and dedication. Together, we will continue to build a brighter future.



SPOTLIGHTS



DONNA

Donna has been with MYEP all the way back to 2013. Her recent promotion into a Residential Service Coordinator role provides a great opportunity to feature her in this spotlight so everyone can get to know her a little better.

When Donna started with MYEP back in May of 2013 she first accepted a DSP position. She was in a DSP position for only a few months before she was promoted to a Lead DSP. Donna's ambitions were quickly recognized; she came with experience, drive, and the right mindset. It was in the Lead DSP position where Donna made her mark. She quickly became known and respected for her uncompromising standards for the high quality service provision, and high professional standards for herself and her team. Donna became the expert. She modeled the daily standards and she invested deeply in relationships.

We recently sat down with Donna and learned more about her professionally and personally. Here is what she had to say:

Tell us about your Coordinator role and what it encompasses.

I develop close relationships with people served, making sure their wants and needs are top priority. Making sure they have a voice in their everyday lives. What keeps you in this field of work?

What keeps you in the field of work?

The people we serve. I enjoy assuring they get treated way all of us deserve to get treated. Providing that little extra help they need.

Tell us about your professional journey before MYEP.

After high-school I got my CNA and started working in retirement homes. This was in New Orleans where I was born and raised and stayed until moving to Iowa in 2000. I came to

be closer to family in Chicago but didn't want to be in the city. I tried it here and loved it. My first job in Iowa was working direct care at REM. Then I did a little bit of everything, worked for the Department of Human Services and then landed here at MYEP.

What are a couple of your professional goals over the next 5 years?

Getting more comfortable in my new role. Excelling in it and being as good as I can.

What is your favorite aspect of the MYEP culture?

Person-centered living. Allowing each person to have their voice heard and their wants and needs respected.

What is a fun fact about you that may surprise people?

I'm not as quiet as I'm sometimes known to be. Once I'm fully comfortable I let loose and my friends and family have to tell me to stop talking so much.

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go and why?

Paris! I keep hearing they have the best wine.

Best concert you've ever seen.

Mary J Blige. It was right before COVID in Kansas City. It was a really good show.

Favorite holiday and why.

Christmas. I'm a giver and I love seeing the smiles on faces.

Favorite season and why.

Fall. Not too cold or too hot.

What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

My grandmother told me no matter how big you ever get, always stay humble. I think that's important.



SAUVE

Resilience Personified.

Talking to most people these days, you hear about the rollercoaster they feel like they've been on with all of the chaos and change in the world around us. Talking to Sauve you'd be more likely to hear about the small parts of his daily life that bring him joy, not about the chaos and hardship. Those who know Sauve well, though, understand and are proud to talk about the major life battles he has faced over the past few years with outstanding resilience and strength.

I recently sat down with Sauve and talked about how he navigated his journey with cancer and loss. In October 2021 Sauve was diagnosed with lymphoma. Sauve shared that his dad was the first person he remembers thinking something was wrong. Sauve went to spend a weekend with his dad in Des Moines and when they went out for Chinese food Sauve didn't want to eat. Sauve remembers his dad saying that if he didn't want Chinese food, he must be really sick. It was shortly after this visit Sauve remembers learning at an appointment that he was diagnosed with cancer.

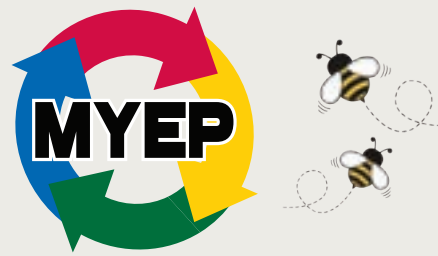
Sauve persevered through long appointments. There were challenging phases of the treatments that left him nauseous, tired, and without his regular appetite. During his cancer battle, Sauve received the crushing news that his dad had suffered a heart attack and unexpectedly passed away. Sauve remembers his dad as the coolest person he has ever known. Sauve says that losing him was really hard, but it makes him happy that he still spends time with his sister. The loss of a parent is devastating. This type of loss coupled with a major health battle could be enough to push anybody into a place of darkness. Sauve exemplified taking one day at a time, step by step. Sauve battled through all of the day-to-day challenges to emerge on

the other side. It wasn't a short battle or an easy battle. Finally in November of 2024 Sauve was officially declared cancer-free!

Despite these hardships it is clear that Sauve has not lost his feisty, spirited approach to life. When asked about what carried him through the difficult times it always comes back to his joy of the small things driving his determination. Since Sauve began living with supports through MYEP in 2009 he has been known for his larger-than-life smile and his infectious excitement. Small things can spark an energetic burst of pure energy and excitement that many times sends Sauve bounding across a room. Small things that get him going include hearing or telling funny jokes, seeing an old friend, a compliment on a new pair of sneakers, and a favorite song blasting at a party.

Sauve will tell you some of his favorite ways to spend his time include walking to nearby parks, time with his sister, watching airplanes and daydreaming of jet-setting to Las Vegas with a girlfriend. When asked what he would like to do more of and who he would like to spend more time with he comes right back to wanting more of the small things that bring him daily joy. Sauve mentions admiring Robert and Dido who are present and supportive men in his life and looking forward to putting up a basketball hoop at his house this spring and shooting hoops together. Sauve mentions his love for good food and going out to eat. Sauve says he's excited about a hockey game and a rodeo he has plans to attend.

Whether intentional or not, Sauve's approach to putting a few of your favorite things on the top of the mountain ahead of you is admirable. The self-pride and wisdom Sauve gained from getting through some really tough challenges is magnetic.



BUZZING WITH ACTIVITIES

MYEP Adult Prom 2024: A Night "Under the Stars"

On April 6th, 2024, the MYEP Adult Prom was held at the iconic Kinnick Stadium in Iowa City. This year's theme, "Under the Stars," was chosen through a vote by the people we serve, setting the stage for an unforgettable evening.

Months of meticulous planning culminated in a beautifully decorated venue, thanks to our dedicated staff, family, and friends who volunteered their time. Elaborate balloon arches and a fun photo booth added to the festive atmosphere, with the stunning backdrop of Kinnick Stadium's football field enhancing the magic of the night.

As our second-ever prom, we were thrilled to open the event to other agencies, expanding our community and making new connections. Attendees arrived in their finest attire, ready to dance the night away. The dance floor was kept lively by our DJ from Star Entertainment, ensuring everyone had a great time.

A special highlight of the evening was a visit from Herky the Hawk, adding an extra touch of excitement and school spirit. Guests captured countless memories in the photo booth, creating keepsakes to remember this special night.



Celebrating Together: Events by Our Residential Program

Throughout the year, the people we serve in our residential program have been busy hosting a variety of mini parties and events, inviting their friends and others served by MYEP. These gatherings have been a wonderful way to build community and create lasting memories.

Different houses took turns hosting events that ranged from simple dinners and cookouts to more elaborate celebrations

like Halloween parties. Bowling outings brought out everyone's competitive spirit, while trips to the pumpkin patch for hayrack rides added a touch of seasonal fun.

It's been amazing to see these events increase and grow over the years. Each gathering has brought joy and connection, strengthening the bonds within our community. We look forward to many more fun and meaningful events in the future!



Summer Cookout Series: Bringing People Together

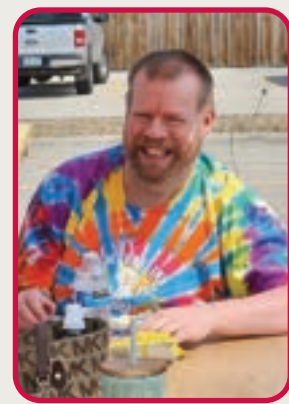
Our Summer Cookout Series, which began in 2023 as a way to increase socialization and bring people together after lots of isolation during covid, continued to thrive in 2024. We were thrilled to see everyone come together for these fun-filled events.

The first cookout of the season was on June 7th, featuring delicious barbecue from T.C. Bonez, games, and music that kept everyone entertained. It was a fantastic way to kick off the summer!

On July 26th, we hosted our second gathering, and what better way to beat the heat than with an ice cream sundae bar? It was a refreshing treat that everyone enjoyed.

Our final get-together of the season was on August 28th, where we savored tasty sandwiches and enjoyed each other's company one last time before the summer ended.

These cookouts have been a wonderful way to reconnect and create lasting memories. We can't wait to continue this tradition next year!



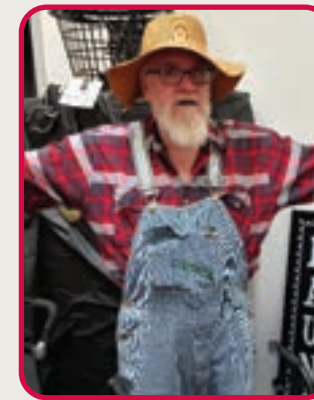
Spooktacular Halloween 2024: A Night of Fun and Frights

On Saturday, October 26th, 2024, we hosted our Spooktacular Halloween Party, and it was an unforgettable night! Guests arrived in their most creative and spooky costumes, adding to the festive atmosphere.

The evening was filled with delicious snacks that everyone

enjoyed. We also had a variety of fun games that kept everyone entertained and laughing throughout the night.

It was a fantastic event, full of excitement and Halloween cheer. We can't wait to see what next year's party will bring.



Holiday Dinner 2024: A Night to Remember

We were thrilled to bring back our Holiday Dinner bigger than ever this year after a long COVID hiatus. Held on December 5th at The Celebration Farm, the event was nothing short of magical. The double round barn provided a storybook atmosphere, perfect for the holiday spirit.

The evening was made beautiful by the presence of the people we serve, their families, our staff, and our board members. The delicious food served by T.C. Bonez BBQ & Catering added to the festive spirit, making the night even more special.

The Holiday Dinner was planned by our committee made up of staff and the people we serve. It was a joint effort to pick the food, the music and everything down to the linens. Our MC, Jimmy, was fantastic, keeping everyone entertained throughout the night.





2024 Highlights

A Monumental Shift:

Transforming Lives from Glenwood Resource Center to MYEP Residential Program

After more than 150 years of service, the Glenwood Resource Center (GRC) in Iowa has closed its doors. This state-run facility, which provided care for individuals with severe intellectual disabilities, faced significant challenges and controversies in recent years, leading to its closure on June 30, 2024. As the center shut down, six long-term residents embarked on a new journey, transitioning into the MYEP Residential Program in Iowa City.

The Glenwood Resource Center has a long history, dating back to its establishment in the 19th century. Over the years, it housed individuals with various disabilities, providing them with care and support. However, in recent years, the facility faced scrutiny due to allegations of mistreatment and inadequate care. Federal investigations revealed significant issues, prompting state officials to announce the closure of GRC in 2022.

As GRC prepared to close, the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) worked diligently to relocate its residents. Among them were six individuals who had spent most of their lives at GRC. These individuals transitioned into

the MYEP Residential Program, a community-based service in Iowa City that offers person-centered support for adults with disabilities.

The MYEP Residential Program provides a supportive and inclusive environment for adults with disabilities. The program focuses on community integration, socialization, and self-advocacy, helping residents build life skills and foster meaningful relationships. Each resident receives personalized support based on their unique needs and goals, ensuring a smooth transition from institutional care to a more independent living arrangement.

The transition from GRC to MYEP was not without its challenges. Many of the individuals had spent decades in an institutional setting, making the adjustment to a new environment difficult. However, with the dedicated support of MYEP staff, these individuals gradually adapted to their new homes. The program's emphasis on community involvement and personalized care played a crucial role in helping them feel comfortable and secure.

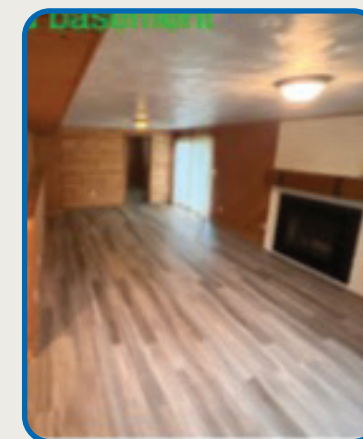
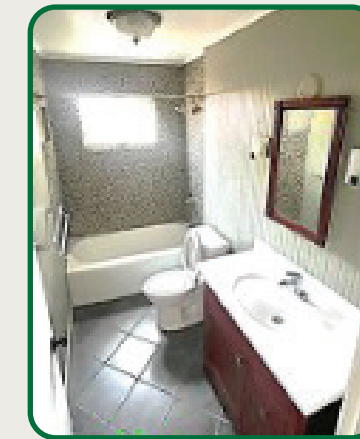
Person Centered Services: Updating a Home

Three adults recently transitioned into their newly remodeled home, marking a significant milestone in their lives.

The renovations were completed swiftly and flawlessly, with a keen eye for detail. Our Maintenance Coordinator worked closely with the individuals to select paint colors, ensuring that their personal preferences were reflected in their new living spaces. This level of involvement is a testament to our commitment to Person Centered Services.

We believe that creating functional spaces that meet the physical needs of the people we serve is just as important as catering to their personal tastes. Moving to a new home can be a daunting experience, especially for those doing so for the first time. By incorporating these personal touches, we aim to make the transition as smooth and comforting as possible.

We strive to create environments where the people we serve feel at home, valued, and supported. This recent transition is a shining example of how our approach to Person Centered Services can make a meaningful difference in their lives.



Community Leadership Program

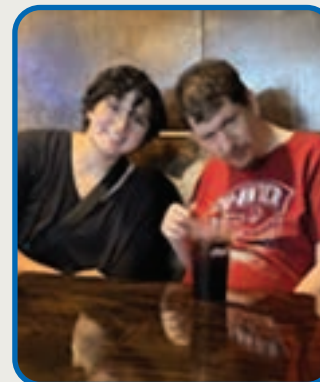
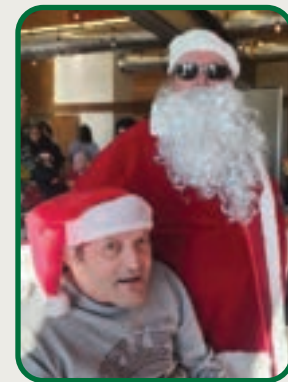


Christine

Christine Fachman, Activity Coordinator and Community Support Liaison at MYEP, participated in the 2023-2024 Greater Iowa City Community Leadership Program (CLP). This program brought together 30 leaders to explore the area's challenges and assets.

Her involvement not only highlights MYEP's commitment to leadership and community engagement but also helps Christine build relationships that will support the growth of MYEP's Adult Day

Program and other initiatives. These connections are crucial for fostering collaboration and expanding the reach of MYEP's services.



Reinventing Quality Conference



Leather



Tara

In September 2024, Leather and Tara attended the Reinventing Quality Conference in Baltimore. This event brought together professionals dedicated to improving services

for individuals with disabilities.

They were inspired by the keynote speakers and sessions on innovative practices and community



integration. They were able to see many passionate individuals working towards enhancing the lives of people with disabilities gaining new insights and strategies to better support the people we serve.

The knowledge and connections from the conference will benefit their work and contribute to providing high-quality services.

Celebrating Our Internal Promotions: A Year of Growth and Achievement

Over the past year, we have seen numerous dedicated team members rise to new challenges and take on greater responsibilities. We are excited to celebrate their achievements and look forward to watching them continue to make a difference in the lives of the people we serve.

- **Angel Gathua:** DSP to Shift Facilitator, 15 Colchester (Feb 2024), 3y 6m
- **Benjamin M Fortenbacher:** DSP to Lead DSP, 88 Whitechapel (Dec 2024), 3y 5m
- **Daisy Lopez:** DSP to Shift Facilitator, 3404 Jamie (Mar 2024), 9m
- **Donna D Henry:** Lead DSP to Service Coordinator, Residential Program (Feb 2024), 11y 8m
- **Edward J Brown:** Lead DSP to Service Coordinator, Day Program (Dec 2024), 8y 3m
- **Fatima A Ismail:** DSP to Shift Facilitator, 1156 Downey (Dec 2024), 2y 7m
- **Fatimah Y Omar:** DSP to Shift Facilitator, 926 DeForest (Jul 2024), 7m
- **Frederick A Hunt:** DSP to Shift Facilitator, 1104 Sandusky (Sep 2024), 10m
- **Guylia L Small:** Shift Facilitator to Lead DSP, 1104 Sandusky (Feb 2024), 6y 3m

- **Isaac G Gomez:** DSP to Lead DSP, Day Program (Oct 2024), 2y 3m
- **Janet Anderson-Monge:** DSP to Shift Facilitator, 80 Whitechapel (Oct 2024), 8m
- **Lindsay Davis:** DSP to Lead DSP, 2509 Friendship (Sep 2024), 4y 7m
- **Megan M Barkalow:** DSP to Shift Facilitator, 1104 Sandusky (Apr 2024), then to Lead DSP, 1311 Esther (Sep 2024), 1y 3m
- **Mohamed A Ahmed:** DSP to Shift Facilitator, 3412 Jamie (Dec 2024), 10m
- **Myka L Meri:** Shift Facilitator to Assistant Lead DSP, 3412 Jamie (Jun 2024), 1y 1m
- **Tasha M Hardaway:** Shift Facilitator to Assistant Lead DSP, 80 Whitechapel (Jun 2024), 11y 8m





A Decade of Dedication

Jimmy reached a significant milestone in 2024. He celebrated his 10th year working at Scheels. Please join us in congratulating Jimmy on this awesome achievement.



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