

MY RHD

WINTER 2018



'This is a great place'

RHD's Live Yes Studio adapts services

to meet Kelli's needs

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Chief Executive Officer
Marco Giordano

FROM OUR CEO

Thank you for your support of RHD

At RHD's Main Line Wine Gala, which celebrates the world's most innovative winemakers in an event that benefits RHD's innovative human services, we were honored to welcome Elizabeth Neuman of Joseph Phelps Vineyards as our honorary chair. Joseph Phelps is absolutely one of the crown jewels of Napa Valley wine, with a rich tradition of innovation, and steadfast commitment to excellence.

Elizabeth talked about the responsibility she often feels to uphold the legacy of her grandfather, Joseph Phelps, and I particularly liked the way she described trying to do that: "through taking risks, remembering our values and continuing to pursue excellence."

We really connect with that at RHD, and I think you see that in our programs across the country.

In its long history, RHD has founded and supported a diverse array programs that meet different needs in a lot of different places. But in every RHD program we work together to deliver the highest quality services in a unique and creative way. All our programs uphold the RHD values and the RHD legacy of excellence in service delivery — by treating people with respect and dignity, by tailoring services to best meet the needs of the people we serve, no matter what their challenges.

The tens of thousands of adults, children and families we serve each year rely on the generosity of supporters who believe that every person, despite their challenges, should be treated with dignity and have the opportunity to develop their full potential.

RHD's broad service mission and diverse array of programs are designed to have the maximum impact on our communities. That

only happens with the support of so many people like you.

Each year, RHD serves tens of thousands of adults, children and families with services that address health care, housing, veterans issues, education, employment, community development, and much more.

In this issue of the RHD Magazine, we're taking a moment to thank those who've helped us create brighter futures for thousands of people it is our privilege to serve.

Donations received from friends, foundations, and business partners directly improve the quality of life for all RHD clients, and allow RHD to continue developing caring, effective and innovative programs that help people in need build better lives for themselves.

Thank you for your support.



RHD staff honored at On Our Own I

Danna Ellison of RHD's On Our Own I, supporting adults with autism, earns PAR Award for exemplary service

Danna Ellison, Team Leader for RHD's On Our Own I program, has been selected as the Frontline Manager of the Year Award for Pennsylvania's Northeastern Region by PAR, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's leading disability provider and advocacy association for people with autism and intellectual disabilities.

Ellison was honored for her strong and effective management skills at RHD's On Our Own I program, creating strong and effective teams, helping Direct Support Professionals improve their skills, and enabling team members to move into higher level positions as Lead Staff and Site Supervisors. On Our Own I is a community-based program providing comprehensive residential and day services in staffed homes to adults with autism, developmental and other neurobiological disabilities, as well as medical complications. Emphasis is placed on developing communication skills, social supports and daily living skills.

Ellison receive her award at the PAR Annual Solutions Conference "We Are Worth It." Awards Ceremony in October. "Danna and her colleagues at RHD daily demonstrate the best leadership skills in our community," said Shirley Walker, President and CEO of PAR. "Through effective mentoring, innovative ideas and genuine encouragement, Danna is the type of leader that inspires her colleagues to grow in this field and provide excellent supports and services for people with intellectual disability and autism."

Ellison demonstrates the importance of building strong relationships with each individual's support system, including Supports Coordinators, families, and direct support staff. She leads her team by example with a willingness and eagerness to work with and understand individuals with intellectual

disabilities and challenging needs with a caring and innovative approach.

"Danna exemplifies the very best of the human service profession – creatively supporting consumers to reach their goals, excelling in developing cohesive teams, and effectively nurturing partnerships with families and stakeholders," said Jeff Prince, RHD Regional Director for Pennsylvania Intellectual Disabilities Services. "Her selfless leadership allows her teams to confidently accept new challenges, facing them with innovation, thoughtfulness, and patience. Danna's unwavering commitment to those she supports directly translates into success for consumers and her teams, and RHD is fortunate to call her one of our own."

"Danna has the ability to create strong teams and develops DSPs to move into higher level positions, as Lead Staff and Site Supervisors," said Rayann Rohrer, RHD Regional Director for Pennsylvania Intellectual Disabilities Services. "Danna is able to take the lead when it comes to organizing and opening new homes in the community. She is backed by her well developed teams, who are always willing to go above and beyond to provide supports to other teams."

"Danna has worked with many individuals with challenging behaviors and has supported them in becoming successful members of the community. She is always willing to accept new challenges and functions as a leader to support her peers. Danna is caring and nurturing, yet is able to set boundaries for both the individuals she works with, as well as her teams and her peers. Danna is versatile, innovative, and always willing to accept new challenges, and she is a valued member of RHD On Our Own I."

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‘THIS IS A GREAT PLACE’

At RHD Nebraska’s Live Yes Studio for artists with intellectual disabilities, staff works to adapt services to meet Kelli’s needs

At RHD’s Live Yes Studios in Lincoln, Nebraska, Kelli has been working with a Dynavox speech generating device — just the latest example of how much she’s grown at the arts-based day program, where staff has adapted services to meet her unique needs. Kelli has cerebral palsy and is in a wheelchair, and for years Kelli communicated on an alphabet pad, spelling out each word as her staff recorded her sentences in a notebook.

Now Kelli types and the Dynavox “speaks” whatever she enters. Kelli had her first spoken conversation with friends and staff, and recently ordered lunch from a local eatery with total independence.

“Kelli is so open and she loves to talk to people and teach people how to talk with her,” said RHD Nebraska Vocational Support Manager Natasha Scholz. “She’s adamant about telling people: ‘I am mentally fine. Don’t pass me by, I’m a smart, accomplished woman, and I love to have conversation, I just can’t do it verbally, but I can communicate this way.’”

Spelling out her thoughts on her keypad, Kelli said: “Most day programs mainly deal with mental disabilities. Physical disabilities are overlooked. I’m not mentally disabled, but you guys will adapt things for me. This is a great place.”

Live Yes is a day program for adults with developmental disabilities that celebrates the unique abilities each person brings to the studio. With Kelli, that meant adapting programming to meet her physical needs.

For a class on splatter painting, for example, Kelli and her staff spent a few minutes brainstorming on how best to approach the medium. Kelli asked for someone to hold a stick out in front of her so that she could hit it with a paintbrush. It worked, and quickly Kelli was painting with the rest of the class.

“That’s one of the things about our staff that I’m so proud of — most of them are artists, but teaching art is not their only job,” Live Yes Director Craig Casados said. “Their job is to cultivate relationships and provide a safe and enjoyable environment to everybody here. If you work here, you do a little bit of everything, and our staff embraces that.

“That’s why our clients feel so safe and

secure here. They understand every staff member here will do anything for them.”

Recently Kelli announced that she wanted to learn sewing.

“Kelli has improved her motor skills and she’s grown so much, we’ve gotten used to the idea that she can do anything she sets her mind to — but we still thought, wow, that’s a lot,” Scholz said. “We just had to figure out how to help her work with a sewing machine.”

The program had a sewing machine donated, and staff went to work modifying it to fit Kelli. Soon enough Kelli was sewing.

“Up here, Kelli’s a PhD, man,” said Casados, tapping a forefinger to his temple. “Our staff had to learn to work with her. But we train our staff to multi-task, to be able to work with everybody, to meet people’s needs no matter what they are.

“We’ve gotten to the point with Kelli where there’s no limit with her.”

In addition, Live Yes staff works with Kelli to make sure she can physically manage the act of creating art in various mediums. With a modified form of physical therapy, stretching and exercises, Kelli’s mother Lynne said Kelli has gained more mobility and strength working at Live Yes than she did in years of standard physical therapy.

“I can’t imagine not having Live Yes for Kelli to come to,” Lynne said. “This is one place I know, no matter what, that she’s perfectly safe, with people who have her wellbeing and her happiness totally at the forefront. She comes home and immediately starts telling me what she did that day, and what happened, and what she gets to do next. This is the only place that ever given her that.

“The staff finds a way to enable people to be the best they possibly can be. It’s phenomenal. They focus on the individual, not the disability. They’re amazing that way.

“The staff is an incredible cast of characters. They’re all extraordinarily talented artists in their own right. The clients make the staff better people, not just the other way around. I can’t imagine any of the staff here being anywhere else — they’re perfect here; everyone here is perfect at the same time. They go off and do other things, but here they’re perfect for that moment in time.”

LIVE YES Kelli has grown so much at RHD’s Live Yes Studios in Lincoln, Nebraska, that program director Craig Casados says: “There is no limit with her.”



RHD Rise Above promotes recovery

Annalisa has maintained her sobriety for two years after decades of struggling. The turning point for her was the day she found RHD's Rise Above.

"I so appreciate the support I got at Rise Above. It was a life-changing experience for me," Annalisa said. "I still have scars, but I can deal with things, I'm getting stronger. I will be forever grateful to the people at Rise Above. They were all so supportive and helped me change my life."

Rise Above is a licensed drug and alcohol outpatient counseling program that offers a variety of services to meet the needs of individuals in the areas of addiction, anger management and domestic violence.

Annalisa is just one of the many people who've passed through Rise Above and are now successfully maintaining their sobriety. Ernest, another Rise Above alumni, summed up his experience in one word: "Wonderful."

"For years I was addicted to drugs and alcohol, I kept getting locked up, and I didn't know a way out," Ernest said. "Rise Above took me out of my comfort zone and taught me responsibility. I'm so grateful for that program and the people there. My life is phenomenal now. They told me if I was willing to do the work, I could change my life. And they were right!"

In the most recent client survey at Rise Above, 92 percent of clients in the program during 2017 had not re-offended while in treatment, and 100 percent of respondent clients surveyed at discharge reported feeling listened to and respected by staff, and reported feeling confident they'd learned the tools to help them maintain sobriety upon leaving treatment.

"Rise Above is committed to engaging clients with respect and dignity for the purposes of serving their needs," said Rise Above Director Hannah Hill. "We're very friendly and welcoming; we never want people to call and get a recording or feel like they're just being sent somewhere. From the front desk to the director, every person our clients encounter give them the sense that they really want to help. We personalize treatment to focus on what's really meaningful to the client, as they work to get through a difficult period in their lives."

Like all RHD addiction recovery programs, Rise Above provides cutting-edge counseling programs rooted in evidenced-based practices.

"We really preach the importance of providing trauma-informed services," Hill said. "Rise Above staff regularly participates in trainings and initiatives, and try to operate from a holistic perspective to treat individuals struggling with addiction and who may have a history of trauma."

"We work very deliberately through discharge planning, to measure and look at what are the holes in people's recovery, and what services do they need wrapped around them? A big portion of our people stay in treatment, because we know recovery isn't finite; it's not like you're done with treatment and you snap your fingers, and: No more addiction! We want to take a look at deeper things that impact addiction, so that Rise Above clients lead fulfilling lives in recovery long after they've left our program."

"I knew I needed to do something different to become sober and remain sober," said Luke, a new client at Rise Above. "I love the staff here. They made me comfortable; it's been great. I'm using a lot of tools they've shown me. They're a good foundation for me, something I can rely on."

"Things are going real well for me now; I've got a full-time job, I'm responsible, I'm independent. I tell people, if you're looking for help, come here. They welcomed me with open arms and I saw a change in myself right away."

RISE ABOVE Clients like Luke (at right) work to maintain their recovery with support from the RHD Rise Above staff, pictured above.



RHD IN THE NEWS

CHANGING LIVES, MAKING HEADLINES

For more on these stories and other news about RHD's innovative programs around the country serving people of all abilities, please visit the Media Center at www.rhd.org.

Commonwealth Fund features RHD Iowa ACT teams in look at comprehensive care for adults with disabilities



The Commonwealth Fund, an organization established in 1918 to promote a high-performing health care system that achieves better access and improved quality for society's most vulnerable, featured RHD Iowa's ACT teams in an article titled: "Creating Better Systems of Care for Adults with Disabilities: Lessons for Policy and Practice." You can read the full story in the media center at www.rhd.org:

Resources for Human Development, a national human services provider, runs 13 assertive community treatment (ACT) programs, which deliver and coordinate intensive mental health services for people whose lives are too unstable to be treated in a clinic setting.

In Iowa, for example, a nurse, mental health counselor, substance use specialist, and peer support counselor make home visits to help people living with mental illnesses often compounded by substance use disorders. The ACT team visited one man on the day he was released from jail, finding him temporary housing and making daily trips to deliver his medication for bipolar disorder. After a few months, he had moved into permanent housing and no longer required the daily visits. With intensive support from ACT staff, he has remained stably housed for 10 months, without hospitalizations or incarcerations.

The field team is supported by a psychiatrist and psychiatric nurse practitioner who offer virtual visits to clients via iPads or laptops. While nurses monitor clients' health status and liaise with their primary care providers, peer support specialists offer advice based on their firsthand experiences, says Gina Hiler, RHD regional director. "They might talk to clients about practical strategies for their diet, activity, and medication regimens while they're in recovery. They also connect people to natural supports in the community, whether that involves going with them to AA or NA meetings or going out for pizza," she says. "ACT is a seven-day-a-week, 365-day-a-year program."

Among the 50 people receiving ACT services in the Waterloo, Iowa, region during the program's first year, 23 percent have had psychiatric hospitalizations, compared with 40 percent in one large study of ACT participants. Nearly all (93 percent) have

remained stably housed during their first year of engagement with the program, and 83 percent have had no arrests or other law enforcement involvement (compared with 67 percent in the large study of ACT participants).

RHD Iowa ACT-Waterloo serves participants in a 30-mile service territory, while RHD Iowa ACT-Cedar Rapids serves a 60-mile radius of the Cedar Rapids office in the ECR MHDS region. RHD CROSS ACT serves the seven counties of the CROSS MHDS region.

RHD Shared Living in South Dakota profiled on KELO-TV: 'New Option for Adults With Developmental Disabilities'

KELO-TV in South Dakota featured a story on how RHD Shared Living supports Ben, who has developmental disabilities, and his family by providing a safe and caring environment where Ben can live a full and meaningful life with as much independence as possible. Ben's mother Debbie Graff calls the support they've received at RHD Shared Living "just a blessing." See the video in the media center on www.rhd.org.

"That was always a dream of ours. We weren't sure it was going to come true, but it did," Ben's mom Debbie Graff said.

Kayla Harris and Jenna Askelson have taken on the role as Ben's caregivers through RHD Shared Living in South Dakota.

"So this environment where it's small, it's quiet, where it's his home—he gets to operate things. It's his bathroom it's his kitchen, those type of things—are just a lot more meaningful in his life," RHD Shared Living director Kelli Anderson said.

Main Line Wine Gala benefits RHD's innovative services

RHD welcomed Elizabeth Neuman of Joseph Phelps Vineyards as honorary chair for the 2018 Main Line Wine Gala, which benefited RHD's Center for Creative Works, La Casa and Healing Ajax.

Elizabeth visited RHD's Center for Creative Works, a unique, creative arts program for adults with intellectual disabilities.

"You could tell how much the staff cared for the people there, and how the artists felt so valued," Elizabeth said. "It was such a wonderful experience."



AT THE GALA Honorary Chair Elizabeth Neuman with supporter Tom Tierney

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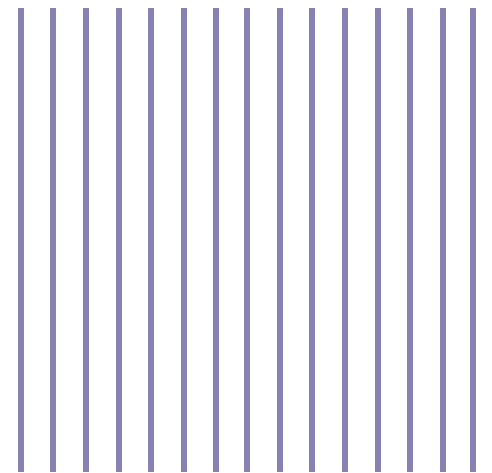
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Your support helps provide the resources people of all abilities need as they work to build their most successful lives. You can help support caring, effective and innovative programs that emphasize the person in the service, with a belief that each human being, no matter what their challenges, should be treated with dignity and respect. You can help give people the opportunity to develop to their full potential, improving the quality of life and creating brighter futures for all RHD clients.

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- Ms. Susan Langmuir
- Mr. & Mrs. Morton Levitt
- Mr. Darren Linkin
- Ms. Katherine Locke
- M M I Preparatory School
- Mr. John McClenny
- Mr. & Mrs. William McKenna
- Ms. Dionne McLeod
- Mr. Douglas Means
- Merck Foundation
- Meriwether-Godsey Inc.
- Dr. Dori Middleman
- Mr. & Mrs. R. Bruce Miller
- Mr. & Mrs. Shawn Mooring
- Mr. Stephen P. Morse
- Kaki Moyce
- Ms. Donna Mundy
- Mrs. Sheila G. Mundy
- Serhij Nahornyj
- Ms. Nuriya Neumann & Ms. Jessica Gantz
- Mr. Derek Nixon
- Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel Nucci
- Ms. Eleanor Nunan
- Ms. Ann M. O'Brien
- H. J. O'Donovan
- Ms. Marsha Olian
- Sherri Oppe
- Lauren Orso
- Paladin Partners LLC
- Mr. Daniel Peterman
- Mrs. Lynn Piccirillo & Mr. Jay Piccirillo
- Pleasant Valley Presbyterian Church

- Presbyterian Women
- Zahra Quartz
- Ms. Sara Reed
- The Reinvestment Fund
- Judge Marjorie O. Rendell
- Mr. Brian Rhodes
- Mr. Travis Rhodes
- Mr. Robert Ricci
- Ms. Donna Rogers
- Ms. Marcia J. Rogers
- Ms. Barbara Romaine
- Ms. Jennifer Rose
- Mrs. Sandra Salasin
- Ms. Dene Sanchez
- Mr. & Mrs. Keith W. Scheer
- Ms. Laurie Scheff
- Mr. Robert Schuhl
- Mr. David Schultheisz
- Ms. Cynthia D. Shaw
- Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Sheard
- Mr. Bruce Shirreff
- Ms. Barbara Silverstein
- Ms. Alicia M. Smith
- Ms. Heidi Stadel
- Ms. Denise Stein
- Ms. Tanya Sulikowski
- Ms. Erica Thomas
- Mr. Weylin Traugott
- Mr. Joe H. Tucker
- Ms. Elizabeth Umbro
- Ms. Kristina Unger
- Mr. Brent Waters
- Randi Weinberg
- Ms. Cora Weiner
- Mr. & Mrs. Thomas R. Witman
- Womens Club of Upper Merion
- Mr. & Mrs. Martin H. Young



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Backstage Pass



Nationally-renowned comedian Cameron Esposito (center) hosted **RHD Morris Home** at her sold-out show in Philadelphia, inviting Morris Home program director Laura Sorensen and lead therapist Kade Collins (right) on stage to talk about Morris Home's comprehensive services for the transgender community. Special thanks to Amber Hikes (at left), executive director of the Philadelphia Office of LGBT Affairs, for her continued support.