

LEADER

A Quarterly Publication of Opportunities Unlimited

"Maximizing Personal Potential through Dignified and Purposeful Living"

End of Year Giving

OU is fortunate to be part of a community where people and businesses are generous and inclusive. Because of the caring nature of many, we are able to provide and improve upon the services we perform each day for persons served. As the year draws to a close, we ask that you consider Opportunities Unlimited in your year-end charitable giving. All gifts, in any amount, are greatly appreciated and will allow us to continue to excel and expand our services to individuals and families in Siouxland. In 2017 we saw change, growth and new partnerships! Here are some highlights:

- OU has partnered with the City of Sioux City to provide vocational training to our persons served through the Parks and Recreation Department.
- OU continues to work with community partners, like the Sioux City Art Center, and support events and activities such as Art Splash and art therapy classes for our persons served.
- OU employs several Certified Brain Injury Specialists, and are one of the few ACBIS sites in the Midwest.
- OU has been able to make necessary home improvements and acquire new vehicles with support of local businesses, donations from individuals, and grants.
- OU has experienced substantial growth in Employment Services, providing job skills training in the community and successfully matching employers with persons served who have developed required vocational skills.
- OU's "Gotta Brain Getta Helmet" program has allowed thousands of children in Siouxland to be trained on the importance of brain injury prevention while also providing bicycle helmets to many.

To learn more about supporting OU, please call us at 712-277-8295 or go to our website at www.opportunitiesunlimited.com/donations.



OU Participates in Memorial Field Fun Day

Community is a powerful word. Socialization is a cultivating experience. Opportunities Unlimited's Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) department has made a way to incorporate both in fun and exciting ways – sOUper Saturdays! Every Saturday at OU, the HCBS department offers an activity or event for our persons served to attend. It's a chance for them to get together and have fun while socializing and learning new things. This fall we have attended Art Splash, a Morningside College Football game, the movies, and Leeds park – just to name a few! We also partake in creative ways to express

ideas through art projects and science experiments. One of our most treasured events was participating in a day of football fun at Memorial Field, hosted by Bishop Heelan Catholic High School! This opportunity was such an enjoyable experience and one that our persons served have not stopped talking about. They were able to feel what it's like to be

part of a team and work together. Students and athletes led football drills, cheers, and scrimmages while all wore team jerseys and practiced on the new field. Trying new things and meeting new people is often hard for our persons served and to experience something like this is unforgettable. These experiences require courage, open possibilities that are endless, and enable individuals to grow. Our persons served experienced all those things thanks to the amazing students and faculty involved. This is something that will stay in their minds and hearts forever!

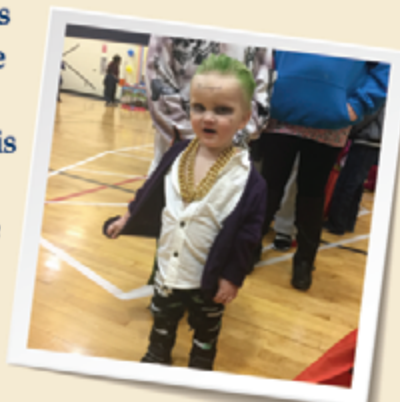


Halloween Fun

In addition to all the excitement that goes along with Halloween at OU, OU hosted its Fourth Annual "Trunk or Treat" event on October 26th. Although originally planned to be held in the OU parking lot, it was moved indoors to the OU gym due to the weather. Staff and persons served decorated their designated areas in spooky fashion, created interactive games, and distributed prizes and treats for the children in the community, persons served in the HCBS department, and children of staff. This year many donations were made to support the event – special thanks to Chick-fil-A, Hirschbach, Culvers, SMEF, and other private contributors who helped with OU's Trunk or



Treating! We had a record turnout this year, with approximately 300 individuals attending our event. Jenn Barcus, event leader, stated, "The response this year has been fantastic! It's great that so many from our community have joined OU in this annual event!" Knowing how well things went this year, we are already looking forward to next year and how we can expand this event!



Into the Streets

"Into the Streets" is a program led by Morningside College students, where they spend a day participating in community projects while supporting non-profit organizations. OU was glad to be on the receiving end of this support, and students helped tackle a number of "improvement projects" that included touch up painting, cleaning our vans, and helping with landscape projects. "We appreciate any and all help to support our properties and persons served," stated Susan Vondrak, who helped coordinate this event on behalf of OU, "The students of Morningside College certainly made a difference!"

Students from Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools also helped at OU during their Homecoming week. Students took on a number of projects and also joined in therapies with persons served. Our persons served and staff enjoyed having people from the community learn more about our mission and services we provide, while engaging in meaningful activities.



We Love Our Staff

OU Celebrated Direct Support Professional Week September 10th – 16th. This weeklong recognition week is dedicated to the many individuals throughout our country who serve others, including those with brain injuries and other special needs. "Our staff are amazing in many ways," stated Jennifer McCabe, President & CEO. "They are dedicated to our mission and serving others. It's great that we can all take time this week to honor them and let them know how much of an impact they make on the lives of many." The OU Leadership Team had different activities and treats for staff each day to remind them how much they're appreciated. The Iowa Association of Community Providers (IACP) also held a contest to recognize providers throughout the state and OU had four individuals selected and recognized. Congratulations to Mona Tremmel, Melody Bentson, Kevin Grell, and Aida Guzman! "Although OU has several employees who would be worthy of this recognition, it's impressive that OU had four employees selected considering the number of providers throughout the state!" stated McCabe.

I MAY ONLY BE
one person
But I can be
ONE
PERSON
Who makes
a difference!

Community Integration & Therapy

Persons served, just like many of us, enjoy spending time participating in various community activities. Sometimes this can be challenging, as it takes additional resources that we don't always have immediate access. The therapy team has recently expanded by adding another rehab technician. Aundrea Newell, who joined OU's residential team earlier this year, has taken on a new role where she will be assisting in the exercise therapy room and also conducting community integration outings with persons served. She has taken persons served out to breakfast, to the movies, and grocery shopping – just to name a few. Persons served look forward to getting out more often and are thankful that Aundrea has this focused role. The therapy team has also been busy planning events for everyone to participate; this includes a "Bags" tournament, SuperBowl party, and chili cookoff.



Nursing Students Learn at OU

Over the last few months, the OU Nursing Department has had the opportunity to host nursing students from several different organizations. Briar Cliff University's senior nursing students, Western Iowa Tech's Hybrid Program nursing students, as well as a group of nursing students from South Korea that are visiting the United States for an Immersion Program, have all had the opportunity to come to OU and job shadow with our amazing Nursing Department! The students have been able to interact with our persons served, hear about how they came to live at OU, and how their rehab has progressed as they have met goals. They have been able to learn about different adaptive equipment and how it assists our person served in their daily lives. This has been a great opportunity for the students to learn about community based rehab and open their eyes to a different aspect of nursing. Our person served have enjoyed interacting with the students and sharing the stories of their lives. As one of the students said after visiting OU, "This has really opened by eyes to how quickly life can change."

