

LEADER

A Quarterly Publication of Opportunities Unlimited

"Maximizing Personal Potential through Dignified and Purposeful Living"

LiteGait Therapy

Opportunities Unlimited continually strives to provide the best rehabilitation for our persons served living at our facility. Our team is constantly researching the best methods possible to provide safe, but efficient, intervention techniques to further improve the outcomes for the individuals we serve. OU recently purchased a LiteGait, a mechanical device where the user can be suspended in order to safely work on mobility with functional tasks. The LiteGait works by suspending the user, allowing the therapists to be hands free in order to further focus on body mechanics and weight bearing in a safe environment. The Lite Gait is allowing OU's therapists to treat complex persons served, who may have been previously ineligible for gait training due to the complexity of their condition. Persons served are receiving increased therapy, longer sessions, and demonstrate an increased sense of accomplishment, as the LiteGait helps to provide a secure environment where the therapist can safely focus on the person served versus worrying about injury to themselves or the individual. The best part of the new equipment, is that the persons served and therapists are enjoying the outcomes and the intervention, making therapy exciting and motivating for the persons living at OU.



Making the Most of Summer

Persons served of Opportunities Unlimited are making the most of summer by taking advantage of the many attractions in Siouxland and neighboring communities. The organization experiences an increase in service requests in the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program during summer months as a majority of the persons served in that program are school aged. With summer in full swing, our staff are helping individuals develop life skills while taking part in fun activities. Some of the summer activities our staff and persons served have enjoyed include: the YMCA and pools, splash pads, Sioux City Explorer's baseball games, county fairs and community events, Omaha Zoo, disc golf, Sioux City museum, Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center, fishing, and walking the local trails. We are fortunate to live in a community that has so much to offer and staff members who are committed to making memorable experiences for persons served.



You've Been Ticketed

This summer marks the 5th consecutive year of Opportunities Unlimited's partnership with the Sioux City Police Department and local Siouxland Dairy Queens through the *You've Been Ticketed* program. As an extension of OU's *Gotta Brain, Getta Helmet* program, *You've Been Ticketed* is designed to encourage children to wear helmets while riding their bikes. If children are seen wearing their helmets while riding bikes, scooters, skateboards, etc. by either Sioux City Police Officers or Volunteer Trailblazers, they will receive a ticket for one free Dairy Queen ice cream cone. This partnership benefits all parties involved. Children who are practicing proper bicycle safety are rewarded with a sweet treat, Police Officers can connect with children in a positive and supportive manner, and Dairy Queen promotes community outreach.

Opportunities Unlimited also benefits from *You've Been Ticketed* by promoting brain injury awareness in the Siouxland Community. President and CEO, Jennifer McCabe states, "It is our hope, that if we can prevent just one brain injury, we feel like it's been a success," "Through *Gotta Brain, Getta Helmet* and *You've Been Ticketed*, just a couple of local programs, we are able to further support our mission and spread awareness of brain injury prevention."



OU 22nd Annual Golf Tournament

The 22nd Annual Golf Tournament was held on Friday, July 19th at the Sioux City Country Club. It might have been OU's hottest and most humid tournament yet, but it did not stop our golfers and volunteers from having a great day! This year, we had a full tournament with several returning teams and a wide spectrum of supporting organizations and businesses either sponsoring a team, hole or donating giveaway prizes. Riverside Technologies, Inc. (RTI) upheld their former title for the fourth consecutive year as the tournament's Title Sponsor while Northwest Bank supported the tournament as Cart Sponsor for the third consecutive year. We also welcomed a few new teams to our annual event, such as Pinney Plumbing, NAI United, Plains Mechanical Services, Brown Wegher Construction, Family Healthcare – South Sioux Clinic, and Troy Betsworth's Team.

Apart from the many raffle prizes our golfers were eligible to win, they also had the opportunity to bid on some great prizes in OU's first ever silent auction. Tory Norby, OU's Speech and Language Pathologist, played a major role in acquiring several of the sport-memorabilia silent auction items. The most popular auction items included, four tickets to a home Minnesota Twins Game, a Big Frig Cooler, and an autograph Green Bay Packer football by the 2018 team. We appreciate all those involved in donating and bidding on the various auction items.

The tournament's success would not have been possible without the help of the fifty OU volunteers who welcomed golfers at every tee box and helped with various tasks throughout the day. We also appreciate the many staff members who stayed behind to keep OU business running as usual. Furthermore, the Sioux City Country Club did an excellent job of running an efficient tournament under the leadership of Mitch Merrill. Together, all parties contributed to the overall success of the tournament while recognizing the needs of our persons served.

OU is forever grateful for the continuum of support from the Siouxland Community who help OU achieve our

mission of Maximizing Personal Potential through Dignified and Purposeful Living. The funds acquired from this year's tournament will go toward a new van with a wheelchair lift for the individuals we are so honored to serve. Tournament Director, Susan Vondrak states, "It is great to see so many Community members come together to support

OU, whether it is putting in a golf team, being a hole sponsor or donating items to give away to the golfers. Their kindness has helped OU and the individuals that we serve better their lives."

Spotlight on Staff

Terry Loutsch joined the OU Employment Services team in May as a Job Developer. In this role, Terry works with local businesses to seek out potential employment opportunities for individuals with brain injuries and other special needs. Passionate about serving others and seeking opportunities for individuals to live to their fullest potential, Terry is a strong advocate for those whom we provide services. In his limited time at OU, he has worked closely with Iowa Vocational Rehab Services (IVRS) to conduct job assessments and seek out employment opportunities for those in our program. We continue to see positive experiences as persons served have found meaningful employment and have made an impact on local businesses. Terry has been in the human services industry for a number of years; we are fortunate to have added him to our OU team where can lend his experience and passion for those we serve.



OU Welcomes Nursing Students

With summertime whipping along at lightning speed it will soon be time to think about going back to school. This summer the OU Nursing Department is hosting 27 South Korean Healthcare students. The students are currently attending Western Iowa Tech (WITCC) for a four-month program before returning to their homes in South Korea. The goal of the program is for the students to find similarities and differences in healthcare between South Korea and the United States. The hope is that they will bring the best of both to the care they will give their future patients. In addition to visiting other healthcare organizations in



and around Sioux City the students will visit OU in groups of two with each group spending several hours over two days. Coming this fall the Nursing Department will be hosts to thirteen Briar Cliff Nursing students. These young people will be focusing their attention on OU's new Community Based Neurobehavioral Program. They will be shadowing the nurses to discover how to care for those with brain injury and prepare them to return to their home communities. The OU nurses always look forward to sharing what they do and impacting those just entering the healthcare field with the importance of our mission of "Maximizing Personal Potential through Dignified and Purposeful Living."



Community Employment

OU's Employment Services Program provides skill development to persons served so they can advance the skills to obtain community employment. We've been able to find success matching persons served with numerous community businesses throughout the Siouxland area. The industries we have placed dedicated employees include food production, retail, grocery, nursing homes and assisted living, legal offices, hotels, and shipping.



One individual who has become a loyal employee and community favorite of a local restaurant, is Corinne. She first started accessing services from OU while in middle school, and has progressed through the Pre-Vocational Program and a few years ago started her job at Buffalo Alice (BAs), located downtown on Historic 4th Street. In her position, she sets and clears tables, replenishes the buffet and on Friday she enjoys their pizza – which is one of her all time favorite perks! Her supervisor has shared that patrons enjoy Corinne's positive and welcoming attitude and look forward to seeing her on each visit. Corinne takes great pride in her job, which is evident in her attendance record and repeated conversations about how great their pizza is.

