

# RISE REPORTER

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Published by Rise, Inc., a nonprofit agency assisting people in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota advance their lives through employment, housing, and personal growth



**Bob Meagher wraps a pallet of finished product for shipping at Liberty Carton Company in Brooklyn Park. Rise President Lynn Noren and Mike Fiterman, chairman/CEO of Liberty Diversified International, discuss their mutually beneficial “partnership that works” on page 2.**

# Rise and Liberty Carton have enjoyed a mutually beneficial *'partnership that works'* since 2003

As the veteran college football coach, Lou Holtz, was known to say, 'I don't need all the best players; I need all of my players doing their best.' That's what we get from the Rise workers – everyone working hard and giving their very best. It's true of the whole organization."

Mike Fiterman, chairman/CEO of Liberty Diversified International (LDI), was speaking with Rise President Lynn Noren about the "partnership that works" which the two companies have enjoyed for more than 10 years.

"While the spirit of the whole team – Rise workers and supervisors, and Liberty Carton customers and employees -- increases the impact we have on the community, it's still the success of each person that makes this relationship so valuable."

Noren pointed out that with the unemployment rate for people who have disabilities at 70 percent, having an opportunity to work for a great company like Liberty Carton, an LDI subsidiary, and be a productive member of society is important to one's feeling of self-worth.

Currently, there are about 45 people from Rise working at Liberty Carton. At the sprawling Brooklyn Park facility, they assemble a wide range of custom corrugated packaging, display, and fulfillment products to be shipped to Liberty customers around the world.

Noting that "Diversity" is Liberty's middle name, Fiterman said Rise workers bring great diversity to his workforce that would be difficult to duplicate on its own. "I think we have

all learned a lot from Rise workers, especially in regard to overcoming challenges and building on our own individual strengths."

Although open to bringing in Rise workers, Fiterman admits he originally was a little concerned with issues like worker safety, supervision, and transportation.

"But Rise made that seamless with outstanding staff, great workers, and reliable transportation. They made it all work."

Noren said that for her, a key characteristic of a good partnership is working through challenging times. "Sometimes we had to put our heads together to grapple with an issue, both being willing to give and take some, and then solve it to both our satisfaction."

"Rise and Liberty have a mutual trust, a commitment to excellence, and care about each other," Fiterman added. "I know what Rise workers and supervisors do and how well they do it, so it takes the worry out of whether the work will get done on time to our quality standards."

Noren also mentioned how much Rise workers and staff appreciate being treated respectfully, enjoying dinners, gifts, and special recognitions available to all Liberty employees.



Lynn Noren and Mike Fiterman at LDI's headquarters in New Hope.

For instance, each year Liberty gives out special holiday gifts in December. The last few years, it was a check for \$25 which the recipient could make out to the person, group, or organization of his or her own choosing.

"It was an exciting opportunity for Rise workers to be able to donate to a cause or agency that they supported," said Noren. "They learned from Liberty how gratifying it is to give back. I know it meant a lot to each one of them."

"We look at Rise in two major ways," Fiterman added. "It is a trusted vendor, as well as an agency that is effectively addressing critical societal issues and deserves our support. It's been our privilege to be a part of this partnership that brings added value to the individuals, our companies, and the community."

Founded in 1918, LDI is a privately held family of companies in the paper and packaging, workplace environments, healthcare, building products, and precision machining markets.

# RISE to the OCCASION

## THIRD ANNUAL *Celebrate Rise* FUNDRAISING GALA

Thursday, October 2, 2014  
5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Minneapolis Marriott Northwest  
7025 Northland Drive North  
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota

Free parking | Live music

Master of Ceremonies:  
Jason DeRusha, WCCO-TV

5:30 Social Hour and Games

6:30 Dinner

7:30 Awards Program, Live Auction,  
and Fund-a-Need for the  
Advancing Lives Fund

### TICKETS GO ON SALE AUGUST 1, 2014

Please watch for ticket information on our website: [www.rise.org](http://www.rise.org)

If you have questions about the event or to inquire about  
event sponsorship, contact Noel McCormick at Rise:  
*phone: 763-783-2832 | email: nmccormick@rise.org*

BECAUSE EVERYONE DESERVES

*to enjoy a*

SELF-DETERMINED LIFE

# After owning her own design and sewing business in Russia, Nadia puts skills and talents to work at Airtex

## Being deaf, Nadia appreciates support from Rise's MEC program to find just the right job



When Nadia and her husband Leonid moved from Russia to Texas about five years ago to be closer to their only daughter, they knew they would face many challenges making a new life in the United States.

Although they both had marketable skills, they had trouble finding employment as they are deaf and neither understood English. Nadia's daughter, son-in-law, and friends taught them American Sign Language (ASL).

The couple moved to Minnesota in 2011, because there were more Russian people and culture here. Her first job was cleaning her pastor's home. She and her husband also found work cleaning apartments, but that didn't prove to be a good fit.

Eager to find a better job, Nadia went to the Minnesota Workforce Center. They referred her to the Minnesota Employment Center (MEC) for People Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing program which Rise co-manages with Lifetrack in St. Paul. She and Career Planning Specialist Mary Jo Duncan worked together to tailor her job search to find something suitable to her interests and skills.

Nadia went to work with a local retailer, tagging and preparing mer-

chandise on the sales floor. She enjoyed the job, but it wasn't full-time work, didn't pay benefits, and was a long bus ride from home.

So Mary Jo and Nadia continued searching. A talented seamstress, Nadia had owned her own business in Russia for 35 years doing designing and sewing wedding dresses and other clothing. In May 2013, Mary Jo found a job lead for a sewing position at Airtex Design in Northeast Minneapolis. Airtex was so impressed with the results of her sewing test that they hired her on the spot.

Through an ASL interpreter, Nadia indicated that she enjoys her challenging work at Airtex very much, especially the variety of high-end products she works on. Located in Northeast Minneapolis, Airtex Design Group designs a wide range of cutting-edge and innovative home fashions, luggage, clothing, and other unique products.

"Nadia is a very dedicated, reliable employee, and is a joy to have around," said her supervisor, Production Manager Lorna Kalibatas. "We value her attention to detail and her quality of work."

But the best part of her job, Nadia said, is the friendly people. She is teaching some of them some ASL so they can communicate better.

Mary Jo meets with Nadia twice a month to assist her with interpreting and communication issues, filling out paperwork as Nadia doesn't read English, and helping with other things that may pop up.

Nadia signed that she appreciates the full support she gets from Mary Jo. "She is wonderful and when I was frustrated, she helped me so much. It was hard at first, but I had to be patient and keep trying to find a good job; I'm very happy here."

Using her SmartPhone, Nadia often relies on [signingsavy.com](http://signingsavy.com) and an English-to-Russian translation app to ease communication challenges.

Nadia said she is proud she and her husband have made it on their own without support from the American government. "We have worked and worked to make a good life here. I say 'thank you' to everyone."

"Nadia's persistence certainly has paid off," said Mary Jo. "She deserves all of her success and I am very proud of her."

Leonid works as a carpenter for a home remodeling company. They have been married for 34 years and enjoy spending time with friends at Deaf Life Church in St. Paul. They also love to travel to Kentucky to visit her daughter's family, including three grandchildren ages three to seven.

# Courtney faces housing, transportation, mental health challenges head on, focuses on a great future for her family

At times, her problems seemed almost insurmountable, but with tenacity and determination, this young mother of two small boys is moving forward with great success.

Just two years ago, Courtney Gapski was unemployed and living in a St. Cloud-area homeless shelter with her children. Realizing her family needed professional assistance, Courtney went to Central Minnesota Mental Health Center for services. Counseling sessions and support were a big help for everyone.

A new job at Preferred Credit in St. Cloud enabled Courtney and her sons to move into their own apartment, but it stretched her budget much too tightly and was not located in a good neighborhood.

In February 2013, Courtney's mental health case manager referred her to Rise's Central Minnesota Works program in St. Cloud where she began meeting twice a month with Lea Engnell, a mental health and housing support specialist.

Together, Courtney and Lea addressed her challenging issues. She had lost her driver's license and didn't have a car so it took her more than two hours in the morning and evening using public transportation to make the loop between home, her children's day care, and work. It was exhausting

and stressful for everyone, and left little family time.

Courtney and Lea were able to find more affordable housing in a better neighborhood closer to work. They also worked on getting her driver's license reinstated.



*Courtney's in the driver's seat, but appreciates support from Rise's Lea Engnell.*

One of Courtney's biggest recent accomplishments was budgeting for a car. "After not having my own for two years, buying a car in March has transformed our lives!" she said. "Our morning and evening commutes have been cut to an hour, giving us so much more time for family activities, and relieving a lot of stress."

Courtney and Lea continue to work together on budget issues so she can repair her credit record and repay student loans.

"It's been an especially tough year with my son, who is now 8 years

old, having been in and out of the hospital," Courtney added. "But despite all the ups and downs, I have managed to keep moving forward. Lea is good about giving me the push I need sometimes and that's very helpful."

Courtney has enjoyed her current job for two years and recently received a promotion to performance management associate. She has also worked in health care and hopes to someday return to school to get a degree in criminal justice, perhaps working with troubled juveniles.

"I think Courtney is one of the most resilient women I have met in a long time," said Lea. "Despite many difficult situations, she is strong and knows what she wants; I admire her tenacity.

We all need support at different times in our lives and I'm happy to help Courtney explore all the options. She has her hands full, but she's doing a great job juggling it all."

"There have been times when I wanted to give up because there was so much to deal with," Courtney admitted. "But it's so nice to have someone who's in my corner to talk things over with. Lea challenges me, but she also tells me I'm doing a good job and I need to hear that. And we continue to set goals for the future."

For information about Rise's mental health and housing support services in Central Minnesota, call Amy Carter at 320-656-5608.

# Lino Lakes City Hall employees count on Matt's attention to detail and solid work ethic in critical document scanning work



Amid the boxes and piles of documents stacked in an office at the end of a quiet hallway in the Lino Lakes City Hall, Matt Perrault methodically goes about his important work. Since October 2013, Matt has been scanning into a computer years' worth of city records, accounting reports, and official paperwork prior to them being shredded.

"Matt is an excellent worker and we could not be more pleased with him," said Lisa Hogstad-Osterhues, deputy city clerk. "He is dependable, reliable, detail-orientated, focused and hard-working. We appreciate how meticulous he is about his work."

Matt, 23, graduated from Centennial High School in 2009 and then participated in Project SEARCH, a statewide collaboration which places students who have disabilities in area businesses to gain job skills and experience. He worked in an unpaid internship at Medtronic, rotating between three different office locations and departments.

There he learned valuable computer skills, data entry, record scanning, photocopying, filing, and high-speed scanning, including importing, indexing, and verifying – all which helped prepare him for competitive employment. Matt also worked at University of Minnesota Physicians in their Human Resources Division doing records management.

Referred to Rise for career planning and job placement services by Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), Matt worked at Rise's Community Integration Program in Coon Rapids doing clerical and production subcontract work during his job search. With assistance from Mary Steinmetz, a placement specialist with Rise's Milestones program, he thought the job with Lino Lakes matched his skill set and would give him an opportunity to grow.

Mary helped Matt prepare for his panel job interview, and once hired, she assisted in training him in on his new job. In the past several months, Matt has expanded his responsibilities by creating new computer file templates, as well as learning a new scanning process and laser-fiche program. The job is a twelve-month contracted position.

"I like getting my work done," said Matt who works about 25 hours a week. "I like seeing all the work I've completed, and the challenge of what's left to do. I know I do a good job and I'm proud of that. I'd like to stay with this job a long time."

Matt said he also enjoys getting two paychecks. After working his day hours at Lino Lakes City Hall, he takes Metro Mobility to the Anoka County Library branch in Circle Pines where he works early evenings. Matt started as a volunteer shelving books in 2010. He

*Matt's skill set was a good match for his job at Lino Lakes City Hall.*

enjoyed this work so much and was doing such a great job that the library hired him in October 2013. Between the two jobs, Matt works about 40 hours a week.

His friendly, supportive city hall co-workers have been impressed with how easily Matt was able to learn the computer hardware and software and figure some new things out on his own; they also appreciate his strong work ethic. Matt enjoys being included in potluck lunches and other social gatherings with his co-workers.

Matt said it's nice to know that Mary is available for guidance or support should he need help with any aspects of the job.

"But he hardly ever calls me!" Mary quickly pointed out with a laugh. "It has been really fun to see how Matt has grown and come out of his quiet shell. He always has a smile on his face and enjoys his co-workers. It has been an awesome opportunity for Matt to increase his social skills and gain meaningful work experience."

Matt, who has a twin sister, Jeanette, lives with younger sister Lisa and parents in Lino Lakes. In his free time, he enjoys playing the piano, working on his computer, and swimming in his backyard pool.

# Electrolux relies on Rise workers to assemble more than 6,000 components each day for home freezers

## 2014 First Quarter Quality Electrolux Scorecard was 98.9%!!

With their employees turning out a home freezer every ten seconds, employees in the Electrolux Major Appliance (EMA) Freezer Division need to have all the right parts at their fingertips. They rely on Rise workers to subassemble several of the components and meet their high quality standards.

Each work day, about 40 people at Rise's Spring Lake Park production facility assemble several different freezer components, including seven different fan motors, seven frost-free controls, one cold control, two fan shrouds, and two drain pans. Averaging more than 6,000 units each day, in April alone, Rise workers completed a total of 128,350 pieces to be shipped back to the Electrolux plant in St. Cloud.

Even more impressive than the numbers of components produced, however, is the quality score EMA assesses the Rise team for its work. For instance, in the first quarter of 2014, it was 98.9%! Electrolux's

Supplier Scorecard measures several operational performance metrics to come up with its rating.

Those working on the various Electrolux lines are proud of their work and look forward to the Scorecard being posted each month so they can check their work results.

"The Electrolux work is great because so many people of varying skill levels get to work on the contract," said Michele Warren, Rise's production manager. "Some of the Electrolux assembly is quite complex, so people have had to learn to read spec sheets, procedure listings, and schedules – even how to palletize the products and prepare for shipping. Electrolux has exceptionally high standards for quality and on-time delivery, and we are proud to consistently meet Electrolux's performance requirements."

"We're really good at Electrolux," said Shawn Lovejoy of Rise's Brain



*Abdidaq Botan assembles Electrolux fans with detailed precision.*

Injury Connections program. He is part of a finely tuned assembly team working together to produce fan motors. "There's a certain order we have to do things in and then we check the quality before we send it back to Electrolux."

Rise and Electrolux have been working together since August 2009, noted Rise's Sales & Marketing Representative Nancy Hoff.

"We are fortunate to work with some talented people at EMA who take time to help us understand their processes, updates and forecasts to do our job well," said Nancy. "The work we do for EMA not only brings variety and new skills to the table, but promotes a sense of pride and dedication. With trucks showing up daily, we have to be ready – and we are!"



*Jeff Havens constructs hundreds of the Electrolux components in a work day.*



# 2013 Rise, Inc. Annual Report

## RISE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Julie Weaver, Anoka  
Chair  
Steve Well, Shorewood  
Vice Chair  
Tom Kettleston, Plymouth  
Treasurer  
Gene Merriam, Coon Rapids  
Secretary  
Mark Bergmann, Minneapolis \*  
Jon Grunewald, Elk River  
Dixie Mengelkoch, Blaine  
Larry Pietrzak, Brooklyn Park  
Sherry Robinson, Andover \*  
Manfred Tatzmann, Brooklyn Park  
Mary Zins, Golden Valley  
\* Elected in 2014

## RISE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Lynn Noren, President  
Tim Dickie, Vice President  
Rosalin Chrest, FLMHC  
Mary Anderson  
Melinda Dannley  
Beth DePoint  
Jennifer Gajewski  
Dan Hagberg  
Tom Haglund  
Mike Harper  
Nancy Hoff  
Keith Hovland  
Noel McCormick  
Truc Pham  
Robert Reedy  
Kim Strandlund  
Michele Warren

## 2013 INCOME STATEMENT

Income	
Program service fees	\$ 11,969,490
Production and labor sales to public	9,125,464
Family Life Mental Health Center	2,772,792
Grants and special projects	2,350,189
Transportation	2,158,843
Program contracts	1,677,377
Donations/special events/United Way	305,372
Other	<u>278,134</u>
Total Income	\$ 30,637,661
Expenses	
Day Training and Habilitation Programs	\$ 10,241,869
Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Programs	3,181,508
Housing and Independent Living Programs	1,012,870
Adult Day Programs	546,576
Welfare-to-Work Programs	401,314
Family Life Mental Health Center	2,707,076
Production	6,303,148
Management and General	3,259,905
Transportation	2,336,807
Fundraising	<u>81,105</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 30,072,178

## 2013 BALANCE SHEET

Assets	
Current assets	\$ 2,539,216
Land, buildings and equipment	13,241,566
Less depreciation	(7,224,318)
Net land, buildings, and equipment	6,017,248
Other assets	<u>854,281</u>
Total Assets	\$ 9,410,745
Liabilities	
Current liabilities	\$ 3,342,500
Long-term debt	268,906
Other liabilities	<u>319,013</u>
Total Liabilities	\$ 3,930,419
Net Assets	
Net assets, unrestricted	\$ 15,113,192
Net assets, temporarily restricted	240,354
Net assets, permanently restricted	<u>126,780</u>
Total Net Assets	\$ 15,480,326

# Rise served 2,859 people in more than 40 housing support, employment, and personal growth programs throughout the Twin Cities and Central Minnesota

## Percentage of People Served by Rise's Service Lines

Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment:	34%
Day Training & Habilitation:	28%
Welfare to Work:	21%
Housing and Independent Living:	14%
Adult Day:	3%

## Percentage of People Served by Disability Groups

Mental health:	30%
Intellectual / developmental:	30%
Sensory (blind, deaf, hard of hearing):	6%
Traumatic brain injuries:	5%
Learning:	3%
Physical:	2%
Other barriers; no disability condition:	24%

## Employment Services

Competitive employment:	647
Center-based employment:	521
Community employment:	374
New placements:	296
Average hourly wage:	\$9.52
Average hours worked per week:	28

## Additional Agency Highlights

The Family Life Mental Health Center (FLMHC), a subsidiary of Rise located in Coon Rapids, served more than 3,500 people through its full range of mental health diagnostic and treatment services.

Rise's transportation fleet traveled more than 3.5 million miles taking people to and from work, daily transporting an average of 660 people.

Hundreds of people had the opportunity to participate in Life Enrichment activities, such as music therapy, Art Speaks, recreational/fitness activities, community volunteer projects, and community integration events.

Percentage of program participants who had a positive, affirmative statement about Rise services was 96%! *Said one:* "Everyone has gone above and beyond in helping me, they're concerned people, very kind and compassionate. I am very grateful and thankful for the wonderful stuff."

Percentage of stakeholders (family, social workers, referring agents, et al) who had a positive, affirmative statement about Rise services was 98%! *Said one:* "We feel that Rise does a wonderful job helping people reach a higher quality of life and increase their self-esteem. What Rise does best is they give each person a good chance to excel."

## Housing and Homelessness Prevention Services

Households receiving homeless outreach & referral services (people):	1,430
Emergency services/short-term housing support (households):	78
Community support programs/Independent living skill services (adults):	55

## County of Residence

Hennepin County:	48%
Anoka County:	28%
Central Minnesota Counties: (Stearns, Benton, Sherburne, Wright, Pine, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, and Chisago)	9%
Other Minnesota Counties:	15%

# Display Art Worldwide appreciates Rise crew's high quality work on important rush packaging project

In April Cliff Thelen, production manager for Display Arts Worldwide in Fridley, needed close to 300 display systems custom packaged and shipped out across the nation in less than a week to meet a client's deadline. Thelen realized that based on their busy production schedules, current work loads and other clients' deadlines, Display Arts was in need of additional skilled help to work on this rush project to satisfy an important client.

Thelen called Rise's Sales & Marketing Representative John Nielsen to see if he had a crew of workers he could send over to help on this important short-term project. Rise has been working with Display Arts since 2008 on a wide range of assembly and packaging jobs for their customers, most often at Rise's production facility in nearby Spring Lake Park.

"Rise has enjoyed the business relationship that we have with Display Arts Worldwide for the past seven years," said Nielsen. "They

have supported Rise's mission and have sought out additional work opportunities for us. Cliff and his team have always been great to work with and we look forward to growing our partnership."

Rise Employment Specialist Jebb Anderson brought a team of four workers to get the job done. It took them only three days to finish the rush order.

Account Executive Marty Moynihan appreciated their efforts. "What really helped us in having them do the work here is that as they finished individual orders, we could ship them out immediately. We didn't have to wait for the full order to be completed to start distribution. Not only did this help us with timing, but it cut our freight costs."



*Doug Golden (left) and Francis Hite were part of the crew who helped Display Ad meet their customer's needs.*

Maintaining Display Art's high quality standards on the project was the work crew's top priority.

"This was a win/win situation for us," said Thielen. "The Rise crew went to work quickly and finished the project early so we were able to beat our customer's expectations!"

In appreciation for their good work, Display Arts' President Tom MacGibbon treated the work crew to lunch their last day on the job.

Since 1925, Display Arts has been creating world-class tradeshow exhibits and point-of-purchase / retail displays. Their artisan staff handles the creative design, fabrication, and graphics, while their logistical professionals handle exhibit management, rentals, installation and dismantling, shipping, and warehousing of these customized products.

## ***A Partnership That Works!*** **Business-to-Business Solutions**

Rise welcomes the opportunity to discuss how together we can generate solutions that best meet some of your most pressing workforce and production challenges.

If you would like a free, no-obligation estimate, please contact

Rise's Sales & Marketing Representatives:

Nancy Hoff at 763-783-2807; email: [nhoff@rise.org](mailto:nhoff@rise.org)

John Nielsen at 763-792-2434; email: [jnielsen@rise.org](mailto:jnielsen@rise.org)

For more information, visit our website at: [www.rise.org/4/business-to-business-solutions.html](http://www.rise.org/4/business-to-business-solutions.html)

# Bergmann and Robinson excited to join Rise Board of Directors

The Rise Board of Directors elected two new members at its March meeting to serve a three-year term.

We welcome Mark Bergmann, a manager in Target's IT Department where he has worked for 13 years. Mark's interest in Rise was sparked when he volunteered to work at the 2013 *Celebrate Rise Fundraising Gala*. He said he was not only impressed with the event itself, but how enthusiastic and dedicated to Rise people were. Mark has served on several other advisory boards, many relating to education.

Sherry Robinson was also elected to Rise's Board of Directors.



*Rise's Board of Directors welcomed Mark Bergmann and Sherry Robinson in March.*

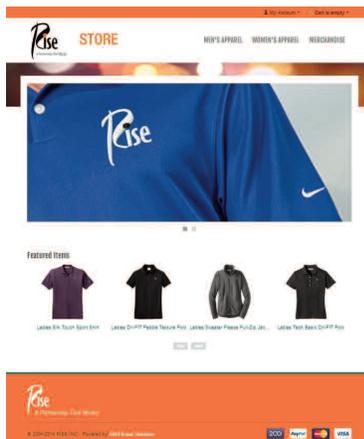
Originally from Rhode Island, Sherry worked for Pentair for seven years before relocating to Minnesota to serve as the human resources manager at Pentair

Technical Solutions' Anoka plant in July 2011. Sherry said she considers serving on Rise's board as "a wonderful opportunity to work with a great organization."

# Cummins Power Generation generously supports housing programs

Special thanks to our kind and generous friends at Cummins Power Generation (CPG) in Fridley who again have demonstrated their support of Rise's programs by donating assembled bags of household items, plus additional personal hygiene items. Rise's mental health and housing practitioners pass along these critical items to people in need.

Rise sincerely appreciates Cummins' Community Involvement Team's commitment to addressing the needs of people in this community through a wide range of projects with various local agencies, including Rise. From left are Rise's Barb Sopp, Holly Brabeck, Nancy Hoff, and Lori Clauson; CPG's Al Stephens, Supriya Budihal, and Rehnuma Sharmin; and Rise's Sandy Jorgensen.



**Shop The Rise Store**  
 for Rise apparel, drinkware  
 and gift certificates at  
**RiseStore.2020Brands.com**

## Jon finds that working at Premium Waters improves his health and outlook on life

Putting in a full day on the job is personally gratifying for Jon Retzlof who works at Premium Waters as a water technician refurbishing office and home water coolers.

Once the water coolers have been repaired and refurbished, Jon cleans them and tests them to ensure they are working properly. The crew works together as a team and completes scores of coolers each day.

After not having worked for nine years, having a steady job that he is good at and enjoys has greatly improved Jon's health.

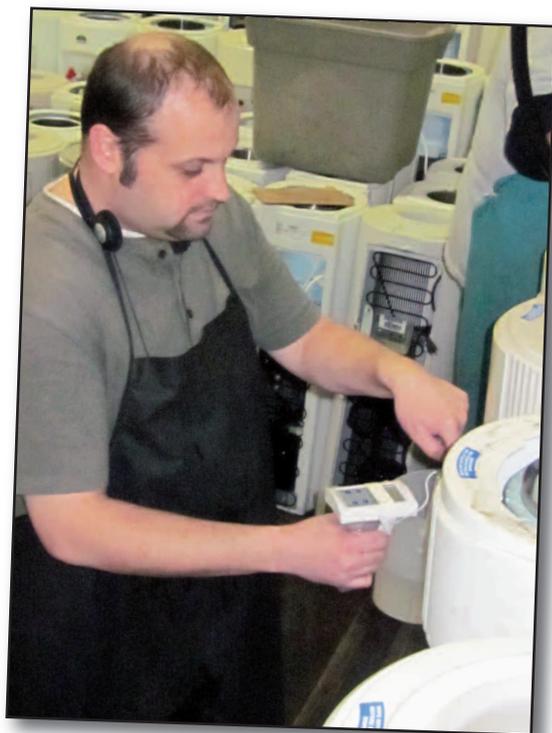
"My mind is so much more focused and I have a reason to get up in the morning," said Jon. "When we have days off for holidays, I actually miss working. I feel better, I feel stronger, and because I'm doing so well at work, it has given me more confidence in other areas of my life,

too. I appreciate having a good job."

In the fall of 2013, Jon was referred by a psychologist at the Hennepin County Mental Center to Rise's Creating Access program for job placement and support services. Mental health issues and a traumatic brain injury had hindered Jon's ability to find suitable employment for many years.

Rise Employment Consultant Lisa Borucki Vukelich met with him on a weekly basis to assess Jon's work history, and together, they developed a career plan. They also came up with strategies and healthy methods for structured sleep that would be critical to Jon's employment success.

"I saw the motivation in his eyes," Lisa commented. "I knew he was ready to get back into the workforce."



*Jon takes pride in the work he does at Premium Waters. Having a good job has give him confidence in other areas of his life.*

Jon continue to meet twice a month with Rise's Chris Oestreicher to help ensure all continues to go well on the job.

## Legislative session ends with big impact on Rise programs

Along with other state service providers, Rise is pleased that the Minnesota Legislature ended its 2014 session May 16 with changes in policy issues and increased funding that will directly impact the people Rise services and its programs.

The most notable bill that passed this session was the *5% Campaign* to increase rates for Medicaid-funded services. This legislation specifies that 80% of the funding be used to increase

the wages and benefits of direct support professionals, with the remaining funds used to offset administrative expense increases such as fuel, utilities, and other operating expenses.

Additionally, the Extended Employment programs received \$250,000 statewide to increase rates. This amounts to a 2% rate increase, or about \$20,000, for Rise.

There were also policy refinements

related to rate-setting, licensing, and other regulatory areas that will impact Rise's services.

Special thanks to those who supported these issues and contacted legislators to share their views; it made a difference and is much appreciated.

Please feel free to contact Rise President Lynn Noren at [lnoren@rise.org](mailto:lnoren@rise.org) if you have any questions or concerns.

# New programs address previously under-served needs

Rise is excited to begin offering three customized employment programs starting mid-2014, designed to address specific needs of previously under-served groups of people.

## MOFAS Employment Services

To help meet the unique employment service challenges people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) face, Rise has partnered with and is receiving funding from the Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS) that will enable people to work in the competitive workforce.

In the first year, Rise staff will receive specialized FASD training to work with at least 20 people, most of whom haven't had a job before. To be eligible for services, you must be 18 years of age or older, live in Hennepin or Anoka County, and have a diagnosis of FASD (or display FASD indicators).

MOFAS Employment Services include vocational assessment, career planning, job-seeking skills support, resume and cover letter development, and mock job interviews. Once the individual is hired, Rise also offers job coaching, employment support, and follow-up services to help ensure success.

To help determine a person's suitability for work in a particular field of employment, people may participate in an on-the-job tryout. This short-term, paid position could lead to a job offer, said Anne Mornes, program coordinator for the program.

For more information or to schedule an intake with a Rise employ-



*Robert Reedy, Rise's director of Vocational Services for the metro area, testified at the Minnesota State Capitol regarding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). With special funding from the Minnesota Organization Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS), Rise now offers an employment program for people with FASD.*

ment consultant, please contact Anne at 612-706-2517; email: amornes@rise.org. Learn more about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder at [www.MOFAS.org](http://www.MOFAS.org).

## Sensory Support job placement

Rise received a Home and Community-Based Services Performance-Based Incentive Payment Program grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to fund community job placements for people in Rise's DTH Sensory Support program who are deaf and have intellectual disabilities and related conditions.

This exciting expansion to the program offers career planning, job placement, and follow-up services to people who want to work in community employment positions.

Occupational communication / placement specialists will provide individual placement and follow-up support services.

## Three-agency MFIP service hub

Rise joined with two other local human service agencies, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSS)

and CAPI (Center for Asian/Pacific Islanders), to provide employment and job placement services to people who are enrolled in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) in the South Suburban Region of Hennepin County. Two employment counselors from LSS, CAPI and Rise each will rotate working at a hub center (location still to be determined), serving individuals who are seeking employment.

Rise's director of MFIP and Welfare-to-Work programs, Truc Pham, who started Rise's MFIP services for refugees and immigrants in 1996, helped establish this three-agency collaboration.

"This partnership brings together the capacity and infrastructure of one of the largest nonprofit service providers in Minnesota, LSS, with the cultural/ethnic expertise of CAPI, as well as Rise's expertise serving people with disabilities and other significant barriers to self-sufficiency," said Pham. "All three organizations are high-performing with current MFIP Hennepin County contracts and employ diverse staff members who are representative of the families served through MFIP."

LSS is serving as the lead agency for this project. For more information, contact Truc at 612-872-7720.



# RISE to the OCCASION



## Nominate a RISE'ING STAR

Tell us about **someone participating in a Rise program** who has overcome obstacles and challenges and is working to achieve his/her own goals and live a self-determined life. Please give specific examples as to how this person has achieved his/her personal measure of success.

I NOMINATE \_\_\_\_\_ BECAUSE:

NOMINATOR'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Beth DePoint at Rise, Inc., 8406 Sunset Road, Spring Lake Park MN 55432  
Or nominate someone online at [www.rise.org](http://www.rise.org). Submission Deadline: August 11, 2014

*Use additional page or back side if necessary*



# RISE to the OCCASION

## Nominate a CHAMPION OF THE MISSION

Tell us how your **Rise staff nominee** helps provide the tools and resources people need to thrive at home, at work, and in the community. Please give specific examples as to how in his/her daily work at Rise, this staff person supports Rise's mission to assist participants achieve goals and live self-determined lives and experience success.

I NOMINATE \_\_\_\_\_ BECAUSE:

NOMINATOR'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Beth DePoint at Rise, Inc., 8406 Sunset Road, Spring Lake Park MN 55432

Or nominate someone online at [www.rise.org](http://www.rise.org). Submission Deadline: *August 11, 2014*

*Use additional page or back side if necessary. NOTE: Members of Rise's Leadership Team (Lynn Noren, Tim Dickie, Rosalin Chrest, Mary Anderson, Melinda Dannley, Beth DePoint, Jennifer Gajewski, Dan Hagberg, Tom Haglund, Mike Harper, Keith Houland, Nancy Hoff, Noel McCormick, Truc Pham, Robert Reedy, Barb Sopp, Kim Strandlund, Michele Warren) are NOT ELIGIBLE for nomination.*



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## RISE REPORTER

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