

RISE REPORTER



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DHS selects Rise for new
Person-Centered Thinking

Join us for the 4th annual
Celebrate Rise on Oct. 8

Brittany proud to be hired
at Magneto Power

Antoine Simon has a great job as a grill chef at the Elements Cafe in the Science Museum of Minnesota. He received job placement and follow-up services through one of Rise's six IPS (Individual Placement and Support) programs. Read more on page 6.

DHS selects Rise to implement new person-centered thinking

Rise was one of four agencies in the state to be selected to participate in a yearlong professional technical assistance training program designed to implement and integrate person-centered thinking processes throughout the agency. This groundbreaking demonstration project is sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the University of Minnesota's Research and Training Center on Community Living at the Institute on Community Integration (ICI).



“Rise has espoused person-centered approaches for decades,” said President Lynn Noren. “We feel we are now at a pivotal time in our service delivery system which requires new thinking and ideas if we are to be successful in the future.”

Rise is the only employment/day services provider chosen for this initiative. The other three are Hennepin County, Mains'l, and Residential Services, Inc. in Duluth. Similar projects have taken place in ten states, the United Kingdom, and Canada.

The basic premise of the program is that person-centered thinking leads to person-centered practices which lead to person-centered organizations, and ultimately, person-centered systems.

“We envision a system in which people are supported in living the lives they want in their own communities,” Lynn explained. “At the same time, the demand for services is increasing and public resources cannot possibly keep up. Rise needs to rethink and retool our service delivery. Using person-centered approaches helps ensure that everyone's needs can be met. The future system will require increased creativity and partnership with the community at-large.”

“Rather than offering a broad array of

services to all individuals, person-centered approaches are designed to focus on the specific interests and service needs of each person,” Vice President Tim Dickie added. “This is a dramatic shift from today, as the policy and regulatory expectations offer a similar menu for everyone. The shift will require new practices and ideas, and Rise is proud to be part of this innovative approach.”

The yearlong training and technical assistance is conducted in three phases by staff at ICI's Research and Training Center on Community Living, with training and support provided by staff from both ICI and Support Development Associates.

“We are excited about this unique opportunity for Rise and DHS staff to work together,” said Alex Bartolic, director of DHS's Disability Services Division. “Rise already is a leader in so many ways, and as steps are taken to become an even more person-centered organization, we will learn what system changes at the state level are needed to support these changes. Ultimately, we want to expand this type of training and technical assistance to more organizations.”

A select group of frontline leaders is currently undergoing training to become “coaches” throughout Rise who will implement the person-cen-

Shannon Meehan is working at her “dream job” on staff with the YMCA's School Age Care, an after-school program at Valentine Hills Elementary School in Arden Hills. She loves doing art projects, reading, and playing outside with the kids. Rise's Customized Job Developer Sarah Kohl-Leaf assisted Shannon in her pursuit of a career working with children.

tered thinking tools. The two groups will meet regularly to share their learning. They will work in collaboration with the other grant partners to problem-solve, generate new ideas, and share best practices throughout the year.

In addition to planning and training, the ICI consultant may also participate in additional activities for consumers, their families, and affiliated support groups as the Rise team requests.

“We want everyone to be aware of the full range of choices available to them,” Lynn noted, “so that we can make a more significant transformation to our services.”

“Rise values the partnerships we've established with businesses and other organizations,” Dickie said. “One example is the new partnership with the Mounds View YMCA, where we recently opened an adult day service to serve individuals with significant disabilities. By partnering with the YMCA, we can offer people health and fitness programs, socialization with community members, and opportunities to grow vital relationships. We are also continuing to assist people find competitive employment, and last year, doubled the number of successful job placements.”

“I am very excited to work with Rise's leadership and coaches,” said Mark Olson, an ICI consultant. “The group's energy around what is possible is infectious.”

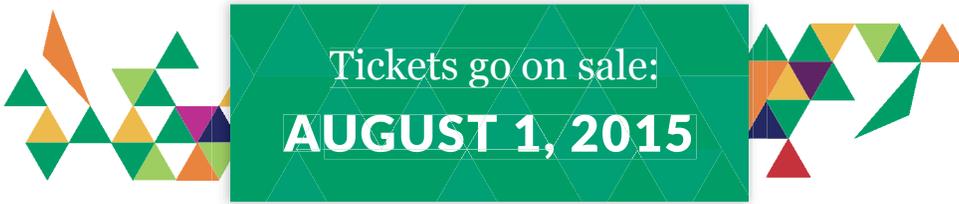


Because everyone deserves to
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Celebrate Rise
Fundraising Gala

Thursday, October 8, 2015 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
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with
Jason DeRusha, WCCO-TV
as emcee



Tickets go on sale:
AUGUST 1, 2015

Watch for registration information on our website: www.rise.org

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

PUSHING BOUNDARIES. UNLOCKING POSSIBILITIES.

Conductive Containers, Inc. and Rise value their longtime, mutually beneficial partnership

On any given day, people at Rise's production facilities in Spring Lake Park and Coon Rapids will likely be working on orders for Conductive Containers, Inc. (CCI). Their products are easy to spot as most of them have hot pink foam parts that stand out across the expansive work floors.

Since 1978, CCI has designed and manufactured thousands of custom engineered electro-static discharge (ESD) packages to protect sensitive components for a wide range of industries, including high-tech electronics, health care, aerospace, military, and computing. Their proprietary conductive corrugated CORSTAT™ material quickly became the "industry standard" for ESD safe packaging.

Today, CCI manufactures packages with ESD foams, vacuum-formed plastic, injection-molded plastic, fluted plastic, and multiple combinations of each. Headquartered in



Terry Keyes is meticulous in her foam-gluing task.

New Hope, Minnesota, CCI customers are located throughout North America and overseas.

When CCI moved this work from Chicago to the Twin Cities, they looked for an agency which employed people with disabilities to do some of their manual tasks. They began working with Rise in October 2001, and in the many years since, have been pleased with how both companies have benefitted from the partnership.

Rise workers assemble more than 30 specialty products for CCI. The jobs require precision and accuracy in folding the customized containers and gluing the ESD safe foam in place. This kind of detailed work helps prepare people for competitive jobs in today's marketplace.

CCI Certified Purchasing Manager Keith Steinke and Rise Marketing & Sales Representative John Nielsen agree it's a terrific fit for both companies.

"Working with Rise is very much in line with CCI's core values," said Keith. "Of course, we like that we are providing work for people with disabilities; but the bottom line is, they provide us with a quality product shipped on time at a fair price. They do a great job for us and we value that."

"People really like the wide variety of products they do for CCI and are proud of the exacting work each component requires," said John. "We often 'prebuild' and then can ship out as CCI needs product to fill their customers' orders, enabling us to be flexible



Joyce Frye enjoys the challenge of working on many different CCI products.

with our workflow. And if CCI has a customer rush order, we can quickly put together a work team to produce whatever they need."

"Rise has always been receptive and responsive to our needs and their customer service is outstanding," Keith added. "We also save on warehousing and shipping costs because many of our finished products ship right from Rise. Logistically, it makes for a smoother operation. And when both companies benefit from the partnership, that's good business!"

In addition to a great business relationship, CCI has been a generous supporter of Rise.

"I think we have all the important elements in place to maintain a great long-term relationship," said Nielsen.

To learn more about CCI, visit their website at www.corstat.com.

John uses his passion for genealogical research to build a company helping others discover their family's roots



Since he was 13 years old, John Luger has been fascinated by his family's lineage. He would often query family members for information to help him construct their family tree.

A few years ago, John took his avid interest to a higher level by starting a genealogical research company called History Hunter to help others learn more about their own family roots. Having completed a year's worth of courses to earn him a certificate from the National Genealogical Society, John is well on his way to being accredited by the Board of Certification of Genealogists.

"I have fun tracing people's families for them," said John. "I am really good at research and do the best possible job to get it done right the first time. I have people give me whatever they have and I take it from there. Sometimes they



If you would like to contact John about his History Hunter services, you can email him at johnluger@gmail.com.

have already started and I can just keep searching back further for them; other people give me a few names and I basically start from scratch."

Letters of recommendation from happy customers include comments such as, "John's work exceeded our expectations. His research was done professionally and with great enthusiasm. It is evident that John really enjoys genealogy research."

Another customer contracted with John to research genealogy to share with family who came from around the world to celebrate her grandmother's 90th birthday. "John supplied me with so much more than that. He was sensitive to our individual family's needs and his due diligence showed."

Much of John's research is done online at his home office in Forest Lake, but he also frequents libraries, county records offices, and the Minnesota Historical Society to gather information.

John's business has grown mainly from satisfied customers who come back for more as well as help spread the word to others. He is clear about his ultimate goal: "I want to build this into a multi-million-dollar business and have other researchers working for me around the world."

In addition to History Hunter, John works about 20 hours a week with Advanced Sales and Marketing (ASM) as a product food and beverage demonstrator.

He started with ASM in March 2010, and currently works in the Forest Lake Walmart Supercenter. Employment Specialist Jill Johnston with Rise's Employment Innovations program in Cambridge provided John with career planning and job placement services, and continues to meet with him regularly for follow-up support.

"I love this job – it's very challenging, but I think I'm good at it," said John. "I make my display look as attractive as possible so people will want to stop. I also know all the qualities of the product I am demonstrating. First impressions are the ones that stick so I always give it my best. I am good with people and make sure every single customer is thanked and wished a good day."

Customers respond well to John's enthusiastic yet respectful approach; he has one of the highest sample-to-purchase ratios of ASM's demonstrators.

Jill has also been an encouraging advocate of John's History Hunter enterprise. "It's exciting for me to see how he has taken something he's so passionate about and turned it into a business. I know John is doing what he loves and will be successful at it."

To date, John has traced his own family back an astonishing 3,000 years! "Yes, they did, in fact, keep records even way back then," he stated.

Rise granted funding to provide six of the way vocational services are offered

Grill Chef Antoine Simon is 'in the zone,' happily cooking for a long line of customers at the Elements Café on the sixth floor of the Science Museum of Minnesota in downtown St. Paul. "I love sending guests off satisfied after a good meal," he said proudly.

Growing up cooking with his mother and grandmother, Antoine has always enjoyed feeding others and was considered the "designated cook and grill master" in the family. After being out of school for almost 30 years, he was proud to earn an associate of applied science degree in culinary arts from the International Culinary School at the Art Institutes International Minnesota in September 2014. He hoped his training would help him land a great job in the Twin Cities.

Instead, being an ex-offender, Antoine experienced repeated disappointments which resulted in his overwhelming frustration, hurt, and depression.

When Antoine's mental health therapist at Hennepin County Mental Health Center (HCMHC) asked him if he would like to participate in Rise's Individual Placement and Support (IPS) program to help him find a job in his career field, he jumped at the opportunity.

Based on years of its experience and positive results, Rise was selected by the Minnesota Department of Economic and Employment Development (DEED) to offer six of the fifteen IPS employment programs funded in the state. Rise's IPS programs are offered in Hennepin and Anoka Counties, and Central Minnesota.



The father of five and grandfather of five children, Antoine hopes that his success at the Elements Cafe will demonstrate to them the importance of having a dream and working hard for it.

Lis Borucki Vukelich, a Rise IPS employment consultant, began working with Antoine on his career plan and job search.

"The beauty of the IPS program is that it caters individually to the individual and I was able to customize Antoine's job search to meet his goals and aspirations," said Lis.

IPS programs are closely integrated with participants' mental health treatment teams. Using a multidisciplinary team approach, Rise staff work in collaboration with state vocational rehabilitation counselors, mental health therapists, and other support team members to help ensure the individual finds a suitable job and is successful.

During this process, Lis worked closely with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Deanna Langton and Brian Morseth, Antoine's therapist. The three of them communicated on a regular basis about Antoine's progress regarding his employment search and discussed ways they could best support him.

"If it hadn't been for their support, I would have given up a long time ago after having so many doors slammed in my face," said Antoine. "Six different restaurants offered me a job, only to rescind their offers once my background check came back my first day on the job. I had paid my debt to society, but no one would believe that I could change, that I would make a great chef in their kitchen."

"Rise staff have long recognized that work promotes recovery and wellness for people who have a mental illness," said Robert Reedy, director of vocational services for Rise's Twin Cities area programs. "Over the years, Rise has developed a wide array of services to address their specific needs in attaining meaningful employment."

"DEED and DHS (Department of Human Services) staff monitor the IPS programs closely with quarterly 'fidelity reviews' to gauge our compliance with 125 standards," said Rise Mental Health Coordinator Anne Mornes. "Rise's IPS programs have consistently scored high

f Minnesota's IPS programs, changing for adults with mental health disabilities

because we have been using the same kinds of evidence-based practices here for many years and believe wholeheartedly in their value.”

“Once the person is referred to a Rise IPS program by their mental health therapist, our staff uses a rapid job search approach,” said Rise Mental Health Coordinator Becky Rother. “IPS staff also assist people obtain personalized, understandable, and accurate information about their Social Security, Medicaid, and other government payments to help alleviate any concern they have about losing benefits because they are earning income.”

Ultimately, Antoine was offered three great jobs in one week! He and Lis discussed the pros and cons of each before Antoine decided to take the position with Elements Café.

“This job has changed my life around,” said Antoine. “Through all of my setbacks, I have appreciated the support I received to keep pursuing my dream. I also learned lessons in perseverance and endurance. I plan to pay all this forward.”

“Antoine is a talented man of integrity and has a great work ethic,” said Lis. “I know he will continue to do well.”

Sandy Shingobe had some big goals – at the top of the list were getting a new job, finding a new place to live, and buying a new car. “If you

Sandy says that her job at Target has helped her in so many aspects of her life.

want it badly enough, you can do it – be determined,” she said with conviction.

After several years working successfully as a certified medical assistant in a Fairview clinic, Sandy’s career was curtailed after two surgeries. When her husband died in 1998, Sandy went into a major depression. She began receiving SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) in 2004 and worked temp jobs in medical assistance and customer service to get by.

Sandy’s therapist recommended that she attend social and mental health support activities at Bridgeview, a drop-in center in Fridley for adults living with serious and persistent mental illness. Julie Smith, a mental health therapist from Bridgeview, referred her to Rise Employment Consultant NaTasha Olson who works with the IPS projects.

Highly motivated, Sandy applied for and took assessment tests on her own to work at Target; she was hired in June 2014. With a steady paycheck now, Sandy was able to

move into a larger apartment with assistance from Anoka County Community Action Program (ACCAP) last October. She was thrilled to purchase a new car.

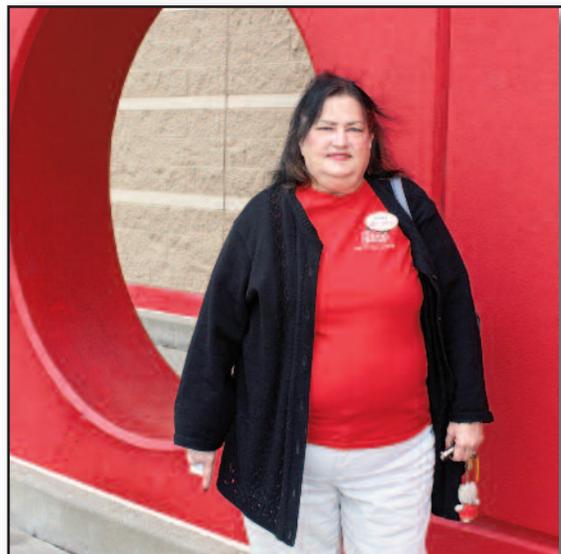
“I really enjoy my cashiering job at Target and sometimes get to work in their Minute Clinic giving shots and taking blood pressures,” said Sandy. “Everyone I work with is very nice and it feels really good to be productive again. Time will tell if I go back to work in the medical field. I tell my friends at Bridgeview that working has really helped me in so many ways. People can do anything they set their minds to and if you don’t succeed at first, just try and try again.”

LaNay Koralesky from Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services and NaTasha worked to help Sandra maintain her current benefits.

“Paperwork from the government can be confusing,” said Sandy. “It really helps me to have NaTasha give me advice and guidance, especially about my benefits.”

For now, both Antoine and Sandy will continue to meet with Lis and NaTasha on a weekly basis to help ensure they continue to be successful on the job. Gradually, Rise staff will reduce their support.

All of Rise’s IPS programs have people on a waiting list for services. “We’re hoping the state will increase funding for these services which will enable us to assist those who really want to get back into the work world,” said Anne. “We are convinced that using this approach will greatly enhance the employment services Rise offers people with mental health disabilities and ultimately, lead to prolonged success.”



A stand-out from day one, Brittany moves from supported to competitive employment at Magneto Power in Anoka

With a promise to customers to ship orders placed by 5 p.m. the same day, employees at Magneto Power's wholesale warehouse and distribution facility in Anoka are in continual, synchronized motion as they fill and ship orders for manufacturers, servicing dealers, and retailers throughout North America.

At the end of a long line of other packagers, Brittany Alt-Willard accepts a bin of assorted products that have been "picked" from Magneto's stock of 40,000 outdoor power equipment and replacement parts, scans each piece to verify them against the original order, and packages it all up for shipping.

Brittany is steadfast in her work, paying careful attention to the details of every order. She and her co-workers are meticulous in their work and are proud of Magneto's 99.5% accuracy shipping rate.

Brittany originally came to Magneto as part of a temporary Rise work team for a specific short-term project. Operations Manager Craig Thompson said she was a stand-out from day one and asked her to stay on working after the original project was completed.

Sue Featherly provided follow-up support services through Rise's Community-Based Training and Employment (CBTE) program, meeting with her twice a month for the past four years.

Her work attitude, focus, and reliability



were what prompted Craig to hire Brittany in May.

"Brittany has done an outstanding job in every process in our warehouse," Craig said. "She has always been eager to learn new tasks, and with positive feedback, has really grown in all aspects of the job. She is a joy to have here and fits in well with everyone."

"I love everything about my job," said Brittany. "It's really busy, but I have nice co-workers and we help each other out. I was very excited to get hired as a Magneto employee and am proud of my work."

"Brittany has continued to expand her skills and self-confidence in the past three years," said Sue. "She has made a lot of changes in her life because of this job and I know how much it means to her to now be a Magneto employee. I am so proud of her."

Brittany and her co-workers ship outdoor power equipment and replacement parts out across North America.

Prior to being hired by Magneto, Sue helped Brittany with benefits planning so that she would still be eligible for Social Security benefits, enabling her to live semi-independently with some supports. Craig also submitted a letter to the Social Security Administration in support.

Brittany enjoys living in her own apartment in Coon Rapids and takes the bus to work. One of her co-workers, though, is happy to pick her up on rainy or cold days.

"I'm tired at the end of the day from being so busy, but it's a good tired," Brittany admitted. "I hope to work here at Magneto for a long time."

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Mary Richards addresses Minnesota Legislature on the importance of MA-EPD so she can keep working

Working with the Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance and the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, Mary Richards is proud that her advocating efforts to help repeal the Medical Assistance for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MA-EPD) premium increase have been successful!

In her testimony before the Minnesota State Legislature this spring, Mary told representatives: “I live independently in my condo in St. Anthony Village. I have lived with lifelong disabilities from a brain injury since birth that challenge me every day. My brain injury has caused learning disabilities, memory issues, depression, and balance issues. Despite this, I successfully graduated from high school, earned an associate’s degree at college, and became certified as a licensed practical nurse.

“I have held a variety of jobs over



the years. In 2006, I was unable to continue working following surgery. As a result, I had to go on Medical Assistance (MA) with a large spend-down (\$349 per month).

“Today, I am proud to be working again at Rise Data Ability doing data entry part-time so I enrolled in the MA-EPD. This program allows me to work part-time and keep my eligibility for MA. I still have very little income, but instead of paying a large spend-

down, I now pay a premium.”

But Mary said she was shocked when her premium almost tripled to \$128 a month. “When you are already living on the edge like I am, it makes a big difference.”

She was also one of 26 people featured in a *Faces of Disability* exhibit which hung outside Minnesota legislators’ offices in St. Paul.

Mary is shown here with Sen. John Marty from District 66 who has kept her poster displayed. Her willingness to share her story was critical to helping legislators understand the impact of their public policies on people’s lives.

“I am asking you to repeal this MA EPD premium increase,” Mary told the legislators. “Our state policy should reward work. Like most people, I just want to be a responsible citizen and a contributing member of society.”



Looking for a great career?? Come work for Rise!

We pride ourselves on hiring the brightest and the best to help us carry out our important mission. Rise offers interesting jobs, competitive salaries and benefits packages, good working conditions, and great co-workers. For more information, check out Rise's current job openings at www.rise.org/2/join-our-staff/

(Here are Mike Harper, Maeta Burns-Penn, and Jose Clemente from Employment Innovations in Lindstrom)

Smith and Minske elected to Rise Board of Directors

The Rise Board of Directors elected two new community volunteers on March 18 to serve three-year terms.

Rachael M. Smith (right) lives in Brooklyn Center and works for both the Osseo Area School District as an educational support para-professional and for Anoka-Hennepin School District #11 as a childcare assistant. A graduate of Hennepin Technical College, Rachael enjoys volunteering at St. Vincent DePaul Church and with the Pageant of Hope, a national pageant providing opportunities for girls with special challenges, which recognized her with the Mentor Award. Rachael is also a Special Olympic athlete, competing in basketball, bocce ball, and golf.

"I am very excited to be a member of the Rise Board of Directors," said Rachael. "I look forward to learning new things and participating in another exciting adventure. With hard work and determination, I have been able to earn a degree and achieve my career goal of working with children. I am excited to work with an organization that helps people achieve their goals."

Sheila Minske, Minneapolis, is a senior Value Stream manager for Medtronic in Brooklyn Center. She first partnered with Rise in 2011 when she was instrumental in securing a grant from the Cummins Foundation to support Rise's Art Speaks program at the Powderhorn Art Fair in Minneapolis. Her interest in Rise continued to expand and in 2014, when Sheila was the director of Manufacturing Engineering and new Production Introduction at Cummins Power Generation, she helped Rise launch its first product,



an adaptive switch to help people with disabilities activate electronic devices.

Sheila credits her father for inspiring her with his passion for helping people with disabilities. During college, she worked as a job coach at Goodwill Industries. Sheila takes great pride in her senior design project at the University of Toledo which automated a hot/cold water dispenser for people with limited upper body mobility, enabling them to be more independent. She has volunteered to modify kids' toys with adaptive switches for Courage Kenny for the past eight years. Sheila and her wife live in Minneapolis with their three-year-old twins.

Rise staff and board members welcome Rachael and Sheila and look forward to their enthusiastic support.



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 a self-determined life. Please give specific examples as to how this person has achieved his/her personal measure of success.

I nominate _____ because:
(name)

A large rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the nominator to write their nomination details.

Nominator: _____
(name)

email: _____ phone: _____

Or nominate someone online at www.rise.org Submission Deadline: August 7, 2015.
Mail to: Elise Randall at Rise, Inc., 8406 Sunset Road, Spring Lake Park, MN 55432 Use additional page if necessary.



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WHO WE ARE

Rise unlocks potential and opens doors to success for people with disabilities and other challenges through creative solutions and customized support.

We envision a progressive, supportive, and collaborative environment that fosters meaningful growth and provides opportunities to live a life filled with purpose.

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