

RISE REPORTER

JUNE 2019 | VOL. 43, NO. 2



Kit Carlson works second shift at Mikros Engineering in Brooklyn Park. Read about other people who have found great jobs at Mikros on page 11.



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A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT LYNN NOREN

On June 5, I celebrate my 40th anniversary at Rise -- and it brings me so much joy! I feel truly fortunate to have that long perspective on this organization and the critical services we offer. In looking back through the years, it is remarkable to me to realize where we are at today compared to 40 years ago. I am honored to serve Rise with a tremendous leadership and staff team who make our mission come alive in their daily work. I can't imagine anything better than working in an organization which supports people in living their best lives every day.

As we go to press with this issue of the *Reporter*, we continue to await the final action by the Minnesota State Legislature. The session passed its scheduled end-date without completing the spending bills, so we are waiting to find out the final funding decisions. It's remarkable that Rise's livelihood is so dependent on what happens legislatively, but as a provider of services to people who have disabilities, legislative action determines our future.

We do know that the Department of Health and Human Services is the only area of Minnesota's budget that, in the final negotiated budget agreement, received a cut -- a really substantial cut of \$357 million for 2020/2021 as well as an additional \$557 million for the following biennium. I know that is going to make it difficult for the legislature to find additional funds to support our important services.

Service providers and advocates have worked tirelessly this session to pass legislation that would attempt to close the gap between the wages we are able to pay our direct support professionals (DSPs) and other positions in our community who compete for the same workers. Our hope is that even with the negative spending targets, a "competitive workforce factor" is included in the final bills.

One of the positives of having such a long tenure at Rise, is that I know we will get through these challenges by working together. Just as services today are very different than they were when I started at Rise in 1979, we will continue to advocate for the services people want and need in the future. I am proud of Rise's ability to be nimble and creative. I think the stories in this issue clearly demonstrate those qualities and we're pleased to share them with you.



WHO WE ARE

Rise unlocks potential and opens doors to success for people with disabilities or 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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AT RISE

Tom Kettleon
Chair, Rise Board of Directors

Lynn Noren
President / CEO

Noel McCormick
Vice President of Advancement

Beth DePoint
Director of Public Relations; Editor





MOHR awards shine a light on Rise's outstanding team members, innovative and progressive program services

OVER THE YEARS, Rise team members and the agency itself have received many accolades and awards. But we consider those bestowed upon us by our peers as among the most valued.

Rise has three terrific honorees of the 2019 MOHR (Minnesota Organization for Habilitation and Rehabilitation) awards which were presented at the annual MOHR conference on May 16 in St. Cloud.

Hearty congratulations to ~

Judy Andersen, director of Rise's five Adult Day Programs (ADP), and her outstanding team on their *Life Enrichment Award* which recognizes the person-centered, creative services they offer to enrich the lives of people with brain injuries, and physical and intellectual disabilities.

In developing each of the five Adult Day Programs, Rise's team opted to work with community centers and local YMCAs, including New Brighton, Mounds View, Maplewood, Fridley, and Coon Rapids, to enhance and maximize the kinds of services offered.

With flexible scheduling, people can choose to participate in a wide range of activities, including art and music therapies, cooking and nutrition, YMCA group classes and events, wellness and fitness activities, volunteer community service projects, as well as social and learning activities.

Pam Satek, a direct support professional at Rise Coon Rapids, has been named MOHR's *Job Coach of the Year* for the Twin Cities metro area. As noted in her



Congratulations to 2019 MOHR awards recipients (from left) Judy Andersen, Lynn Noren, and Pam Satek.

nomination, Pam was recognized because she “leads with her heart, is person-centered, and believes in each and every person she serves. She also takes great pride in helping ensure that people fully understand the expectations of their employer and the job tasks they’re responsible for. Pam also assists people with setting and attaining their personal and professional goals.

“Pam has a knack for developing exceptional professional relationships with the people she serves. To do this effectively, integrity, trust, and patience are required, and Pam has no shortage of these important qualities.”

Rise President & CEO Lynn Noren is this year's recipient of MOHR's *Tip of the Spear* award recognizing her 40-plus years of extraordinary contributions to the disability field. She was honored for her tireless work to strengthen services and supports for people throughout Minnesota and beyond.

Lynn started at Rise in 1979 as a young college intern with Rise's (then) Work Activity Program; 34

years later in 2013, she assumed the position of president.

Throughout her career, Lynn has developed many innovative and customized programs which address key issues and other barriers affecting men and women with disabilities, as well as refugees and immigrants, in the areas of employment, housing, and personal growth.

Lynn is an active and prominent leader both here in Minnesota and across the nation. She has served on numerous industry advisory boards and committees, taskforces, and leadership groups. She is also a sought-after presenter for a wide range of statewide and national conferences.

Thousands of people whom Rise has served, and indeed, across the country, have benefited greatly from Lynn's extraordinary experience, advocacy, and leadership.

Rise team members are so proud of our Adult Day Program team, Pam Satek, and Lynn Noren for their outstanding work and contributions to the people Rise serves. Congratulations!

Denise admires ARCH's mission, finds work interesting

THROUGHOUT HER CAREER in office support positions at Rise, Denise Coppess has always kept her sights set on working for a great company out in the community one day.

In her position as a financial office support staff at ARCH Language Network in Little Canada, Denise feels like she has made it.

Following high school graduation, Denise continued her education by taking college courses in office procedures. She came to Rise in 1997 and worked as one of the receptionists and clerical assistants at Rise Coon Rapids. In 2006 she started working as a data entry clerk with Rise's Data Ability.

Given her skills and leadership abilities, Denise was one of the first people selected last year to work with a small team in the mail room at Cummins in Shoreview. She did a great job in getting this project up and running successfully. She honed even more skills and then felt ready to make the move into competitive employment.

With support in career planning and job placement services from Rise Employment Consultant Sarah Gustafson, Denise pursued her job search with hope and enthusiasm.

When Denise learned about ARCH's mission and the career opportunities available, she was really excited. "I also liked that the company had started by working with newly arrived African refugees and immigrants," said Denise. She was hired in December 2018.

ARCH provides professional interpreters and translators in more than 50 world languages for



face-to-face interpretation and 100 languages for document translation services. They work with health care, education, legal businesses, and social service organizations throughout Minnesota and beyond.

Denise verifies people's insurance coverage for interpreting and translating services and completes the paperwork for submission. She is trained in three health care insurance providers' systems and verifies about 100 claims a day. Denise finds the work interesting and loves that she is learning so much about the insurance industry as well as world languages.

"I had a lot of training when I first started here so I could better understand 'the big picture' of what ARCH's interpreters and translators do. It's a really good company."

Denise's co-workers and supervisor find her to be accurate, dependable, and a good addition to their team. She thinks everyone is considerate and nice to work with.

"We are so delighted to have Denise working at ARCH," said Director of Operations Twila Erickson. "We enjoy her smiles and willingness to jump into any task. Rise has been a wonderful organization to work with over the years. ARCH

first hired an individual who is Deaf in 2014 with assistance from Rise. Their job coaches are always willing to assist when needed and offer valuable input so ARCH can provide a positive work space."

Sarah follows up with Denise twice a month to ensure everything continues to go well on the job and address any work-related issues which may crop up. She also attends Denise's training sessions and recently brought in an ergonomics consultant to advise on a new way to set up her work area to meet her needs.

"Denise worked diligently to achieve her goal of working for a good company in an administrative support role," Sarah noted. "She never doubted her dream and she never gave up. It's wonderful Denise has found herself a perfect fit at ARCH Language Network."

Having grown up with foster siblings who are Deaf and communicate with American Sign Language, Denise is fluent in ASL. Twila has suggested that Denise get her certification in ASL interpreting -- another good career-building option for Denise to consider.

"I come from a family of three boys who are all very special to me," she said. "They have shown me that if you stay the course on your journey, your dream job can come true."

Denise takes Metro Mobility to work from her group home in Coon Rapids where she lives with three roommates. She enjoys spending time with friends and family, shopping, and is looking forward to a trip to Disneyland next year with her mom that a long-time good friend is treating them to.

CELEBRATE Rise!



PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019

5:00-8:30 P.M.

MINNEAPOLIS MARRIOTT NORTHWEST
BROOKLYN PARK, MN

TICKETS GO ON SALE

AUGUST 1

WATCH FOR REGISTRATION INFORMATION
ON OUR WEBSITE: **WWW.RISE.ORG**

*LIFE IS A JOURNEY. IF YOU OPEN YOURSELF
UP TO THE POSSIBILITIES, IT CAN TAKE YOU
PLACES YOU NEVER DREAMED OF.*

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE GALA OR WISH TO INQUIRE ABOUT A SPONSORSHIP,
PLEASE CONTACT **SAMANTHA MARKS AT RISE: 763.792.2450 // SMARKS@RISE.ORG**



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

Austin's years of running with his dad pay off when he qualifies for USA team

AUSTIN HACKLEY has been running with his dad Bob since he was a young boy; they even completed the Medtronic Twin Cities Marathon together. But little could he have imagined that someday he would represent the United States at the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates on the track and field team!

Austin, who is 27, has competed in Special Olympics with his home team, the White Bear Lake Bears, for five years. A well-rounded athlete with three older brothers and athletic parents, Austin participates in track and field, basketball, downhill skiing, and soccer. He says he has made many great friends through Special Olympics and they all support each other.

After qualifying here in Minnesota, Austin went to Delaware to try out for the Special Olympics national track and field team. He needed to finish in first or second place in each of the events to qualify for the U.S. team.

When he was selected for the U.S. team, his mom, dad, and

grandmother packed their bags to accompany him half way around the world and cheer him on.

The World Games ran from March 5 to March 22, with delegations from 190 countries competing. Austin took seventh place in the 1500-meter run, fifth in the 850-meter run, and FIRST in a 4x4-relay, running the second leg!

It was quite an adventure for everyone. While they were there, Austin and his family had fun taking in the sites of this exciting country. His favorite place was the observation deck on the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, which is 1,250 feet tall.

"Austin has always worked hard and has an 'I can do it' attitude," said his dad. "He is fearless and gives a 110 percent effort in everything he does. It is amazing to see how far he has gone. Austin was able to overcome some serious medical problems and has become a very competitive athlete. His ambition and drive are what have allowed Austin to overcome challenges and become a successful young man."



When he returned home, Austin brought in his medals to show his co-workers at the Kwik Trip in Stillwater where he works five days a week as a retail helper. "I was proud to be an American and represent my country," he said. "They were all really excited for me."

Among his many job duties at this busy convenience store/gas station/car wash are keeping the coolers stocked, facing product shelves, unloading delivery trucks, and emptying trash. He has worked there since 2014.

"I have recently given Austin the nickname, 'Awesome Austin' because that's exactly what it's like when he is here - awesome," said Manager Jessica Stelhem. "The entire Kwik Trip team was overjoyed for him and definitely missed him the three weeks he was gone. He makes all of our lives easier everyday and we are so happy Awesome Austin is part of our Kwik Trip family."

Austin lives in an apartment with a roommate in Woodbury and take the Transit Link to work. He enjoys exercising, movies, and spending time with his friends and family.

Austin, second from right, with some of his USA teammates at the World Games in Abu Dhabi.





Ubah takes it day by day, step by step to build a new life

EVEN THOUGH HER favorite Ohio State Buckeyes were not vying for a NCAA basketball championship at US Bank Stadium in Minneapolis this March, Ubah Mohamud was nonetheless thrilled to be working for Whelan Event Staffing at the Final Four games.

In addition to that coveted job assignment, Ubah also worked at the opening game at the brand new Allianz Field in St. Paul for the Minnesota United soccer team. And with the Minnesota Twins baseball season in full swing, she will likely be working at Target Field this summer.

Hard to imagine, then, that only 18 months ago she was unemployed, homeless, and dealing with chemical dependency issues.

Originally from Somalia, Ubah's father moved his family to Columbus, Ohio, to give them a better life when she was six years old. She relocated to the Twin Cities in 2015. Without a place of her own, Ubah found herself sleeping in parking garages, stairways, or anywhere she could be relatively safe and out of the elements.

Now 27, Ubah has developed keen survival skills and 'street smarts.' She eventually made her way to Catholic Charities where she met Buddy Heino, a housing case manager, who helped her find stable housing in South Minneapolis in August 2018.

Buddy referred her to Employment Consultant Rowan Radcliffe who works with Rise's Pathways to Success program for career planning and job placement services. Pathways is funded by a grant from Hennepin County.

Ubah was in treatment for six



months, got a sponsor through AA, and began in earnest to put her life back together. She met with Rowan regularly to help formulate a career plan, develop a job resume, and begin looking for a good job.

"Rowan and Buddy were so much help to me," said Ubah. "They helped me tap into resources that I didn't know anything about and figure out what my next steps were going to be – how I was going to get from Point A to Point B. Rowan got me a bus card so I could get to my appointments and interviews, and a copy of my Green Card. She helped me get job interviews and work clothing from Michael's Closet at Rise, and good work shoes."

Ironically, even with all that job development support from Rowan, Ubah found the job with Whelan on her own. Ubah applies for local special sporting and social events online, and works different events about 20 hours each week.

She said she enjoys helping people who are excited to be at these special events. Ubah gets many compliments and her managers note that she is a role model for her co-workers.

"I am really grateful for my life

today, but I know I didn't do this on my own.

"It's been day by day, step by step. I owe so much to Buddy and Rowan for helping and supporting me. I now know that anyone can do anything they believe in. Rise is a good name for the company because that's what it helps people do."

Ubah is currently working on finishing her GED. She attends Regular Adult

Basic Education classes at Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning in St. Paul and is also attending classes to get a low-pressure boiler license. Eventually, she would like a full-time job in customer service.

Rowan is happy to be on "Team Ubah," as she calls it. "She's doing it – she's a shining example of someone who has overcome huge barriers, but is willing to work hard to go after what she wants and is not going to settle for less. It is so gratifying to see her doing well."

"Ubah has been a constant inspiration for me," said Buddy. "She fights for what she believes in and does not take 'no' for an answer. Over the past year, I have seen Ubah flourish as she builds a solid foundation for her future, something she is and should be proud of. I admire all her work and dedication!"

"I used to feel worthless," Ubah admitted. "But Minnesota helped make me a better person. I don't want to be dependent on the government – I want to pay my own way. Today people who know me, respect me for what I have accomplished. I know I am going to go places. I know my own worth."

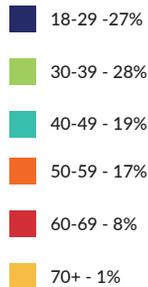
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3,384

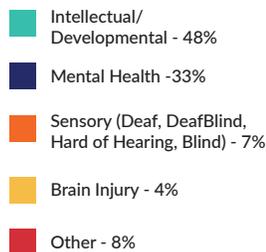
PEOPLE SERVED BY RISE IN 2018



AGE RANGE



DISABILITY TYPE



SERVICE LINE



EMPLOYMENT

The information below reflects employment outcomes for people served in our Day Training and Habilitation (DTH), Vocational Rehabilitation/Supported Employment (VRSE) and Welfare-to-Work (W2W) service lines.

689 NEW COMPETITIVE JOBS IN 2018

328 VRSE JOB PLACEMENTS

255 W2W JOB PLACEMENTS

106 DAY TRAINING & HABILITATION JOB PLACEMENTS

35 people transitioned from center-based or community (contracted) employment to competitive placements in 2018.

35

SATISFACTION

The information below is reflective of survey responses from 654 people served, 332 stakeholders and 9 business partners.

96% positive response for people served

98% positive response for stakeholders

100% positive response for business partners

“ Rise is a beautiful program, the staff is great!!! I have truly improved every aspect in my life, and am more confident. I recommend the program to anyone who needs it. ”

- From a person served

“ It's hard to put into writing how much Rise has positively affected our daughter's life. ”

- From a parent

ENRICHMENT

Rise recognizes the importance of personal growth in all aspects of life. In 2018, the majority of people in Rise's DTH and Adult Day programs made progress on their personal goals. We offer life enrichment activities such as volunteer projects, art therapy, and community activities to support them in meeting these goals.

75% PROGRESSED THEIR COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SKILLS

75% ADVANCED THEIR INDEPENDENCE

78% HAD GREATER ACCESS TO THEIR COMMUNITIES

81% INCREASED THEIR PERSONAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS



STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

LYNN NOREN
President and Chief Executive Officer

TIM DICKIE
Chief Program Officer

TOM HAGLUND
Chief Financial Officer

ERIN BRAATEN
Vice President of Human Resources

NOEL MCCORMICK
Vice President of Advancement

JUDY ANDERSEN
Director of Adult Day Programs

JODI BLUME
Director of Community Integration
& Life Enrichment Programs

MIKE HARPER
Director of Programs & Services - Central Minnesota

SARA HASSLEN
Program Director

KEITH HOVLAND
Director of CBTE & Supported Employment Teams

DAN MEYERS
Director of Vocational Evaluation & Transition Services

MICHELE MORRIS
Director of Industrial Services

RYAN NELSON
Director of Transportation

KRIS OBERG
Program Director

ROBERT REEDY
Director of Vocational Services - Metro Area

RICK ROBBINS
Program Director

BECKY ROTHER
Director of Quality Assurance

JAMIE SMITH
Director of Information Technology

NATALIE ZACHARIAS
Director of DTH & Supported Employment Services

2019 RISE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Kristin Hangebrauck, Saint Louis Park

Lauri Hopkins, Lino Lakes

Susan Langfeldt, Deer Park, Wis.

Sheila Minske, Minneapolis

Kelly Steffens, Prior Lake

Manfred Tatzmann, Minneapolis

INCOME STATEMENT

INCOME

PROGRAM SERVICE FEES	\$15,373,970
PRODUCTION AND LABOR SALES TO PUBLIC	\$7,184,962
GRANTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS	\$3,116,004
TRANSPORTATION	\$3,051,515
DONATIONS / SPECIAL EVENTS / UNITED WAY.....	\$373,153
OTHER	\$128,438
TOTAL INCOME	\$28,971,166

EXPENSES

DAY TRAINING & HABILITATION PROGRAMS.....	\$12,381,490
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.....	\$3,742,923
PRODUCTION	\$4,063,962
MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL.....	\$3,094,250
TRANSPORTATION	\$3,266,248
ADULT DAY PROGRAMS.....	\$996,209
WELFARE-TO-WORK PROGRAMS.....	471,562
HOUSING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS.....	\$567,393
FUNDRAISING	\$222,033
TOTAL	\$28,806,070

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS.....	\$14,232,462
LAND, BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT	\$18,118,380
LESS DEPRECIATION.....	\$9,072,914
NET LAND, BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT.....	\$9,045,466
OTHER ASSETS.....	\$571,511
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$28,849,439

LIABILITIES

CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$3,027,440
LONG-TERM DEBT.....	\$1,423,053
OTHER LIABILITIES	\$313,341
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$4,763,834

NET ASSETS

NET ASSETS, UNRESTRICTED	\$18,729,546
NET ASSETS, RESTRICTED.....	\$356,059
TOTAL NET ASSETS.....	\$19,085,605





Mikros Engineering offers wide range of career opportunities

WITH MINNESOTA'S CURRENT unemployment rate hovering around three percent, businesses in all sectors often find it challenging to hire enough qualified workers to keep their operations running smoothly.

So that's why Johnathan Milks, the Human Resources director at Mikros Engineering, Inc., says it exceptionally helpful when Rise's Employment Consultant Amber Barnes calls to tell him, "I think I have someone who would be a great fit for your company!"

"Of course, I can't Johnathan make a 100-percent guarantee," said Amber. "But by the time I call him with a recommendation, I already know the person has the interest, the skills, and the motivation to work at Mikros."

Located in Brooklyn Park, Mikros has provided custom injection molding, insert molding, over-molding, tooling, assemblies, and prototypes to companies throughout the world since 1962. Mikros has a wide range of career opportunities, from original product design to the finishing work.

Marci Jasper from Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services made the first contact with Mikros a few years ago, laying the groundwork for this mutually beneficial working partnership Johnathan and Amber have.

"We have hired several people through Rise and realize that what they bring to the job is dependability, capability, and a willingness to work hard," said Johnathan. "We have a pretty diverse workforce and each person is valued for their contributions."



Hunter Bjorkstrand recycles plastic scraps throughout the plant.

Johnathan noted that Mikros managers and employees do most of the on-the-job training for new employees themselves. Amber may offer some follow-up support services, if necessary, but Mikros's employees tend to work as a team and support each other. Meet some of them:

Following his auto accident Momo Sackie had a hard time finding work. But with his experience in production, he finds working at Mikros to be "the best. Everyone

is cool and we work as a team," he said. "I like doing different jobs almost every day."

Hunter Bjorkstrand has worked at Mikros for just over a year and has already had several different jobs in the large manufacturing plant, each one with increased responsibility. His supervisors have allowed him to try out different jobs so Hunter has worked as a machine operator, a grinder, and a recycler.

"I like to move around a lot and have gotten to know many people here," said Hunter. "They trained me in on all these jobs. I enjoy it and these are really good people to work with."

Kit Carlson (shown on the cover) worked for many years for a local lawn service company, but was happy to find a new job that was a little less physically demanding. He works the second shift at Mikros, which not only gives him "nice, steady work," but enables him to also do metal scrapping during the day. Kit likes the variety of the work and his supportive Mikros co-workers.



Momo Sackie does trim work on a wide range of completed products.

Always wanting to learn new tasks, The Centre's members and employees appreciate Rick's good work, reliability

THE NEW RICHMOND Area Centre is a busy place located in the heart of this Wisconsin town. An inclusive, nonprofit organization serving the St. Croix Valley area since 2009, The Centre (as it's known locally) has 6,000 members of all ages who enjoy a wide range of health and fitness activities, recreation, sports, aquatics, preschool child care, and kids' camps.

With career planning and job placement assistance from Rise Employment Consultant Patty Thurk, Richard Salberg was hired in August 2016 to work with the housekeeping/maintenance team four days a week. He keeps the common areas, locker rooms, classrooms, and bathrooms clean for members and staff.

As busy as he is at work, Deanna



"Rick does outstanding cleaning work," said Follow-Up Support Specialist Kim Erland. "He always has a positive attitude and says hello to everybody."

na Homme, The Centre's cleaning manager, says Rick helps out wherever he is needed. "He will pick up extra work shifts, and is always asking to add to his task list. 'What else can I do?' he wants to know. He is eager to learn new jobs, especially if it involves operating equipment!"

Kim Erland, a Rise follow-up support specialist, checks in with Rick on Fridays to see how his work week has gone and help address any work-related issues.

Among Richard's many work attributes, the one Deanna probably appreciates the most is his dependability. Having (finally!!) survived one of the coldest and snowiest Wisconsin winters in recent memory, Deanna recalls that there were several times that she called Rick to tell him to stay home and not tackle his almost-two-mile walk to The Centre. But he always came in to work anyway.

"A neighbor gave me some extra warm clothes, so I was fine," he noted. "This is a good place to work and I have really nice co-workers and members to talk to."

Deanna considers Rick to be an outstanding employee and recognized him as the *Employee of the Year* for her department in 2016.

Not only does Rick enjoy his work, but getting to chat with so many interesting, kind New Richmond-area people is definitely an added bonus for him.

Rick hadn't worked in many years, "so it is so nice to go to work,"



Rick enjoys the variety of his work, chatting with members, and learning new tasks.

he said. "I was bored at home, but I am never bored here." He usually arrives about 20 minutes early to work so he can talk sports and politics with some of The Centre's members.

"Rick seems to have the scoop on what's going on and has a great sense of humor," said Deanna. "He really fits in well here and has gotten to know many of our members pretty well. They like swapping stories with him."

In his free time, Rick enjoys spending time with his stepdaughter and her four young children who live near by.



It won't be a party without YOU -
Join us June 12 at Hop & Barrel Brewing Co.
for Tapping Into Possibilities 'Friend-Raiser!'

Visit rise.org/special-events for discounted tickets or pay at the door

HOP & BARREL

Hop & Barrel Brewing Co.
310 2nd St.
Hudson, WI 54016
4:30 - 7:00 p.m.

**Come enjoy music, games, prizes & delicious brews
in a family-friendly environment!**



In remembrance of Emeritus Director Jack Grunewald



ALL OF US AT RISE extend our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of John 'Jack' Grunewald, an emeritus director on Rise's Board, who died in Naples, Florida, on February 2.

A former chief financial officer for both Pentair, Inc. and Polaris Industries, Jack served on Rise's Board of Directors from 1990 to 2013 before he and his wife Jan retired and moved to Naples. He especially enjoyed reading-history and politics, had travelled to 120 countries with Jan, and loved golf.

His extensive financial and corporate business background was exceptionally valuable to Rise over his many years as a director. Jack was a kind, generous man, and a tremendous supporter and champion of Rise's mission and the people we serve.

For instance, in 1986, Jack, Jan, their daughter Lynn, and son-in-law Peter Magnuson created and then helped run Rise's *Par Excellence Golf Tournament* that raised money for Rise program services for 19 years. Jack's son, Jon, currently serves as a director on Rise's board.

Generous supporters contribute to Rise's important mission

Your gift to Rise is an investment in people!

Please consider some of the many ways you can support Rise:

* **Smile.Amazon.com:** Sign up online to have a percentage of your purchases donated to Rise -- simple, automatic, and no cost

* **Planned giving** through a bequest, will, trust, life insurance policy, retirement account, or stocks and assets

* **Workplace giving** through the United Way or employer match

* **Volunteer**, individually or as a group, in a wide range of activities and projects

* **Celebrate Rise** sponsorships, donations of raffle and live auction items

* **Give to the Max Day:** Online giving at GiveMN.org in mid-November each year

For more information about these and other ways to support Rise, please contact Samantha Marks at 763-792-2450; smarks@rise.org.



Interested in an exciting career at Rise? Find out more at rise.org/jobs

Rise is all about people and potential!

We want exceptional professionals on our team who will help make a difference in people's lives --like Stacy Gross, an art therapist who manages Rise's Art Speaks program offered to people served in our day training and habilitation programs.

Meet other Rise team members and find out how they spend their work day and what they enjoy most about their career at rise.org/team-member-spotlights



Michael Sack lets his ‘fingers do the talking,’ writing about mobility, accessibility issues -- and SPORTS!

By Samantha Marks,

Rise Development Manager

THIS PAST FEBRUARY, the ‘Minne-SNOW-ta’ metro area saw its snowiest month in history. Though some people may appreciate its white, glistening beauty, many people focus on the slick roads, lengthy commutes, and snow-covered walkways it causes.

Michael Sack knows firsthand that sidewalks and curb cuts can become impassable for those who are mobility-impaired or use a wheelchair as he does. He wrote about his and others’ situation in an op-ed piece published in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* on December 7, 2018. It was headlined, “*Minneapolis proposal to clear sidewalk snow is a game-changer*”

Interest in Michael’s advocating pieces quickly ‘snowballed’ as the *City Pages* posted another submission of his. “*To Minnesotans with disabilities, George H.W. Bush was a hero*” hit the press on December 14, 2018. His article highlighted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed by President Bush. Michael wrote it was “a sweeping measure that would help millions of people with various disabilities live lives free of discrimination.”

Michael credits the ADA for educating the Minnesota Twins in designing Target Field. The wheelchair-friendly gates, handicapped seats, and 13 elevators are an incredible win for this Minnesota sports fan.

Michael’s writing recognition does stop there. Along with his long-time friend, Sam Graves, the duo has co-authored *Two Men On*, a blog dedicated to sports and accessibility topics, since January 2010.

After reading their blog, Twins President Dave St. Peter invited Sam and Michael to tour the then-new Target Field. The pair came up with a three-page list of things to check out for accessibility, including doors, restrooms, elevators, seating, concession stands, and kiosks.

Their blog discussions have also addressed accessibility plans for other Twin Cities sports venues, including CHS Field in St. Paul and the US Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.

Additionally, Michael still finds time to write to his legislative representatives, continuing his passion for advocacy for himself and his peers. Michael’s Rise supervisor, Jordan Reisdorph, emphasized Michael’s attributes.

Michael’s writing, computer skills, and strong work ethic were immediately apparent to Rise team members when he started at Rise Bloomington in 2011. His initial day-to-day data entry tasks quickly turned into updating quar-tiles, writing memos, taking on additional projects for managers,



Michael Sacks is a prolific writer and wrote an article for the March 2019 issue of the Rise Reporter.

as well as lending a helpful hand to team members frustrated with computer issues, including Program Supervisor Piper Wohlfeil.

“He is our go-to guy around here!” Piper said. “Anything we need, Michael can do it.”

“Michael is so eloquent in his writing, and his passion shines through,” added Jordan. “When work is limited, he will take initiative and find new projects to tackle. He keeps us all on our toes.”

Michael’s appreciation for the presence of his staff is mutual.

“I look forward to seeing them every day. Rise is the place for me!”



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Show-stopping scenes from Rise's 3rd Celebrate Talent held April 9 at Fridley High School Auditorium

Top row: **1.** Lucinda Anderson opened the show by singing *America the Beautiful*. **2.** Volunteers Teri and Isabelle West (left and right) were stage managers. Former Rise Spring Lake Park receptionist, Jean Stephenson, is their proud mom and grandma. **3.** Ademola Koleosho sang an original song he wrote just minutes before the curtain went up.

Second row: **4.** Rise Team Member Nancee Magistad tickled our funny bones with her stories.

5. Some of the 20 showpeople taking a bow at the end of the program.



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