



Easterseals TN

ALL ABILITIES. LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES.

The support, care, and determination of the Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) at Easterseals TN enables our members to experience life to the fullest.

Easterseals TN creates opportunities for growth.

Matt, an Easterseals TN member, succeeded in accomplishing two goals that young adults hope to attain. In March 2020, Matt moved from his family’s home into an apartment with a roommate. Also, Matt is gainfully employed at Zaxby’s.

Matt’s journey began a few years ago, when he joined Easterseals TN as an ECF Choices member participating in the Easterseals Community Integration program. Recognizing that Matt never meets a stranger and truly enjoys a engaging conversation, Direct Support Professional (DSP), Bonnie, quickly involved him in a variety of community activities. One of his favorite outings has been visiting a local animal shelter. Several days a week, Matt supports and cares for the cats in the “Cat Room” at the shelter for hours on end. His dedication and innate ability to support the shelter led Bonnie to developing his job training skills. This development eventually landed Matt his job with Zaxby’s. At Matt’s work his favorite responsibility includes appetizer preparations along with packing for deliveries.

As time progressed, Matt’s work ethic and determination steered Easterseals staff to recognize that Matt was capable of even larger ambitions. Subsequently, Matt was introduced to our Residential Living Program. Early on Matt began learning independent living skills, while his family and Easterseals staff worked tirelessly to facilitate finding Matt a place of his own. Recently, everyone’s dreams came to fruition with his family’s support and Matt made the move in March. Matt is devotedly striving to get acquainted and support his roommate in their new apartment. Bonnie and other DSPs, are helping Matt adjust to domestic responsibilities by teaching Matt to cook, do his own laundry, and keep up with housework. Bonnie declares, “Matt folds his shirts like an expert and has them neatly organized in his chest of drawers.” Thanks to his family Matt has a very strong acquired baseline skillset. Each of Matt’s accomplishments illustrate how the programs and services at Easterseals TN enable people to live healthy, productive, and independent lives.

Within a short time, Matt expanded his horizons beyond what his family and friends might have thought possible. Way to go Matt! Everyone at Easterseals TN is so proud of you!



Matt and Bonnie, DSP



Matt in his new home

THE BIG PAYBACK 2020 - May 6-7

For the past six years, the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee has hosted a 24 hour online giving day for non-profits in Middle Tennessee. The event celebrates the spirit of generosity and is a welcome source of additional income for non-profits.

Easterseals Tennessee looks forward to participating each year due to the exposure we receive, as well as, the contributions that individuals and businesses give in support of our programs and services.

Remember to click on www.thebigpayback.org on May 6th at 6 PM through May 7th at 6 PM, to join in the fun and give to Easterseals Tennessee.



Home Managers and Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) Change Lives

Home Managers and DSPs believe in, motivate, and guide our members with compassion and care. Results have shown that our members learn to trust and love their caregivers like family, which ultimately impacts their health and well-being. Hollis and Nancy are two Easterseals TN Home Managers that exemplify the spirit of compassionate caregivers while focusing on the daily routines of individual members in our residential living programs.

As a young girl, Hollis said she always yearned to “help” others, a heartfelt attitude that she believes originated from caring for her elderly and blind grandmother. Nancy nursed her sister through cancer, while simultaneously caring for her father who had diabetes, heart problems, and was on dialysis. These two women both relish the time and comfort they were able to offer their family members, embracing their past as the pathway to their career of supporting others.

Hollis supports three members in one home. One of whom, named Jerri, is an ECF CLS member who entered Easterseals programming both nonverbal and withdrawn; however with Hollis’ support, Jerri has blossomed. Jerri now spends most of her time in the living room socializing with her housemates, and enjoying daily outings in the community. Additionally, Jerri’s hand and eye coordination improved vastly due to Hollis’ interaction and teaching skills. Playing Checkers and Connect Four have become part of their regular routine, positively impacting her motor skills, and, as well, just for the fun of it. Brandy Hudson, our Chief Services Officer, expresses that, “Hollis’s persistence in helping Jerri come out of her room made a world of difference in the quality of Jerri’s life.”

Nancy, helped Nicholas (Nicky), an Easterseals TN member that she supports, learn to trust others, and to realize that the community is a welcoming environment. Nicky’s PCP and Psychiatrist were making home visits prior to Nancy’s care. Now Nicky will leave his home for his doctor’s visits, to eat in restaurants, and to take walks around the lake. Nicky has also become interested in cooking due to Nancy’s culinary passion. In addition, they are teaching one another sign language. Chief Services Officer, Brandy, comments, “It is easy to see how much care, consistency, and compassion Nancy puts into what she does when you see the great progress Nicky has made.”

Both cases validate the power of inclusion and acceptance. They illustrate that without support, many individuals might simply exist; perhaps never perceiving nor ever experiencing their own capabilities.



Hollis enjoying games with Jerri



Nancy sharing some of her recipes with Nicky

Some of Our Essential Staff During the Pandemic



Bertha, a Home Manager in West TN for 2 years



Larry, the Benton County Rest Area Supervisor for 19 years



Charles, the Supervisor of Janitorial Services at Houston Barracks for 3 years



Tim Ryerson, President and CEO

As we write this 2020 Spring newsletter, COVID-19 remains active. As you have heard on the news reports, “essential” businesses must continue to operate. Easterseals TN is one of those “essential” organizations.

President and CEO Corner

Today, staff are active managing Rest Areas on TN interstates as our “essential staff” are safely cleaning facilities for truck drivers to have a place to rest as they deliver needed supplies to the community. Staff within the Residential Program are still at work each day, dedicated to supporting members. If members need on the job support at a restaurant or grocery store, Easterseals staff are job coaching to help fulfill members work obligations.

Easterseals TN staff are “essential” during good and tough times. Please thank “essential staff” in our communities for their dedication. Also, remember to continue supporting Easterseals TN, as we maintain services as an “essential” and vital community organization.



Mark Your Calendars:

The Big Payback 05/06/20
ESTN Summer Camp 05/25-08/14/20

Easterseals Tennessee 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Perry Moulds, *Chairman*
Chuck Mataya, *Vice-Chairman*
Steve Deckard, *Secretary*
Jeff Bridges, *Treasurer*
Caryl Atwood
Jeb Beasley
David Beecham
Karen Blake
Lee Molette
Rhonda Phillippi
Steve Zimmerman