

# CONTACT



Fall 2018

In touch with all things Cottonwood...



# MY JOB MY CHOICE



We help people with disabilities shape their own future.

# A Message from Our CEO



The theme for this issue of CONTACT is MY JOB – MY CHOICE! This theme expresses the sentiment of people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities across the country who want to make sure their choices are honored. Forty plus years ago when I began working in this field, choices were limited for individuals served. Cottonwood, from its early beginnings, was entrepreneurial and offered a variety of work options for those served. To this day, we continue to offer a vibrant and successful Work Center, Cottonwood Industries, as well as JobLink, which works closely with businesses throughout the area, matching the skills of job seekers with the needs of the business.

Purpose has become a popular topic recently. We all yearn to find purpose in our lives, to make a meaningful contribution to the greater good. Individuals served by Cottonwood want purpose in their lives as well. So whether someone chooses to have a job at Cottonwood Industries Work Center, at another area business or both, it's their choice. Whatever the choice, these people are also providing a meaningful contribution to the greater good.

Now, please take a few minutes to enjoy this issue of the CONTACT and learn more about Cottonwood!

*Sharon Spratt, CEO.*

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CONTACT is published for the friends and supporters of Cottonwood, Inc. by the Community Relations and Development Department: Ettie Brightwell and Kari Bentzinger.

Cottonwood, Incorporated is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization that serves children and adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Cottonwood provides an array of employment options, onsite and in other parts of the community, residential, and case management services. Cottonwood is a member of Interhab, the Resource Network for Kansans with Disabilities.

Cottonwood is partially funded on a contractual basis with the Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services. Cottonwood receives some funding from Douglas and Jefferson Counties. Some funding is also received from United Way of Douglas County. Cottonwood is an affirmative action equal opportunity employer. We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law. (The Fair Housing Amendment Act of 1998).

Labeling and mailing services for this newsletter have been provided by men and women of Cottonwood. An adapted version of this publication and other materials are available by calling 785.842.0550 or by visiting us on the web at [www.cwood.org](http://www.cwood.org).



# Celebrate

## DSP Week

September 10th-14th, 2018 was designated as Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Week. DSPs are our hardworking professionals who work directly with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We do so appreciate the hard work that our DSPs put in each and every day, but this week gives us special opportunities to show them how important they are to us and the people we serve. The week kicked off with the Management Team serving breakfast for our DSPs. Thank you to McDonald's for donating breakfast. Mid-week, the DSPs also received delicious cookies from Eileen's. Raffles were held throughout the week for gift card drawings from places around Lawrence. And on Friday, we celebrated our DSPs with a special DSP Appreciation Treat Bag. Our DSPs are amazing, caring individuals. Thank you, DSPs, for all you do!



"It is very rewarding to see our consumers grow and be so happy at Cottonwood. I couldn't ask for a better place to work!" -Lyndsee



"Blessed to be part of the bigger picture."



"I love my co-workers and the people we support. That's why I stay here and plan to stay until I can't move!" -Mary



# My Job M



There always seems to be a flurry of activity at Cottonwood Industries. For over 50 months in a row, there has been 99% work availability. The contracts procured by Cottonwood Industries provide the people we serve many varied opportunities to earn a paycheck as well as learn valuable skills while completing meaningful work for a variety of local and regional businesses.

"It's a really great partnership for us. Not only are we able to get something done that generally we don't necessarily have the time or space for, but we know it's quality work being done by the right people doing what we need and making sure it gets done on time."



-Cottonwood Industries  
Business Partner

## COTTONWOOD Industries



"We get really good employees that are very engaged. They are directed on what they're doing and they are focused because they want to do a good job. So, we have people that are really paying attention to our product."

-Cottonwood Industries  
Business Partner

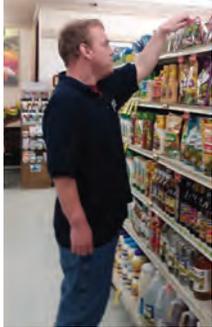


Choose Cottonwood Industries to perform all the jobs in your order fulfillment cycle, or choose just those jobs that we can perform most cost-effectively for you. Contact us today to discuss your needs. Robert Bieberle, Cottonwood Industries Business Development Manager, at 785-842-0550 or [rbieberle@cwood.org](mailto:rbieberle@cwood.org).



# My Choice

## Employees of the Month



### May - Steven

"I have worked at Heartland Foods for almost 2 years. I keep all products neat on the shelves. I work with nice people."



### June - Kenny

"I have 5 jobs! I work at Taco John's, Chili's, Regal Theatre, Signs of Life, and Papa Keno's. My advice about being a good employee is never look down when someone is talking to you. Always listen to management and do what they tell you. Be working when you are supposed to be working. Treat your co-workers as you would want to be treated."



### July - Kristin

"I have worked at Heartland Homecare Services since January 2017. I work on a computer doing data entry and scanning. I destroy returned medications and send out statements to customers. Show up on time, be reliable and help your supervisor with whatever they need. Also, enjoy your work!"



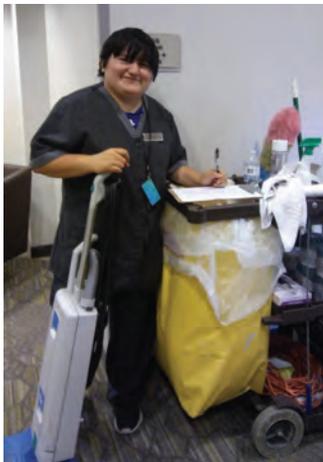
### August - Dan

"I have worked at Brandon Woods for 2 years. I am a dishwasher. I like the pay and I get along with my co-workers. Be a good employee by being on time and work hard. I have perfect attendance."



### September - Charlene

"I have worked at Springhill Suites for 15 months. I clean and check rooms. I also restock items and take out the trash. I like learning how to do something different to make my job easier. My advice for being a good employee is make sure you do all of your work each day so the next person doesn't have to do your work."



### October - Bea

"I have worked at Six Mile Chop House for 7 months. I fold napkins for silverware. I like my boss and I also like making money!"



Victoria began working at Wendy's in the dining room and cleaning trays. Soon she was learning how to use the fry station and tray up bacon. While she would clean trays she would watch other employees ring up orders for customers. One day Victoria saw a customer at the counter and realized the employee had left for a bit. Victoria stepped up and greeted the customer and began taking the order. Her supervisor and job coach were both there and stood back and watched. Victoria had it all under control with no formal training. She took the entire order and had a happy customer! Victoria's job coach said she is really good at learning new skills and will soon be doing food prep. Way to go Victoria! Wendy's is lucky to have you!

## JobLink

## Employers of the Month

- May - Heartland Homecare Services
- June - Wendy's
- July - Pizza Hut (Baldwin)
- August - Home Depot
- September - Fuzzy's
- October - Double Tree by Hilton

"You should give JobLink a try. I cannot imagine what our office was like before, and now we have 4 long-term employees and members of our team!"

-Heartland Homecare

"You would be shocked at the benefits of hiring an individual with a disability. Our employees get a boost of morale and a great sense of community involvement."

-Double Tree by Hilton

JobLink candidates have a variety of skills and abilities with an array of educational levels and work experience. JobLink is your employment agency resource for dedicated and talented employees in the Lawrence, Kansas area. You'll find that we share your commitment to quality. For more information contact Phil Bentzinger 785-842-0550 or pbentzinger@cwood.org.

# My Job My Choice



"I love my job at EN-TIRE! I clean the bathrooms, mop the floors and take out the trash. The people are so nice. I'm excited because now that I have a job I saved my money for the Parks and Rec trip to San Antonio! I can't wait! It's my first time going."

-Margert

Margert also works at Cottonwood's work center, Cottonwood Industries, where she works on various contracts for area businesses.



This work combined with her part-time job at EN-TIRE helps Margert maximize her income and remain productive the whole day.

Cottonwood's philosophy is that everyone can work at some level of employment. "Supported unemployment" is not anyone's goal.



InterHab is the state association for providers of community services to Kansans with developmental disabilities. They serve their members through support, technical assistance, and advocacy. Through their members, they provide leadership at the local, state, and federal level in support of persons with disabilities.

PowerUp!, InterHab's Annual Conference, is designed to inspire, educate and empower professionals who support persons with disabilities. Power Up! features 30+ sessions from speakers driving innovation in disability services, active networking with like minded professionals, collaboration with attendees to build actionable takeaways and the latest news on our political climate.



Several Cottonwood staff attended the InterHab Powerup Conference in Wichita, October 10-12.



Congrats to our very own, Pennie Goodrich! She received the InterHab Achievement in the Workplace Award. This award is presented to a person who receives services from an InterHab member and who has made significant accomplishments in his or her workplace.

Pennie heads out each day to any one of her three jobs, with the intention of being positive and doing her best at everything she does. Pennie strives to be as independent as possible. She is so dedicated to her work and continues to grow in confidence and independence in all areas of her life.



# FORE!

The Cottonwood Classic Golf Tournament was held on an absolutely gorgeous Monday, May 21, 2018 at Eagle Bend Golf Course. The golf tournament was SOLD OUT with 32 teams participating!



Congratulations to the Championship Flight team winners: 1st Place- Intrust Bank; 2nd Place- Kaw Valley State Bank. The Maybe Next Year flight winners were Emprise Bank/Midwest Concrete and 2nd Place went to the team from Truity Credit Union.



## Minimasters

Once again, the Cottonwood Mini Masters miniature golf tournament was held at The Lodge in Baldwin City, Kansas on May 24. We all enjoyed a wonderful hamburger barbecue thanks to Peach Madl and her fantastic crew. A few hardy players made it through a couple of holes before the deluge hit! Despite the weather, we had a wonderful time dancing and playing games inside the Lodge and watching and playing with unique bubble wands under the overhang. What a great way to have fun with all our friends. Can't wait until next year!





# Salute!

Cottonwood held its 19th annual Salute! A Festival of Wine and Food on July 12-14. What a festival it was! The Mass St. Mosey kicked off the festival on a very hot and muggy Thursday evening. The weather did not seem to melt away any of the fun for the almost 500 folks who attended. This year's Winemaker Dinner was hosted by The Oread and featured wines from the Ruffino winery. Todd Izzo, from Constellation Brands, eloquently guided attendees through an amazing evening of food and wine pairings.





The Grand Tasting, also held at The Oread, was a perfect ending to a wonderful 3 days with food offered from 10 local eateries and over 200 wines offered as well. And the silent and live auctions proved to be as exciting as ever. Salute continues to be Cottonwood's largest fundraising event and this year was no exception with over \$225,000 raised for Cottonwood.

A special thank you to Standard Beverage Corporation, The Oread, The Nigro Brothers, Brian Hanni and all of our sponsors, participants, donors and volunteers for making this year our best ever!



# Salute!



We would like to give a very special shout out to those Grand Tasting attendees that participated in our 'Raise the Paddle.' We raised over \$21,000 with this effort alone and were able to replace one of our much needed and used accessible vans.

- |                                 |                             |
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## Thank You Sponsors!



Silver - Gold - Platinum - Diamond - Champion



Thank You!

# Celebrate!

The 17th annual Cottonwood Classics were held on Monday, September 24, 2018 at Southwest Middle School. This event is truly a celebration of all that is Cottonwood and what makes Cottonwood such a uniquely wonderful place.



Distinguished Service Award  
Tana Ahlen



25 years of service  
Charles Snedeger



Caring & Commitment Award  
Marion Babb & Ben Layton



10 years of service  
Pam Richards



Cottonwood Industries Business Partner of the Year  
Churchill Container



Shining Star - Barb McEldowney



Shining Star - Albert Gauna

The Classics are Cottonwood's way of honoring those who excel in their lives and jobs, making a difference in the lives of the people we serve.



Cottonwood Choir and soloists- Ben, Victoria and Pery



Lisa celebrates 10 years of service at McDonald's



Jim Thomas, JobLink, accepts the JobLink Outstanding Community Employer Award for LMH Health



JM Smuckers



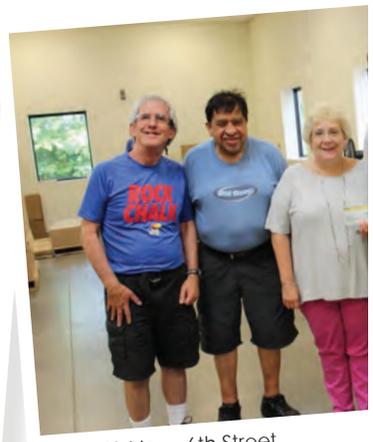
Gavin Kreidler



Great Plains Media



James Person, Source America



HyVee - 6th Street



David Decker, Jordan Lister, & Rian Morrissey



Lawrence Library



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Monique Pope from Black Hills Energy



Greg Orman



Cary Brightwell  
Kim Brightwell



KU Endowment





Andrea Baloga, Gail Vick, Susan Esau, Lisa Arch, & Darcey Soto with Angela



Free State High School Interpersonal Skills (IPS) Class



# Tours



Boeve, Hazlett, & Wood Families

We are very proud of the work that is done at Cottonwood to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Come see for yourself all that Cottonwood does. If you are interested in finding out more about Cottonwood and/or touring our facilities, please contact Ettie Brightwell, Director of Community Relations/Development at [ebrightwell@cwood.org](mailto:ebrightwell@cwood.org) or (785) 842-0550.



Andrew Williams - KU Engineering



Lawrence Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Partners



Jon greets Larry McElwain-Lawrence Chamber of Commerce



Double Tree Hilton Hotel

# Farewell



Our dedicated Director of Support Services, Janet Fouche-Shack, is retiring this Fall after a combined 31 years of service to Cottonwood. Consumers and staff have benefited significantly from Janet's commitment to consumer advocacy as she has worked in various capacities over the years with Residential, Work and Support Services. Her dedication to enriching the lives of those she serves is clearly evidenced by the strong relationships she has developed with consumers, families and co-workers. Janet always looks for ways to give a shout out to co-workers and always take the time to recognize when staff have gone "Above & Beyond." She is a true team player. We will miss her and wish her well as she embarks on this next chapter.



## Welcome!

We are pleased to announce that Pam Ludwick has been hired as the Director of Support Services. Pam fills the role vacated by the retirement of Janet Fouche-Shack. Pam has a B.S. in Education and nearly 10 years of experience at Cottonwood. She has worked in Residential Services, JobLink Supported Community Employment and for the past six years as a Case Manager. Prior to coming to Cottonwood, Pam had many years of experience in business including leading multi-functional teams, project management and employee relations. We welcome Pam to her new role!



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Cottonwood, Inc. & Salute Festival of Wine & Food



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# Shaping Futures

## Why I Give



"Giving matters. I believe that our lives are all made better when we give back, and this is a lesson I want to teach my three sons. Between work, sports and school and the love/hate relationship we all have with our electronic devices, it is

more important than ever to make human connections. That's why, in addition to my monthly PayPal contribution, I also serve on the Cottonwood Foundation Board. My board service has given me the opportunity to make those personal connections with many of the consumers with intellectual/developmental disabilities who receive services from Cottonwood. I see the positive difference Cottonwood makes in their lives every single day. I hope



you will consider joining me and my family in supporting Cottonwood, whether it is a one-time gift or an easy monthly contribution. I'd also love to host you for a tour if you or your work colleagues or book club or family would like to come see the amazing work that happens at Cottonwood every day."

- Allison Vance Moore, President Cottonwood Foundation Board

"I see the positive difference Cottonwood makes in their lives every single day."



## Opportunities to shape the future

The Cottonwood Foundation is a separate but affiliated 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization established to facilitate the contribution of funds for the benefit of Cottonwood, Inc. The Foundation's purpose is to promote and further the advancement of services at Cottonwood. With increased competition for limited philanthropic funds, gifts have become even more critical to help ensure a long, healthy future for Cottonwood, Inc. Contributions to the Cottonwood Foundation can be made in a number of ways, including cash, securities, real estate and personal property, life insurance, retirement plans, in-kind gifts, and planned gifts through a will or trust. Each contribution makes a difference and helps ensure the future of Cottonwood.



### ONE-TIME GIFT

Your gift makes a big difference!



### MEMORIAL & HONORARIUM

Honor your loved one with a gift today.



### MONTHLY GIVING

Help shape the future of the people we support year-round with a monthly automatic gift.



### QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DEDUCTIONS

Individuals who've attained age 70 1/2 may make QCDs.



### PLANNED & ESTATE GIFTS

Learn how to leave a legacy through a Will or Trust.



### Company Match

Many companies offer a company donation match.

Contact Ettie Brightwell, Director of Community Relations/Development, for more information.  
ebrightwell@cwood.org or 785-842-0550.

## You can make a lasting difference!

The Cottonwood Foundation is a charitable organization, and gifts are tax deductible. Contact Ettie Brightwell, Director of Community Relations and Development, at (785) 842-0550 to learn more about how you can have an impact on the lives of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities by making a donation to the Cottonwood Foundation. For more information about Cottonwood, Inc. as well as the Cottonwood Foundation, visit [www.cwood.org](http://www.cwood.org).



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19th Annual  
Consumer Art Show**

Lawrence Arts Center  
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