

CONTACT

Fall 2020

In touch with all things Cottonwood...



COTTONWOOD
INCORPORATED

We help people with disabilities shape their own future.

A Message from Our CEO



Greetings to everyone. As we think back to the first of the year, we couldn't have predicted COVID-19 and the impact it has had on all of our lives. We have all had to make changes in the way we live each day. I am very thankful for the staff members at Cottonwood and for their tireless efforts to protect the health and safety of the individuals we serve. Our creative, compassionate staff have found new and clever ways to have fun, be silly, and bring a little extra joy into our daily lives. Who knew drive thru celebrations would be such a hit!

Despite all that we have been through, we have much to be thankful for. As we enter into the season of Thanksgiving, I want to take this opportunity to wish each of you peace, good health and happiness. And a special thank you for your ongoing support of Cottonwood. We are Cottonwood Strong, and remain committed to our mission. Your support enables us to continue to provide the quality care and services that we are known for. We are forever grateful.

Sharon Spratt, CEO.

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COTTONWOOD INCORPORATED

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Cottonwood, Inc. &
Salute Festival of Wine & Food



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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 individuals 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. 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.



Meet the staff!



Susan Rogers
Health Supports Nurse Manager

"I like our mission of serving adults with disabilities, that this is a well-regarded, stable organization, and that everyone here is so kind and good to work with."

Susan loves office and organizational supplies and likes to listen to podcasts and ride her bicycle (not at the same time!)



Chelsea DeSoto
Health Supports Nurse

Chelsea has worked at Cottonwood for 4 years and says she doesn't 'like' working here, she LOVES it! "I love the people I take care of and the people I work with. I love that I get to help others. Every day is different in some way."

Chelsea likes watching her son participate in sports as well as taking care of her chickens, dogs and guinea pig.

Chelsea loves all animals and pizza is one of her favorite foods.



Robin Wood
Health Supports Nurse

Robin has been at Cottonwood since 2010 in various positions—beginning in HR, then to Residential and now Health Supports.

"I like the kindness and appreciation that the consumers show as we support them."

Robin likes to bicycle, kayak, read and solve

logic puzzles.

Fun Cottonwood fact: Rick Falley (Work Services) and Robin have children that married each other so Robin and Rick share 3 grandchildren.



Elizabeth Billings
Health Supports Clerk

Elizabeth has worked at Cottonwood since June, 2019 as our Scheduler Extraordinaire!

"What makes my job special is getting to know all of Cottonwood's wonderful consumers".

Elizabeth has lived in Lawrence all of her life and never forgets a name or a face.



Heidi Rios
Health Supports Specialist

Heidi has worked at Cottonwood for 4 years. She drives consumers to their medical appointments as well as helps the nurses pick up and deliver meds, medical equipment and health-related paperwork.

Fun facts: Heidi once bowled 7 strikes in a row! She has been a singer since she was 7 and can quote the entire movie, Hocus Pocus, line by line!

Health Supports



Cottonwood has an amazing Health Supports Services Team. This team provides health care coordination to many of the people we support. Team members schedule medical appointments (1,980 in 2019 alone!), transport and accompany people to appointments, advocate for consumers with medical personnel during appointments, make wellness visits for medical issues, administer medications, inoculations, and some testing as well as providing medical training to staff and staffing the on-site clinic during regular business hours. And of course, providing unprecedented support through all of the unknowns of the pandemic. What a team!!

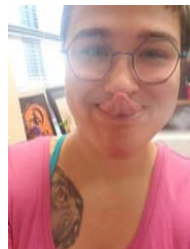


Peggy Waldschmidt
Call-In Clinic RN (PRN)

Peggy has worked at Cottonwood for about 2 years as a PRN.

She likes the opportunity to interact with consumers and staff.

In her free time, Peggy likes to spend time with her children and grandchildren (she has 12!). She also likes to bake, crochet, embroider and knit.



Ronni Cox
Health Supports Sr. Specialist

Ronni has worked at Cottonwood for 3 years.

"I always enjoy the silly things consumers have to say, and the coworkers all make me feel a part of an amazing team."

Ronni is currently working on her Masters in Social Work. And, a fun fact: Ronnie can touch her nose with her tongue! Her favorite animal is an orangutan.



Shannon McCoy
Health Supports Specialist

Shannon began working at Cottonwood in 1996 as a Residential Manager. He is now in his fourth time working at Cottonwood, this time as a Health Supports Specialist.

"I love working with all the wonderful consumers we serve here. They bring so much to the job for me. I also really enjoy the teams that I have been a part of working with here, we have a great group of staff working at Cottonwood."

Shannon loves vehicles and is currently on vehicle #35! "I have always been a car nerd, knowing statistics, how the sales & finance processes work. As a person with a disability as well, once I learned what wheels meant to me, I became addicted to cars/trucks."

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS WEEK

September 14th-18th, 2020 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.

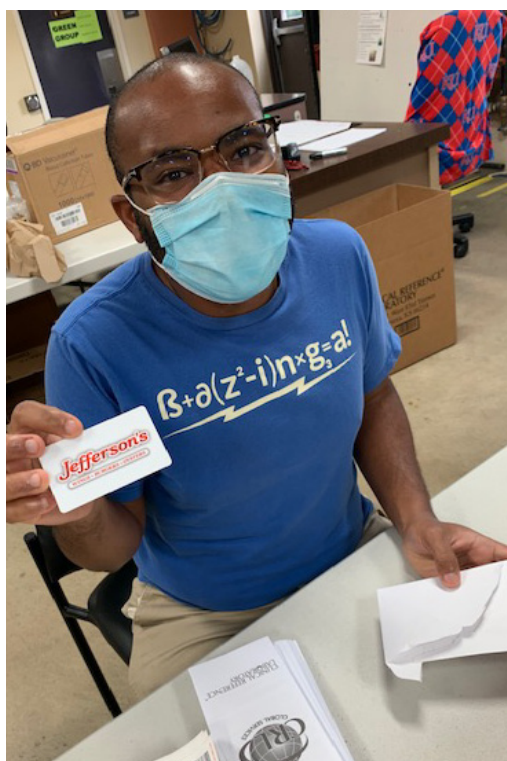
WE LOVE OUR DSPs!



The compassion, creativity and diligence that our DSPs provide is always amazing even through these unprecedented times.



The week kicked off with a shout out to our DSPs with fun yard signage from Sign Gypsies. Mid-week, we had planned to offer a walk up treat of coffee and pastries from Uplift Coffee but had to postpone that event as many of our DSPs were working in the homes at the time and not on site. We will bring that fun appreciation event back to Cottonwood later this Fall. On Thursday, we had a fun treat of ice cream for all staff and consumers provided by the KC Ice Cream Company. 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!



EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH



June - Dakota
"I have worked at Menard's for 7 months. My favorite task at work is helping guests find items and getting them to their cars."



July - Alex
"My favorite task at Pioneer Ridge is washing dishes because I can just focus on what I need to do and do a good job. I like my job because I like the people I work with. They are fun, we laugh a lot and they help me."



August - Raybert
"I prep cars for pre-wash and help keep Club Carwash clean. My favorite task is cleaning out the drain towel trough. I like knowing I made a valuable contribution to my workplace."

September - Victoria
"I have worked at Wendy's for 3 years. I enjoy food prep. It helps me relax and ease my nerves. It also helps me be creative. I like my co-workers and my employer. I get along with everyone."



October - Leo
"I have been doing maintenance on a variety of equipment for 15 years at Anderson Rentals. My advice to be a good employee is to be on time or early and do what they ask."

Employers of the Month!

June - Googols of Learning
July - Heartland Homecare
August - Target
September - Princeton Children's Center
October - Pioneer Ridge Independent Living



JobLink



Congratulations to Matthew on his new job at The Market in the Kansas Union!



Cole is super proud of the pay raise he received. Even though our offices are closed, he stopped by to share his great news through the window! Keep up the good work, Cole!

Despite the COVID effect, JobLink has landed **50 jobs since March!** Kudos to the amazing JobLink staff for never hesitating to provide the supports necessary to help our 300+ clients get and stay employed throughout the community during these risky times.



With JobLink, you'll find that we share your commitment to quality. For more information contact Phil Bentzinger 785-842-0550 or pbentzinger@cwood.org.

Cottonwood Industries

There always seems to be a flurry of activity at Cottonwood Industries. The contracts procured by Cottonwood Industries provide the people we serve many varied opportunities to learn, maintain, and hone valuable skills while earning money and completing meaningful work for a variety of local and regional businesses.

Building 3 has been knocking it out of the park with all these Hill's variety packs. They have been doing up to 7 pallets per day. That is 1,820 boxes made a day and 21,840 cans being handled daily. That is impressive!!!



Some of the key players in making these amazing numbers happen are pictured here- (clockwise from top), Jordan, Allison, Courtney and Karrie. You all do a great job everyday along with everyone else in Building 3.

Celebrating Milestones

While we were not able to gather for the Cottonwood Classies as in past years, we were able to share a virtual experience to celebrate all things that make Cottonwood such a special place—the people we support and the incredible staff who serve them. It is this Cottonwood family that keeps our mission strong and vital!



Mark Denny



Paula Pratt



Mike Taylor



LaFawn Yost



Marion Babb



Jarrod Brown



Lisa Totten



I feel very privileged to have worked so long for an organization like Cottonwood, whose mission, services, culture, and dedicated employees provide me a daily sense of contribution to society. Cottonwood's promotion of the ideals of independence, inclusion, & work should make all of the people we serve, staff, families, and the whole community proud!

-Phil Bentzinger
25 years



Loletha Clark



Sara Filbert



Miguel Ramos



Andrea Rogers



Karyn Todd



RoxAna
Covarrubias



Courtney
Herron



Patricia
Lyons



Stephanie
Maytubby



Latisa
White



Thank You For All You Do!



I never had aspirations of working with people who had disabilities. All I knew was that I needed to be able to leave work each day and feel like I had accomplished something worthwhile. I was referred to Cottonwood by another employee and I'm thankful every day that he thought of me for my position. I can truly say I look forward to going to work each day because I know I'm going to spend my time around wonderful and creative people who push me to be my best. I have the opportunity to both learn new things and share my talents which I find extremely fulfilling. Cottonwood has improved my life in a variety of ways just by letting me be a part of the team.

-Keri Rodriguez
10 Years



Katy
Achtenberg



Sadie
Crumet



Drew
Diedel



KH
Harris



Gregg
Norwood



Jerry
Sylvester



Rick
Falley



Connie
Farmer



Tammy
Faughn



Catherine
Hutton



Cassandra
Johnson



Joanna
Marin



Amelia
Neuhaus



Rebecca
Neuhaus



Amy
Robertson



Melissa
Rowlands



Kathy
Ziesmer



Home Sweet Home

Look at all the fun persons supported by Cottonwood have been having in their homes during the past months! From crafting to cooking to perfecting basketball skills to just relaxing, days are full at Cottonwood homes!



Pop Up Drive Thrus



Safari on Cottonwood Campus with lots of "creatures" to find.



Zoom Calls



Adapting Fun For COVID!

2020 has certainly been an interesting year thus far. But as always, the Cottonwood family has found new and fun ways to stay connected.



Auction Donors

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Salute! 2020 Reimagined



2020 marked the 21st anniversary of Salute! A Festival of Wine and Food. Our fabulous Festival Steering Committee demonstrated such flexibility, creativity and resiliency as we tried to bring the best reimagined Salute we could in light of the pandemic. While we missed gathering in person to enjoy the wonderful food, wine and camaraderie that Salute brings, we

were able to bring an amazing auction full of wonderful art, wine, spirits, experiences and more. And also due to the change to a totally on-line auction, we were able to test out a new mobile bidding scenario which worked almost flawlessly.

We want to give a huge THANK YOU to our fabulous sponsors who stuck with us and helped this Salute achieve such tremendous success! Salute continues to be Cottonwood's largest fundraising event and this year was no exception with almost \$120,000 raised for Cottonwood.

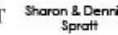


A special thank you to all of our sponsors, participants, donors and volunteers for supporting us through these challenging times. Proceeds from Salute enable us to provide upgraded medical equipment and supplies, repairs on homes and vehicles and many other vital supports for the people that Cottonwood supports.



Thank You Sponsors!

We appreciate your support!



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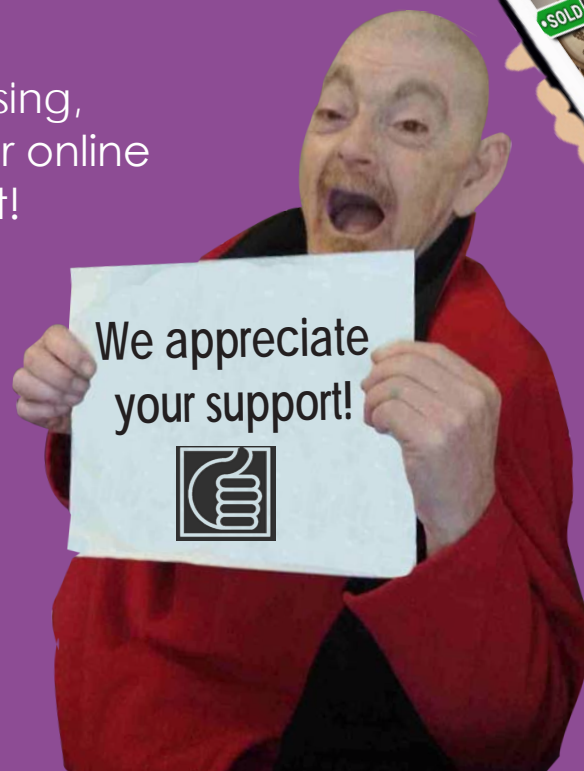
Consolidated Printing
Dash Medical Gloves
James Otten Dentistry
Emprise Bank
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Foxtail Real Estate Co.
Free State Dental
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Heinback Larkin, DDS

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RCB Bank
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Stephens Real Estate
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Thank you!

To those who participated in purchasing, donating, and bidding in our first ever online auction. We appreciate your support!



Why I Give

We owe our communities more than the taxes we pay. Taxes provide the bare necessities. Donations of time and money are what I call civic rent. These donations add grace and kindness to our community. Cottonwood is very special to me. When I was kindergarten age, there wasn't kindergarten or pre-K in the public school and so I went to Mrs. Terrill's home where she provided a kindergarten experience. Two of my good friends at that time did not go on to first grade with me – back in the days before “inclusion”. When I was invited to join the Cottonwood Board, those two kindergarten friends were Cottonwood consumers and I become even more passionate about the services provided by Cottonwood. It is very much a happy place the employees are happy, the consumers are happy and the supporters are happy. If you have not visited Cottonwood, we would be delighted to give you a tour and would welcome your support!

Tana Ahlen, Past President, Cottonwood Foundation Board of Trustees



You can make a lasting difference!

STAY CONNECTED!



**Cottonwood, Inc.
&
Salute Festival of Wine & Food**



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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. For more information about Cottonwood, Inc. as well as the Cottonwood Foundation, visit www.cwood.org.



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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!



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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.



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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.