



Community Newsletter

New Name but Same Committed Service After 40 Years

As we reinitiate our newsletters to the community we thought we would look back at the impressive history of our organization and the partnerships we've made. This is also a chance for you to see our refreshed name and branding which positions us for a bright future with new opportunities and partners. Hope you enjoy!

Stacey Ismail, Executive Director



With help and support from a variety of sources, a small group of families formed the Jefferson County Association for Retarded Children (ARC) on March 27, 1955. Sixty people attended the organizational meeting and ten families joined the organization.

The organization's first goal was to develop a school for children with developmental disabilities. In January 1957, the ARC opened the doors for the Opportunity School at the Hillsboro Civic Club building. Due to the advocacy of the ARC parents, the State Department of Education took over the operation of the school as State Training Center #2 in November, 1958. This was only the second such school in the state of Missouri.

On March 23, 1963, the ARC parents broke ground on 8 ½ acres of land on Highway A (now Plass Rd.), which the ARC had purchased in 1961 for the purpose of building a permanent location for the school. By September 1964, the school was moved into three classrooms in the upper floor. In 1967, the second building was completed, which added four more classrooms. The school accommodated nearly 75 children, who were eligible to attend. In 1973, a gym building was completed on the property. These buildings currently house offices for various agencies that provide services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

On November 28, 1960, the ARC opened a preschool program for younger children who could not attend the state school. The preschool was called the Jefferson County Opportunity Kindergarten and accepted children from age three to eight. The program closed in 1963 due to low enrollment, but was successfully reopened in 1978 and eventually included an infant stimulation program. In 1980, the program was adopted by the agency now known as NextStep for Life, Inc. until it was closed in 2003 due to a change in the State's service delivery model.

The ARC began raising money as early as 1959 to start a sheltered workshop. However, it was not until 1970 that a board of directors was formed. The first workshop opened in Mapaville, Missouri, in 1971 due to a \$10,000 gift raised by the ARC. This workshop employed 15-20 workers. By 1974, the workshop faced serious financial problems due to a record number of snow closings one winter. The workshop was forced to close in 1979, but a second workshop board organized shortly thereafter and eventually became Jeffco Subcontracting, Inc. (JSI), originally located in Hillsboro but now located in Arnold. JSI employs over 100 people with developmental disabilities annually.

By 1976, ARC members and the sheltered workshop board worked with an interested family to obtain a \$32,000 grant and to raise \$27,000 to purchase land and build a residential facility for individuals with severe disabilities requiring intensive care. On June 5, 1977, the exceptional home called Pony Bird opened its doors for 10 children between 2 and 12 years of age. In 1978, Pony Bird formed a separate board of directors and today has four residential homes at two locations (Mapaville and DeSoto), which supports 59 individuals of all ages who are non-ambulatory.

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In 1978, the workshop and the ARC board worked together to establish the Lang Center at the Presbyterian Church in Horine. The Lang Center provided training for adults who were not candidates for the sheltered workshop to learn practical living skills. This agency became known as Developmental Disability Services (DDS) and later merged with NextStep for Life.



Also, in 1978, the ARC campaigned for and Jefferson County voters passed Proposition S, the "Special Ones" to establish a new property tax. In the late 1960's, the State of Missouri had passed enabling legislation referred to as Senate Bill 40 (Chapter 205.968 through 205.972 of the Revised Missouri Statutes) which permitted counties to establish a mill tax for the purpose of developing and expanding sheltered workshops, residential and support services for their developmentally disabled citizens.



On August 17, 1978, pursuant to Senate Bill 40, the Jefferson County Court established and appointed the Jefferson County Commission for the Handicapped (JCCH), a board consisting of nine members - four board members related to a person with a disability and five members unrelated, to oversee this new property tax. The first board consisted of:

Related:

Pervis Seabaugh, Festus
Sam Maxwell, Imperial
Ken Ott, Arnold
Dana Hockensmith, De Soto

Unrelated:

John L. Freeman, De Soto
Ellen Dietrich, Hillsboro
Ron Hoenninger, Hillsboro
Reverend Paul Powell, High Ridge
Janet Mangan, Festus

Through the passage of Proposition S, a 10 cent levy was assessed on each one hundred dollars of property evaluated. In 1985, the 10 cent levy was rolled back to 6 cents as a result of re-assessment and, in 1988 with the passage of Proposition H, the levy was increased by 4 cents restoring the levy back up to the original amount of 10 cents on each one hundred dollars of property evaluated.

In June 1980, the JCCH established the non-profit corporation, Exceptional Ones, Inc. to provide direct services. Those direct services included a Practical Living Skills program to provide developmental and vocational training, a community recreation program for young adults, and early childhood intervention for children from birth to age five. In 1984, Exceptional Ones received its first certificate of accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for the adult and pre-school program. The accreditation allowed Exceptional Ones to contract with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to provide vocational evaluation and job readiness training locally in Jefferson County. A Supported Employment Program was established in March, 1992.

Residential services were added in September, 1984, with the development of a group home in Mapaville, Missouri for eight residents. In 1991, residential services expanded with the completion of the Assisted Living Apartments in Arnold, Missouri, which provided six two-bedroom apartments. In May 1992, the individualized supported living program was developed to support people living in houses and apartments in the community. In 2005, construction of the second Assisted Living Apartment building with four two-bedroom units was completed.



From 1991 on there were multiple mergers and name changes and in 2002 Service Coordination was added through a contract with the Department of Mental Health. As of 2003, the county tax entity was known as the Jefferson County Developmental Disabilities Resource Board (JCDDR) and as of 2010, the non-profit was known as NextStep for Life.



Notably, in 2016, to be in compliance with Conflict-Free Case Management regulations, the JCDDR voted unanimously for a separation of JCDDR and NextStep for Life effective July 1, 2017. On July 1, 2017, NextStep for Life and the JCDDR officially separated and began operating under two different Board of Directors and Executive Leadership. The JCDDR would continue to oversee the property tax dollars, which had grown to approximately \$3 Million annually, and would continue to provide local case management through an agreement with the Department of Mental Health. NextStep for Life would continue as a non-profit and provide direct services to individuals in the county.

On September 24, 2018, the JCDDR officially changed the agency name to Developmental Disability Advocates and **now** provides case management for individuals ages 3-16 without Medicaid or Autism funding **and** all individuals 16 and older in Jefferson County who are eligible for Department of Mental Health services.

FY20 Funding Awarded



The annual funding application cycle for Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020) is complete. The Board received nearly \$4M in agency requests with a county tax budget of just over \$3M to distribute. The requests were reviewed by the Board's Finance Committee and at the April 22nd Board of Directors meeting the FY20 proposed budget was presented and \$3.4M in funding requests were approved by the Board. Agencies who will receive funding in FY20 are: NextStep for Life, Inc., OATS Transportation, Pony Bird, Inc., JSI, Inc., F.A.C.T., Disability Resource Association, Judevine Center for Autism Services, Sunnyhill, Inc., Jefferson County Community Partnership, Camp Circle Star, Spirit Strides, Pathways to Independence, and Elks Mobile Dental.

This is the first time in the history of the Board when 100% of the county tax dollars collected are budgeted to go to community service agencies. These agencies are providing valuable services and supports to people with developmental disabilities and their families in Jefferson County.



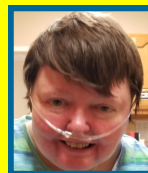
ELKS MOBILE DENTAL

SPONSORED BY THE MISSOURI ELKS BENEVOLENT TRUST, INC.



June 2019
Glennon Overkamp

Shining



July 2019
Tracy Proffitt

Stars



August 2019
Rhonda Pigue

Check out all of our Shining Stars at www.ddadvocates.org/shining-stars/

Meet the Board of Directors



Ms. Margo Pigg, Board Chair
Appointed: May 2005
Role: Agency Representative -COMTREA
Community: Festus

Mr. Josh Bauman, Vice-Chair
Appointed: September 2012
Role: Family Representative
Community: Festus



Mr. Vince Coleman, Treasurer
Appointed: November 1988
Role: Community Representative
Community: Festus

Dr. Marsha Mertens, Secretary
Appointed: January 2014
Role: Family Representative
Community: Imperial



Mr. Gary Roettger, Director
Appointed: September 2003
Role: Community Representative
Community: Arnold

Ms. Elizabeth Spaugh, Director
Appointed: December 2017
Role: Family Representative
Community: Barnhart



Pastor Randy Starkey, Director
Appointed: March 2019
Role: Family Representative
Community: Pevely

Developmental Disability Advocates would like to thank the following former Board members who resigned in 2019 for their dedicated service:



Dr. Anthony Casey
Years of Service
2007 to 2019

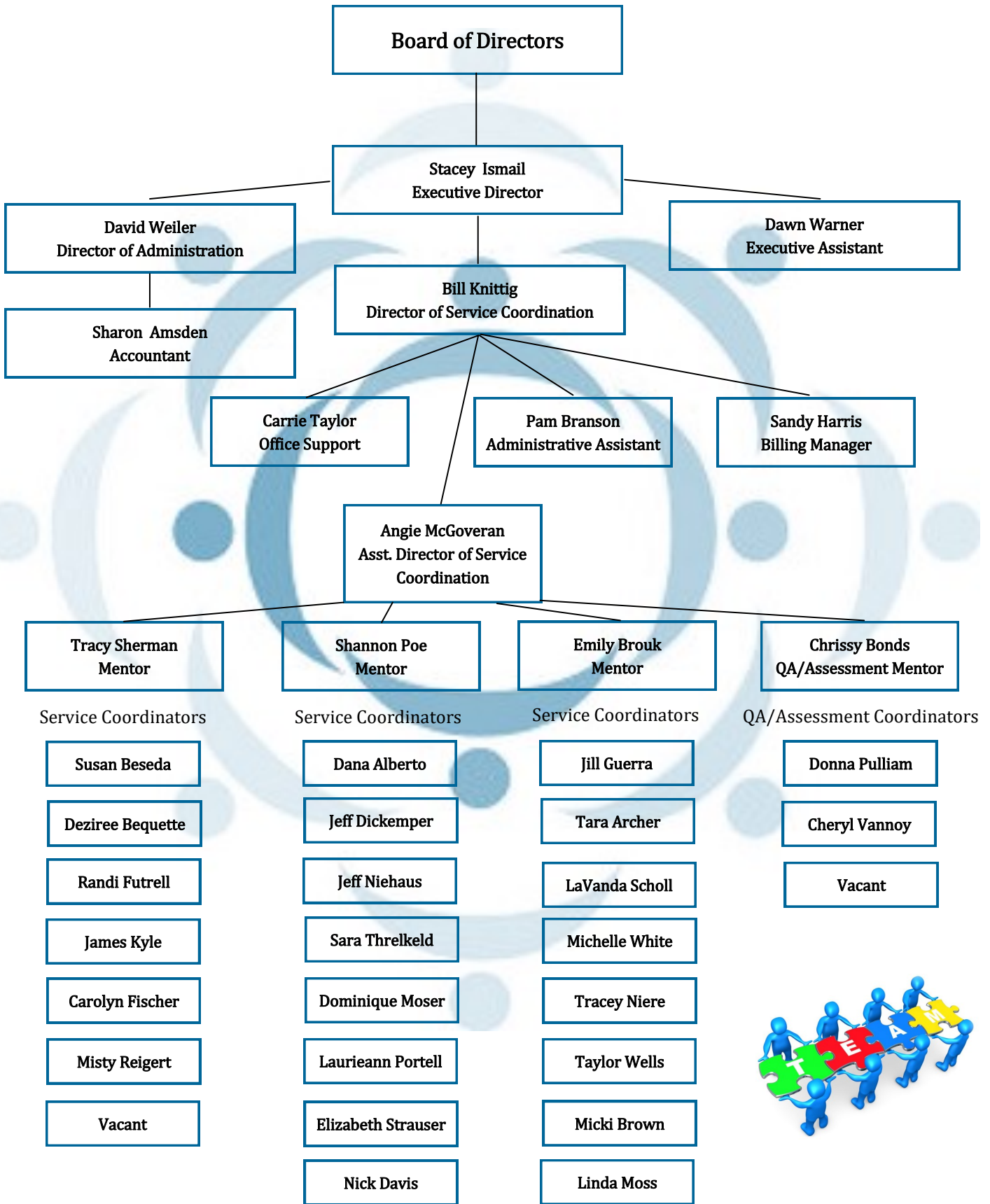


Tom Bookstaver
Years of Service
2002 to 2019



Erica Watts
Years of Service
2018-2019

Meet our Team



Have you considered an ABLE account?

ABOUT STABLE ACCOUNTS

What is a STABLE Account?

ABLE Accounts give people with special needs more independence and financial security. A STABLE Account is an investment account available to eligible individuals with disabilities. STABLE Accounts are made possible by the federal Achieving a Better Life Experience ("ABLE") Act. STABLE Accounts allow individuals with disabilities to save and invest money without losing eligibility for certain public benefits programs, like Medicaid or SSI. Earnings in your STABLE Account are not subject to federal income tax, so long as you spend them on "Qualified Disability Expenses."

STABLE Accounts have some similar features to normal bank accounts, but they are not checking or savings accounts. STABLE Accounts are investment accounts, similar to 529 college savings accounts or 401 (k) retirement accounts. When you deposit money into your STABLE Account, your money will be invested in different options that you choose. While you can still withdraw and spend your money whenever you need it, STABLE Accounts also allow you to grow your money and to save long-term for disability expenses.

Federal and Missouri ABLE Legislation

The Achieving a Better Life Experience ("ABLE") Act was passed by Congress in December of 2014. It is the federal legislation that allows families and individuals with disabilities the opportunity to create tax-advantaged accounts that can be used to help maintain health, independence, and quality of life. Missouri Revised Statutes §§ 209.605-209.645 establishes the rules for MO ABLE. The Office of the Missouri State Treasurer administers this program.

IRS Regulations

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has provided proposed regulations for STABLE Accounts. These proposed regulations offer guidance to states, beneficiaries, and other interested parties.

BENEFITS

Tax-Free Earnings

The earnings you make on your STABLE Account are not subject to federal or state of Missouri income taxes, so long as you spend the earnings on Qualified Disability Expenses.

Keep Your Public Benefits

One of the primary reasons that the federal ABLE Act was passed was to protect individuals with disabilities from losing certain benefits such as SSI or Medicaid. With the exception of some special SSI rules (see below), your STABLE Account funds do not count against you for purposes of determining your eligibility for means-tested federal benefits programs. For example, if you have \$5,000 in your STABLE Account, that \$5,000 does not count as an asset when determining your eligibility for SSI or Medicaid. In addition, your STABLE Account will not affect your eligibility for state-based means-tested benefits programs offered by Missouri.

No Impact on Medicaid Benefits

The money in your STABLE Account will not affect your eligibility for Medicaid benefits. For more information, please see Medicaid's recent guidance on STABLE Accounts [here](http://www.stableaccount.com/files/documents/implications_of_the_able_act_for_state_Medicaid_programs.pdf). www.stableaccount.com/files/documents/implications_of_the_able_act_for_state_Medicaid_programs.pdf

Limited Impact on SSI Benefits

Using a STABLE Account will not make you ineligible for SSI. If, however, you have more than \$100,000 in your account, your SSI benefits may be suspended.

Here's how this will work: any STABLE Account funds *over* \$100,000 are treated as a countable resource for purposes of determining your SSI benefits. For example, if you have \$101,000 in your STABLE Account, the Social Security Administration will ignore the first \$100,000 but will count the next \$1,000 as your resource. The good news is that if your STABLE Account balance causes you to exceed the normal SSI resource limits, your SSI benefits will be merely *suspended* - you will not become *ineligible* for SSI. Once your account balance drops, you can notify SSA to have your SSI benefits resume.

Money you withdraw and use for housing expenses may also affect your SSI benefits if you do not spend the money right away. To avoid any impact to your SSI benefits, be sure to spend housing money within the same calendar month that you withdraw the money. For example, if you withdraw \$800 from your STABLE Account on June 3rd for rent, you must pay that money to your landlord by June 30th. As long as you do not hold housing funds over from one calendar month to the next, the funds will not affect your SSI benefits.

STABLE Card

The **STABLE Card** (www.moable.com/stablecard-info/) is a loadable prepaid debit card that is available to everyone with a STABLE Account. The STABLE Card does not pull money directly out of your STABLE Account. Instead, you get to choose a specific amount of money to load onto your card. This way, you can better control budgets and plan for your Qualified Disability Expenses. If you are the Authorized Legal Representative for an individual with a disability, you will be issued the primary card, but can also obtain a companion card for the beneficiary. The STABLE Card's discrete loading feature allows you to limit how much money your loved one can access at any given time.

Only STABLE Account funds can be loaded onto your STABLE Card, to avoid commingling STABLE money with non-STABLE money. This allows for easier reporting of your withdrawals and expenditures. You can use your STABLE Card to spend money anywhere Visa is accepted. Although it is a loadable card, it works just like a regular debit card. You will still be able to set up a **STABLE Card online account** (www.stableaccount.com) to view your spending history.

If you can't find what you're looking for or need assistance you can use any of the following for help:

Visit the MO ABLE **Frequently Asked Questions** page at www.moable.com/faq/

Call 1-800-439-1653

Email team@stableaccount.com

Information in this article obtained from the
MO State Treasurers Office webpage.

For complete information go to: <https://www.moable.com/benefits/>



Save the Date for these Free Upcoming Events



September 10, 2019
8:00am - 1:30pm

- Motivational Speakers
- Door Prizes
- DSP Awards

Make plans now to attend our Annual Provider Conference at the Youth Center of Victory Church - Pevely. We will celebrate Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) in Jefferson County for all that they do. Local Provider Agency's top DSPs will be recognized and we will announce the 2019 Jefferson County DSP of the Year! It will be a great event!

For more info on our events, email us at info@ddadvocates.org or call 636-282-5500



DD Advocates Events Calendar

Check out our new website www.ddadvocates.org. Here you will find not only DD Advocates events, but events, trainings, conferences and workshops being held by local, state and national organizations. Our hope is that this calendar can serve as a "one-stop shop" for information of interest.

If your organization has an event that you would like added to our calendar, contact Dawn Warner at 636-282-5500 or by email at dmwarner@ddadvocates.org. Your event can include a flyer and/or your website to provide more detailed information.



2nd Annual
"Boo"-cce Tournament
October 26, 2019
Noon—3 p.m.

Mark your calendar and get your 4 person team together and sign up to play in our free "Boo-cce" ball tournament. Several local and state legislators will be on hand to share information regarding Jefferson County issues and learn about issues of interest to people with developmental disabilities and their families. There will be spooky snacks, photo selfie area, prizes for the best dressed team and for the winning team. Come hear some great information and have lots of fun!

Developmental Disability Advocates



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It is the *mission* of Developmental Disability Advocates to provide resources to create opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities in Jefferson County to live full and enriched lives.

The *vision* of Developmental Disability Advocates is that individuals with developmental disabilities live a life of their choice and are fully included in the community.

There are many ways to follow us for resources and information:



Our website
www.ddadvocates.org



On Facebook
[@ddadvocatesjeffersoncounty](https://www.facebook.com/ddadvocatesjeffersoncounty)



On Twitter
[@ddadvocates_jc](https://twitter.com/ddadvocates_jc)



On Instagram
[ddadvocates](https://www.instagram.com/ddadvocates)