



Helping people with disabilities and people who are aging **live independently** in Northwest Missouri.



Hire a caregiver – even a friend or relative – to help with cleaning, cooking, shopping, bathing, and more!
www.meril.org/cds

July 2017

Agency update from the CEO



Welcome back to the MERIL newsletter. I would like to share with you some changes we have made to our services in the nine-county area of Northwest Missouri.

Since I became the CEO of MERIL, we have taken steps to streamline our organization. As a result,

Angels Home Health was sold to The Whole Person, a Center for Independent Living (CIL) in the Kansas City area. We are pleased that the nurses and director continue to share our office space in St. Joseph and provide home health services in Northwest Missouri.

In addition, we discontinued our Bridge Interpreting services on June 30. There are a number of qualified interpreting agencies in the area, and we are confident these agencies can meet the needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members that we have been honored to serve. We are glad many of them are able to join us for our biweekly “silent lunch” peer support group.

With these changes, MERIL is now positioned to focus on providing Independent Living services (IL), Consumer Directed Services (CDS), and In-Home services. We continue to provide CDS services to over 300 participants in Northwest Missouri, and we recently expanded our In-Home program to Nodaway County (in addition to Buchanan and Andrew counties). We provide aid to those who need equipment and other support through our Consumer Assistance Fund, and our youth services and nursing home transition services, including the Money Follows the Person program, will continue to help people live independently in their own homes and communities.

MERIL, like the other 21 CILs in Missouri, receives a lion’s share of its revenue from (a.) the state, in the form of the IL Grant from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and (b.) the CDS funds from Medicaid. This year the Missouri legislature made many cuts to the services that CILs provide. We are preparing for the damaging effects of these cuts, and we are determined to respond in a way that guarantees our core services will be available to those who need them.

Our core services are: (1.) information and referral, (2.) independent living skills training, (3.) transition services (youth and nursing home), (4.) peer support, and (5.) advocacy. MERIL has provided these core services for over 23 years as Northwest Missouri’s Center for Independent Living, and we will continue to do so well into the future.

- *Rob Honan, CEO since January 2017*



Solar Eclipse Fundraiser

The eclipse on August 21 is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. And we have the perfect spot!

- Directly in the path of totality in St. Joseph, MO
- Less than 1/4 mile from the Highway (to avoid traffic)
- Accessible indoor bathrooms, ice machine, camping space
- Near 24-hour stores (Walmart, McDonald’s, gas stations)

Reserve your spot today!

Minimum donation:

- \$ 20 per parking spot
- \$ 40 per night if camping

All proceeds directly help people with disabilities live independently.



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