Thank you to all of our caregivers for providing essential services in these difficult times.

News about:
Black Lives Matter
Mail-In Voting

30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Part-time Caregivers Needed in all NW Missouri counties!
Black Lives Matter

2020 is shaping up to be a year that will be discussed in history along with 1968, 1989 (Berlin Wall coming down), 1865 (End of Civil War), 1776, among others.

There have been two defining events or series of events that have characterized this year. The first is COVID-19. While not the topic of this article, the Coronavirus has certainly made its mark, and will continue to do so for the conceivable future. The other event that has shaped this year is Black Lives Matter, or BLM, and this is what I would like to write about.

Racism in this country has long been a major problem and is still a problem, thus the need for the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. Recognizing that Black Lives do matter is an important step in dealing with racism. At MERIL, I have discussed the importance of this issue, namely that racism is just plain wrong. As a human services agency, we must be leaders in this regard.

We must not get hung up on such things as: protesters versus looters and rioters, or Democrats versus Republicans, or Black Lives Matter versus all lives matter. Rather, we must focus on right vs. wrong. Racism in any form is simply wrong, and if we focus on this, I think that we will have made progress. But it is not an easy task. Each person must look into their heart and commit to this.

Community Entrepreneur Isaac Collins and Leadership Northwest Zoom presenter provided me the inspiration to write this short piece.

- Rob Honan, MERIL CEO

Mail-in ballots for 2020 elections

Due to the coronavirus, Missourians are allowed to mail in ballots for the August 4 primary election and the November 3 general election.

Remember to check your voter registration early in the year to make sure you are registered to vote, and make arrangements for any accommodations you may need in advance of election day.

Contact your “local election authority” for more information: https://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/votemissouri/locallectionauthority

Celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

https://thewholeperson.org/30th-anniversary-of-the-ada/ada-30th-anniversary.html
https://disability.mo.gov/ada30.htm
https://www.dol.gov/odep/ada30/

The Whole Person
People with Disabilities Leading Independent Lives

Calling all artists

It's not too early to start working on your poster for the GCD's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Poster Contest.

Use this time to create artwork illustrating the importance of inclusion in the workplace. Find out more at https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/PosterContest/.

Open to all Missouri residents. Deadline for submissions is August 1, 2020.

The deadline for this year’s NDEAM poster contest is August 1. For more information, visit: https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/PosterContest/

Stay up to date with the latest news, events, and resources: Facebook.com/meril4u Twitter.com/meril4u
Support MERIL’s Independent Living services by purchasing a reusable grocery bag at the Maryville Hy-Vee. Hurry, though, this fundraiser is only available during the month of July. Thank you for helping us!

1217 South Main Street, Maryville

We’re participating in the

HY-VEE REUSABLE BAG PROGRAM

When you buy the $2.50 red My Heart Reusable Bag this month, we will receive a $1 donation.
We appreciate the dedication of our In-Home Services team members who have continued to provide essential services to people with disabilities during the coronavirus pandemic. Thank you for all that you do!

Amber King, In-Home Services Coordinator
Tiffany Diaz, LPN
Rachael McElvain, RN
Mitchell Myers, LPN
Kylelettea Carmean, PCA
Gail Donaldson, PCA
Lexi Gamache, PCA
Fran Grippando, PCA
Lisa Hallacy, PCA
Kathy Kretzer, PCA
Melanie Metcalf, PCA
Ramon Reyna, PCA
Chantella Smith, PCA
Mariah Trauernicht, PCA
William Walker, PCA
Brenda Williams, PCA
Professional care in your home
We know that people are happier and healthier when they are able to receive the care they need in their own homes. Our licensed nurses and trained caregivers take that responsibility seriously, and we strive to provide our participants with exceptional services so they can live comfortably and independently in their homes.

Licensed nurses and caregivers
MERIL’s licensed nurses help with medication setups, diabetic nail care, skin monitoring, and vital sign checks. MERIL’s trained personal care attendants (PCAs) assist participants with personal care tasks, such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, and bathing. We also offer free “Vial of Life” kits to help you prepare for an emergency.

Call us to get started
Our In-Home services are available to residents of Andrew, Buchanan, and Nodaway counties. We accept referrals from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). Call us to learn more about eligibility for our In-Home services.

Visit meril.org/inhome for more information.
We help caregivers find part-time jobs!

MERIL accepts applications for caregivers to work for a Consumer Directed Services (CDS) participant, and/or to work for participants in MERIL’s In-Home Services program. Caregivers help people with disabilities with personal care tasks, such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, and bathing. Caregivers do not need any prior experience and the hours are flexible. Visit meril.org/caregivers to learn more.

Caregivers make a big difference in the lives of people with disabilities, making it possible for them to live independently in their own homes and communities. By working for a MERIL participant, caregivers also support all of the other Independent Living (IL) services MERIL provides.

For providing care to our participants and for supporting our services, we appreciate the caregivers who partner with us to fulfill our IL mission! Contact us if you know of an outstanding MERIL caregiver! We would like to feature them in our newsletter and on our website!

Transitioning out of a nursing home with MFP and assistive technology!

Money Follows the Person (MFP) is a program that provides funding for people with disabilities who want to live in their own homes instead of in a residential care facility. MERIL provides information and personalized guidance to those who participate in the program.

MERIL’s Lisa Gabriel helped coordinate Albert Shaw’s transition to independent living in the community, with funding from the MFP program and assistance from Missouri Assistive Technology.

Moving from a nursing home to an apartment at the end of April 2020—in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic—presented unique challenges, including bare store shelves and delayed deliveries. Nonetheless, Albert was able to successfully obtain the supplies he needed to move into his home, which he remembers as “one of the happiest days that I have had in a very long time.”

Pictured here is Albert in his new home. He had been living in a nursing home for a year and half prior to contacting MERIL and beginning the process of transitioning to independent living in the community.

“MERIL and Money Follows the Person was a godsend,” Albert said. “Without them, I would still be in the nursing home. Instead, I am living in my own apartment, having peaceful sleep, cooking, and taking care of myself.”

Caregivers are needed in all nine counties!

Apply in our St. Joseph or Maryville office to become a caregiver!

If you are responsible and have a passion for helping people with disabilities live independently in their homes, we want you to work for a MERIL participant! Visit www.meril.org/caregivers to learn more.
Making a Difference at MERIL

Your contribution will help change lives!

Donations to MERIL help fund programs that assist people with disabilities in their goal to live a full life in their homes and communities.

Please consider a financial gift to MERIL. You may mail a check or use the PayPal link on our website.

In addition to donating, you can help us immensely by spreading the word about our services. The more people who know about us, the more we can help.

Visit www.meril.org/help to read more about people who have benefited from our services.

Thank you to these recent donors:

♦ Donna Austin  ♦ Ashley Culver  ♦ Sew Strong Together (Ferluknat Farm)

We also want to thank the many others who donate equipment to us. We accept donations of assistive technology devices and durable medical equipment.

Donna Austin (left) donated cloth face masks to us! She is pictured here with MERIL Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Melanie Metcalf.

We celebrated our In-Home nurses during National Nurses Week. Pictured from left to right: Rachael McElvain, Tiffany Diaz, Mitchell Myers, and Chelsea Myers.
Helping people with disabilities and people who are aging live independently in Northwest Missouri.

Northwest Missouri’s Center for Independent Living
Since 1994, MERIL has provided five core services for people with disabilities in our nine-county service area:

- Information and referral
- Independent Living skills training
- Transition services (youth and nursing home)
- Peer support
- Advocacy

Our vision is: **A Barrier-Free Northwest Missouri**.

More than half of our board members and staff have a disability. We use our personal experiences to see the abilities that people have, and we respect people for who they are.

We believe people with disabilities should have control over their own lives, achieve their own goals, and fully participate in their communities.

Learn more about Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in Missouri at [www.mosilc.org](http://www.mosilc.org).

Choose your own caregiver
help with cleaning, cooking, shopping, personal care

Phones & devices for low hearing, low vision

Nurse visits at home medication, blood pressure, diabetes care

**Independent Living Skills Training**

**Nursing home transition**

**Accessibility**

Nonprofit

Call us. Tell us about your health condition or disability. We’ll help you get the resources you need to live independently.

MERIL offers a wide variety of services and resources for people with disabilities.

Our most popular service is our Consumer Directed Services (CDS) program, which allows a person to hire a caregiver of their choice to perform personal care tasks in their home.

**We help caregivers find part-time jobs!**

MERIL helps the CDS participant (the person with a disability) find a potential employee (caregiver). Anyone who is interested in becoming a caregiver should contact MERIL to fill out an application. The hours are flexible and no experience is required.

Midland Empire Resources for Independent Living (MERIL) is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization governed by a board of directors: L. Kent Allen (chair), Sandy Lewandowski (vice chair), Jonathan Connally (secretary), Joseph D. Hegeman (treasurer), Tammy Blakely (director), E. Wayne Crawford (director), Kelly Narowski (director), Jaren Pippitt (immediate past chair), and Robert Honan (CEO).