

JANUARY 2024

*Hands of Heartland*THE NEW
NEWSLETTER

We invite you to be inspired by the stories that shape HOH - stories of resilience, passion, and the transformative power of meaningful work. Additionally, we are thrilled to share news of our expansion into Iowa which exemplifies our commitment to making a positive impact and offering thoughtful care by serving more wonderful communities.

As we embrace the new year, we want to express our deepest gratitude to you, our community,



As we step into the bright horizon of a new year, we are filled with an overwhelming sense of excitement and endless possibilities.

The year ahead holds the promise of growth, empowerment, and positive change, and we are thrilled to embark on this journey with each and every one of you.

At Hands of Heartland (HOH), our commitment to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities remains as steadfast as ever. It is our unwavering dedication to our mission that propels us forward and fuels our excitement for what lies ahead.

We are delighted to introduce you to some of the remarkable individuals who make up our vibrant HOH community and celebrate their unique contributions. From Desi's inspiring journey of purpose to our fantastic team of Jens, who exemplify dedication and talent.

for your support. Together, we will continue to create a world where individuals with developmental disabilities can experience life, employment, and independence within the communities they enjoy.

Thank you for being a part of the HOH family. We can't wait to see where this year takes us, and we are excited to share this journey with all of you.



HUMANS OF HOH

Say Hello to Desi

We believe in celebrating the remarkable individuals who have been touched by the HOH experience. Our “Humans of HOH” series shines a spotlight on the incredible stories of resilience, passion, and empowerment that inspire us all.

Join us in celebrating the triumphs, challenges overcome, and the unwavering spirit of the Humans of HOH.

Meet Desi, a young woman filled with curiosity, determination, and a love for learning. Desi’s background is woven with threads of creativity and opportunity. Her family recognized her potential and sought an environment where she could thrive.

Through the programs and support offered by HOH Desi found her unique role in the world of agricultural research at The University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Three days a week, Desi is immersed in the art of sorting through wheat seeds, a task she undertakes with unwavering enthusiasm.

At work, Desi meticulously sifts through seeds, discerning the most viable ones

while skillfully discarding bugs and other impurities. Beyond sorting, she takes charge of organizing, naming, and cataloging each seed, contributing significantly to the vital work in the agricultural domain.

What began as a volunteer opportunity alongside her mom blossomed into a pivotal role at the heart of this research. In her free time, Desi channels her creativity into sorting and making bracelets, crocheting, and even indulging in a bit

of singing. Known for her infectious sense of humor, Desi lights up the room and brings laughter to those around her, creating an uplifting atmosphere within the HOH community.

Her love for learning shines through as she absorbs new knowledge daily, whether from the supportive community at HOH or her reading endeavors. Desi's innate curiosity and passion for organization align seamlessly with her role, making her a valued asset to the Agriculture Department.

HOH worked to pair Desi with a job she would love and she finds immense satisfaction and joy in her work. She's been working there three hours a day three days a week since April 2022. The seed sorting project stands as a testament to Desi's commitment and the transformative impact of the custom programs at HOH.

Behind every successful journey is a dedicated guide, and for Desi, that person is Bailey. As the Employment Specialist Coordinator at HOH, Bailey oversees the HOH job coaches and manages the developmental disabilities part of the employment program. Her role is pivotal in ensuring that individuals like Desi receive the support and guidance they need to thrive in the workplace. Bailey's passion for her work shines through in her own words: "I really enjoy helping the individuals. I mean, it can be anything as just having a quick phone call in the morning to set them up for a good day. ... working things out with them throughout the day, problem-solving, building those skills in the workplace."

As the January Human of HOH, we want to thank Desi for sharing her beautiful story with all of us.





JENNA MURRAY



JEN NEELEY



JENNIFER MEINTS



JENNIFER LIEBERTH

JEN-UARY

Welcome to Jen-uary!!! HOH is incredibly grateful for our wonderful group of Jens, each bringing their unique talents and dedication to our community. Let's meet these remarkable individuals:

Jenna Murray: As a Case Manager for three years, Jenna cherishes relationships with individuals and team members. She enjoys board games, sports, and crafting, making a positive impact at HOH.

Jennifer Geiger: In her 18-month tenure as an HR Generalist, Jennifer's joy comes from connecting with new hires, candidates, and participants. Family adventures and reading are her delights, and HOH feels like home to her.

Jen Neeley: Our Operations Director for 3 ½ years, Jen thrives on daily interactions with people and the excitement of exploring new opportunities. She enjoys family camping, hiking, and nurturing her garden. Working at HOH fills her with anticipation for what 2024 holds.

Jennifer Shellenbarger: With five months on the team as an HR Generalist, Jennifer loves working with the TMR team, spending time with family and friends, and diving into a good book. She's thrilled to be part of the HOH team.

Jennifer Meints: As Director of Community Outreach for 3 ½ years, Jennifer's dual role as a parent and professional is a dream come true. She's passionate about family time and feels grateful and excited about each new day at HOH.

Jenny Rohr: Serving almost two years as Team Member Resources Director, Jenny relishes seeing the individuals in services daily. She enjoys travel and quality moments with loved ones. Working at HOH fulfills her passion for problem-solving and helping others.

Jennifer Lieberth: As a dedicated Direct Support Professional with almost two years of service at HOH, Jennifer finds immense fulfillment in the positive impact she makes on her clients' lives. She takes pride in witnessing the progress her clients make on their unique journeys. For Jennifer, working at HOH isn't just a job; it's a calling that fills her with a sense of purpose, making her feel like she's truly making a difference every day.



JENNIFER GEIGER



JENNIFER SHELLENBARGER



JENNY ROHR



Hands of Heartland

NEW YEAR & NEW STATE

2024

Iowa Location

After successfully serving nine locations in Nebraska, we're thrilled to announce that HOH is expanding to Iowa! Our commitment to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities continues to grow as we extend our services into Iowa.

Stay tuned for more details on our new locations and services and how we plan to make a positive impact in this state. Just as we have done in Nebraska, we will continue to work closely with families, school districts, advocacy organizations, and the broader community in Iowa to drive positive change. Our experienced and compassionate team will uphold the same principles that have made HOH a beacon of support for countless families.

While our reach expands, our mission remains unchanged: to enable people with developmental disabilities to experience life, employment, and independence within the communities they love. We are excited about the potential for growth, enrichment, and collaboration in Iowa, all while staying true to the values that have defined HOH throughout our journey.

EVEN MORE TO FOLLOW!

Follow our socials for an exciting year ahead for upcoming events, heartwarming stories, and the latest news from Hands of Heartland.

Lets Grow Together

Connect with us on social media to stay updated and engaged with our vibrant community. Click the links below to follow us on our Social Media Platforms and join the conversation, share your stories, and be a part of the positive change we're making together. Thank you for your support! Here's to a year filled with growth, empowerment, and endless possibilities!

