



November 2021

Dear Friends of UCP Heartland:

I hope everyone is well, healthy, safe, and in good spirits. This past 20 months have been painful for all of us. Little did we know at that time it would continue to linger and cause heartache and on-going challenges in our lives and specifically the lives of the people UCP Heartland supports, their families and our staff. But as I tell people all the time, despite the obstacles there has been a lot of good. This is where we need to steer the focus, carry this momentum forward as we continue to look at ways to be better human beings, be better neighbors and community members and for us here at UCP Heartland be a better organization for the people and families we are honored to support. So, as we all approach the holiday season in the year 2021, it is my hope we can focus on the blessings we have encountered and pay it forward to others who might need some additional hope and support in our communities.

One thing I have noticed in my relatively short time in St. Louis is our donor base and really the entire community is so philanthropic. The spirit of giving and investing selflessly in impactful missions is real even during a time where you might have thought we would see a major decline. Last Fiscal Year alone we raised nearly \$2 million dollars from individual donors, corporations, grants, trusts, and events. In fact, the 2021 UCP Heartland Gala raised over \$260,000 in a virtual setting which is the most raised in our 30+ year of hosting this event. If you follow us on Social Media platforms, I hope you have noticed that we are doing a 30-day campaign of "Thanks." To keep with the theme, I think it warranted to give a heartfelt THANK YOU to each of you reading this communication. We all play a part in the success of UCP Heartland and the people and families we support. 68 years ago, the families wanting something different for their children might have thought they were alone, but little did they know because of their effort a village of people would rally around an incredible cause to make what UCP Heartland is today. We have so much more work to do but it is important to pause and be grateful!!

I am THANKFUL for the UCP Heartland Team and their continued focus amidst an unprecedented time of crisis, fear, loss, restriction, isolation, and sadness. We have not been perfect, but we have done some really good things:

1. Launched a new Autism Services and created an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapy Center for children in Columbia, Missouri. We are in the process of expanding this service into St. Louis City.
2. We opened 2 new residential homes bringing reality to individuals that always had that dream to experience independence and living in their own home in the community.
3. 35 people with disabilities obtained jobs in a community business.
4. 50 High School students participated in our summer work program.
5. We suspended our Adult Day program early on in the pandemic and now have been able to bring back 30 individuals in JC and 60 here in St. Louis. This number will continue to grow over the next several months.

6. UCP Heartland Child Development Center is serving over 50 children in an inclusive environment where children with and without disabilities are learning, engaging, and playing together.

7. Invested in a Client Advocate position and as a result are helping more individuals and families through our Navigator service and have started UCP Heartland's first Self-Advocates group made up of staff and clients.

8. Summer camp was full, and we are committed to serving youth during the upcoming winter school break. Families are excited and appreciate our commitment to this service because it is already full.

In closing, I challenge all of us to keep focusing on the good even though it is easy to veer toward the negativity that seems to be around us more and more these days. In this season of THANKS and giving, know your support to UCP Heartland is more important than ever. A quick reminder of a few things to consider as we approach this important time of year:

- Be on the look-out for UCP Heartland's Story of Thanks about one of our clients Andrew and give unrestricted general operating support dollars as these are needed the most.
- Give online and utilize social media and your circle of influence to encourage others to give.
- Make a multi-year pledge to help build sustainability and have a consistent flow of cash for the future.
- Most importantly, become engaged and be a vocal advocate for UCP Heartland and the entire not for profit sector.

Together, we are #HeartlandStrong

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or would like to know how you can support UCP Heartland.

With mission in mind,

Clint Bolser, CEO
UCP Heartland