



4724 Mike Colalillo Dr.
Duluth, MN 55807

Udac Highlights October 2022

Dear Friends of Udac,

Fall is here!! The transition from summer to fall is in full swing as we each adjust to the return of fall rituals like school, football, colorful leaves and cooler weather! Fall is the time of year that we nationally acknowledge and give a heartfelt thank you to the Udac Career and Life Coaches and October is Disability Awareness month. A big thank you to our Career and Life Coaches and to all our employers. You are all deeply appreciated.

This *Udac Highlight* is dedicated to the creative and diverse Career and Life Coaches in our organization. I am so pleased to acknowledge the excellence, dedication, innovation, commitment, and amazing work done by Udac's outstanding Career and Life Coaches. It is through their skill and their commitment to the uniqueness of each person they work with that they help transform lives. Their dedicated work enriches and helps each person grow and thrive in meaningful community experiences and at their jobs.

I am delighted to introduce you to each of them and to share with you the creativity of their work.

Udac Career and Life Coaches:



Angela Welch is working to create a tool to assess readiness to advance in self-reliance and independence. Her work highlights the dedication it takes to incrementally create opportunities that develop confidence. Her work will help teams and her colleagues learn more about developing confidence and independence.



Mike Granley uses his extensive work experience to consistently provide an environment that allows for employment success for individuals. His work promotes independence while providing needed support.



Dawn Caribou is consistent in her support of individuals to allow them to grow confidence to try new experiences. Her creativity helps them move forward in their attainment of their goals.



Willy McGivern is always willing to give feedback that helps individuals grow. They trust Willy to be honest with them to help them advance their skills.



Joyce Teah provides support and direction when needed but knows how to let individuals try on their own. Her ability to encourage individuals to discover a new way of doing something encourages their growth.



John Skiba provides the space and an environment for individual success. He empowers those he works with to grow in their skills and accomplish their goals. He believes in them and in turn they believe in themselves. He helps each person create their own pathway to successful self-reliance.



Ginger Erkkila has the heart to let individuals grow. She provides the stability and willingness to help them open doors to new opportunities. She has the courage to allow them to do it on their own.



Joe Burch is dedicated to creating new opportunities for growth that leads to goal attainment. He listens to what people want and then helps them put in place the steps needed to move forward. He is creating a directory of available community experiences that will expand horizons for individuals and help his peers know more about what the community has to offer.



Destiny Brown said yes to working with adults of all abilities and took on a new career. She is committed to providing opportunities and new experiences.



Paige Wanek identified early that it takes the entire team to commit to helping individuals expand their skills. She is dedicated to finding opportunities and involving the team in creating a platform for success.



Kayla Stenstrup knows that differently abled adults need resources and support for successful community living. Her work focuses on using her knowledge and experience working in special education to help them find success in the community and at work.



Casey Lozon is a champion for community programming and growing successful independence. She is a trailblazer in creating opportunities and experiences that accentuates an individual's strengths and allows them to find success in the community and independence at work. Her work extends to working with employers to expand their workforce with people of all abilities.



Nicole Opland builds a network of support that includes the entire team in advancing community-based living and employment. She is committed to communication and building the confidence of the individual and the team to move forward with self-reliance. Nicole provides a foundation of support and new experiences that promotes individual growth.



Chris McCord knows that information is power. He is committed to working with each person and their team to understand the benefits to employment for people with disabilities. He is a myth buster that working means a loss of benefits. He assists employers to know how including individuals of all abilities benefits their business.



Chloe Tralle is a bridge builder. Her work helps each person experience opportunities that bridges where they currently are with where they want to go to. Her work includes the creation of the “*Udac Experiencing Community and Careers Program*” that explores the diversity of businesses and jobs available Duluth.



Stephanie Davich creates opportunity and community inclusion through community experiences that meet the outcomes of the individual. She designed a successful virtual program during the pandemic and is now transitioning this knowledge to creating meaningful community experiences to allow people to be active participants in community life.



Dana Mattila-Swor has a deep commitment to creating the best possible life for everyone she works. This translates into sharing her accumulated wisdom, knowledge and vast experience by mentoring her colleagues and the teams she works to help them grow in their knowledge.



Nova Senarighi knows that transportation is a key to community living and successful employment. Nova is coordinating the advancement of community transportation as a bridge to working and being involved in the community. Her work focuses on allowing people to grow the skills they need to use cabs, buses and Udac supported transportation as needed. Keeping people dependent on others for transportation limits their opportunities now and in the future. Her work gives options and opportunity.

These are just a few highlights of the work being done by Udac Career and Life Coaches. Their work is being acknowledged across the state and highlighted in national publications. They are outstanding in their creativity and their willingness to reach new heights of community inclusion and expanded employment roles. Their pursuit of excellence, in support of the people we are privileged to serve, is creating a new model of service that advances community inclusion and integration. It is a pleasure to share with you and acknowledge the fine work that these colleagues demonstrate every day.

Udac is creating a vibrant future for people of all abilities in the community. Thank you for your support of Udac and our work to advance community inclusion for all.

Enjoy the fall!!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen D. Herman". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Karen Herman
Executive Director
Udac, Inc.