

DIRECTOR'S DISPATCH



Tuesday, February 21st is the Grand Opening of RISE Crafts and Curiosities.

A celebration milestone of lots of hard work by many people. Sometimes it is good to reflect on where you have come from to keep you moving to where you need to be.

How did we get here? Like a river many streams came together and formed what we now have. Some of the streams dried up and others produced well.

Please give me grace in advance for where my memory does not recall correctly. Enjoy hearing parts of the story you did not know.

All great accomplishments start with a vision that is founded in purpose. Our purpose is to put families first. Our ultimate vision and true north? Creating a Perfect Life.

How do we do this?

We create CHOICES: We create choices, where others might see limitations. We have vision to seek out new possibilities and solutions for success.

Misty and I were in the community helping to set up an opportunity for both Community Services (Day Program) and the Workshop. Folks kept asking, "Are they able to do that?" This planted a seed. We wanted to make it possible to see the abilities not the perceived limitations of our folks.

We have high EXPECTATIONS: We set positive expectations with courage to grow. We have permission to fly and permission to fail.

We would need a space for growth and moving the thrift store would free up space. We needed courage to move out of a "safe" zone. We needed courage to find a place that worked. I get quoted that "empathy without action is useless" so I started looking at buildings that might work. Looking at buildings lead to calling about buildings and thinking of all the expenses and risk. It also lead to me calling the Aldi company and asking for them to donate the store they vacated on Business 50. I want to clarify something. I have been called confident and fearless throughout my career. Truth is that I am anxious, afraid and frequently doubt myself.

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Why focus on courage? Your ability to make a difference is directly tied to your courage. To cold call on people you don't know, ask for something that most likely won't be given, and having no one to show you how? Empathy without action is useless, and I really wanted to let the folks I serve have a chance to show their abilities.

We have PASSION, sometimes overwhelming passion: *We inspire others through our purpose and passion to make a difference. We radiate pure awesomeness.*

When we found the location on Holden, the passion exploded from community leaders, board members, employees and staff. We had been talking about this move and set funding aside for career cluster development so there was strategic planning, but even I was surprised at our speed of action.

September 28th I had breakfast with Rhonda Gelbach, President of Warrensburg Main Street. Idea of several not for profits sharing a space. I did not want to share, I wanted a store.

September 29th I had showed the store to Misty, Melissa and Vicki. WOW not turning back now!

October 17th Board members on Workshop committee visited the location.

October 18th Board approved signing lease and set up funds.

October 19th Suzanne Taylor, Executive Director of Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce gives me a opening to announce the store at an event we attended.

October 29th Fixtures were being moved in the store.

November 2nd The first item was sold to a person passing by and wanted to know what we were opening.

We create RELATIONSHIPS: *We build relationships based on trusting intentions and mutual respect. We also like to have fun.*

We obtained SUPPORT: *We support each other as defined by our individual needs. As a team, we are capable of perfection.*

As I communicated the vision of a store folks such as Harold Stewart, Warrensburg City Manager, Tracy Brantner, Executive Director of Johnson County Economic Development Corporation, Suzanne Taylor, Executive Director of Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce, and Julie Turnipseed, Executive Director of Warrensburg Main Street Inc., all gave input, suggestions, and support. Harold, Tracy, and I visited about strategy as to how to get us the Aldi building.



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My staff and employees have put in hours and effort. We have had stress, debates, lessons learned and great successes. Along the way it has been fun and we certainly show that as a team we are capable of perfection.

We EMPOWER: *We empower those around us to lead. We give respect, responsibility, and certain control so others can create and innovate for themselves.*

The store is a vocational center and serves to stretch our folks to become comfortable in the wider community. We are downtown and in the community where we need to be. The workshop has moved from a place for “those kids over there”, to being a functional retail store between a bank and an art studio at the corner of Holden and Pine streets, the center of the business district.

Marquita Jorden, one of our retail associates taught a craft class to the community yesterday. Empowerment is not a feeling that I can do something. Empowerment is attaining the ability to do something.

True personal empowerment has to involve real world evidence of our ability to have an impact on our relationships and social surroundings.

RISE and JCBS does provide a safe and supportive environment, however we must allow ourselves and our employees exposure and experiences that allow for community inclusion, self-sufficiency and individual choice.

A very tricky task for sure!

We TEACH: *We teach others from our strengths and allow others to teach us from their strengths. We share our knowledge and experience to learn from one another.*

Really we are back to CHOICES with action. We are teaching the community what we are able to do. We are also learning what we are able to do.

I don't have an ending to my story, maybe because it is just beginning.

The sermon:

RESPECT

Peace.

Scott Holmberg
Executive Director

