



**Please join us in welcoming four new members to your Missouri APSE Board of Directors!**

**Member Spotlight - November 2016**



***Meet Stacey Ismail***

***Vice President, Employment Services  
Easter Seals Midwest***

I grew up in Sedalia, received my Bachelor's degree from Drury University and my Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling from MU. I have worked as a case manager for both DMH and Boone County Family Resources, where I was also a Supervisor for the Children's Services Team. I had the pleasure of working with the First Steps program for over 12 years at DESE and had a brief stint at DHSS as the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant Director. My family and I re-located to Texas for a couple of years where I had the opportunity to work for Catholic Charities Fort Worth as Director of Community Services. This allowed me to step a bit outside of my comfort zone and learn about social enterprise, refugee resettlement, homeless initiatives, innovative vocational programs, and efforts to reduce poverty.

For the past two years I have had the distinct pleasure of serving as Vice-President of Employment Services for Easterseals Midwest. We provide pre-employment and employment services in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas through both DMH and VR. With all of the changes at the federal level emphasizing the importance of competitive, integrated employment, we have a real opportunity to influence policy and practice in Missouri and assist people with finding meaningful jobs in their community. I am proud to be a new member of the Missouri APSE Board to help with this vision!



## **Member Spotlight - November 2016**



***Meet Kimberly Lackey***  
***Public Policy Team Manager***  
***Paraquad***

I am the Public Policy Team Manager at Paraquad Inc., a Center for Independent Living in St. Louis. At Paraquad I help guide and direct a team of individuals working to influence public policy and create change that improves the lives of individuals with disabilities. I perform policy research and analysis, legislative advocacy, provide individual legal advocacy services and utilize my expertise of the Americans with Disabilities Act. I attended the University of Missouri-Columbia and received a B.S. in History and Political Science. I graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia, School of Law in May 2006 with my J.D. and I have worked on improving access to employment, health care, public transportation and affordable accessible housing for individuals with disabilities. As the Public Policy Team Manager and staff attorney at Paraquad, I have the opportunity to work on disability law and policy issues on a daily basis.



## **Member Spotlight - November 2016**



### ***Meet Heather Parnell***

***VA Vocational Social Worker***

***Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital***

I am a licensed clinical social worker who provides vocational rehabilitation counseling and case management to individuals with disabilities. As the Supported Employment Specialist and primary point of contact for all vocational services at the Truman VA Medical Center in Columbia, I assist veterans with serious mental illnesses in becoming successfully employed in the community. Prior to my work at the VA, I worked for Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation as a counselor where I served veterans and transition-age youth. In addition, I have a medical social work background providing hospice care.

I am a member of the Truman VA Psychosocial Rehabilitation team, which encompasses Healthcare for Homeless Veterans program, Housing Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supported Housing program, Veterans Justice Outreach program, Vocational services, Transitional Residence programs, and Veteran Peer Support services. As a team, we work on assisting veterans to achieve successful and sustainable lives by simultaneously focusing on "Employment First," and "Housing First" ideologies. I firmly believe that all individuals have the right to competitive employment, and to live successful and independent lives with the right supports, resources and opportunities.



## **Member Spotlight - November 2016**



### ***Meet Ed Thomas***

***Executive Director***

***Camden County Developmental Disability Resources (CCDDR)/Senate Bill 40 Board***

I was born in Monett, Missouri, and grew up in Ozark, Missouri. I became the Executive Director for the Camden County SB 40 Board in March of 2012 and became the President of the Arc of Missouri in October of 2014. I am also currently the President-Elect for MACDDS and will serve as its President in 2017. Community integrated employment is one of my highest priorities professionally and personally. My first cousin was an individual with I/DD, and she was never afforded the opportunities to participate in school or work at the time. As a member of very large family and close-knit community in a small town, I learned first-hand the importance of family and community supports. I am extremely motivated to promote and increase education and awareness as well as removing the barriers of community inclusion for all individuals with disabilities.