

Nebraska Transition College provides a tailored **learning** atmosphere, supports integrated **work-ing** environments, and builds stronger communities to enhance interdependent **living** for individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder or other learning difference.



# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

LEARNING. WORKING. LIVING.

## Special points of interest:

- NTC becomes a non-profit!
- Meet Jake Dwinell
- Programming Updates

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Volume I, Issue I

March 2018

## Nebraska Transition College becomes a Non-Profit!

Yes, it's time to celebrate! We are happy to announce the arrival of a bouncing baby non-profit: Nebraska Transition College! The letter was delivered on February 27—we are officially a 501 (c) (3)!

Official DOB: June 21, 2017  
Name: Nebraska Transition College  
Nickname: NTC  
Formal Name: 81-3766668  
Proud Parents: All of YOU!

And what better way to headline our brand new newsletter?! Look for this monthly newsletter to be delivered to your e-mail box with feature stories, board updates, activities, future events,

and more.

In addition to our board members who helped to make this possible, I would like to thank a few stand-outs: **Matt Meyer** (budget), **Patrick Lavelle** (CPA), **Baylor Evnen Curtiss Grimit & Witt** (By-laws) and **Lyle Wheeler** with Keating O-Gara Law (Articles of Incorporation, and our Fiscal Agreement).

The entire application was in the area of 80 pages—we could not have done it without you!

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: FEB 23 2018

Employer Identification Number: 81-3766668  
EIN: 1705325631907

NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE  
C/O STUART P. STOFFERBAUGH  
6901 N 13 ST  
LINCOLN, NE 68521

Contact Person: HEBERLE C. YOUNG  
Contact Telephone Number: (877) 829-5500

Accounting Period Ending: June 30

Public Charity Status: 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

Prior 990/990-EZ/990-N Required: Yes

Effective Date of Exemption: June 21, 2017

Contribution Deductibility: Yes

Addendum Applies: No

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive non-deductible income. Donors transfer no other value.

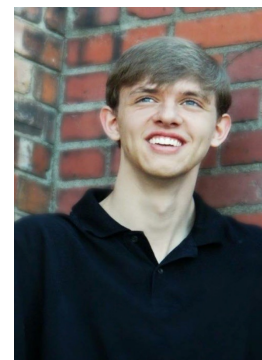
**Break out the champagne!**

## Board Spotlight—Meet Jake Dwinell

Jake joins Nebraska Transition College as its newest board member. Welcome Jake! Jake is an evening server at Legacy Estates. In addition to serving on the Nebraska Transition College board, He serves on the board of Autism Family Network. Jake loves to help people saying that, "seeing someone smile because of

something I did for them is the best feeling for me,"

As a person with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, Jake offers a critical perspective as we continue to build our programming. His continued ambassadorship for others with a disability will have a far-reaching legacy impact.

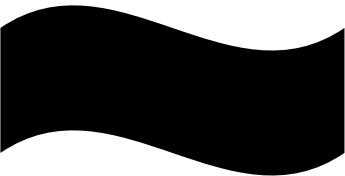




Nebraska Transition College  
6901 N. 13 Cir  
Lincoln, NE 68521

Phone: 402-560-4627  
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info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org

*Nebraska Transition College is a  
Public Charity Non-Profit  
organization under IRC Section 501  
(c)(3). Donors can deduct  
contributions made to NTC under  
IRC section 170.*



#### NTC Board of Directors

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Dan Williams

Cindy Mowery

Darren Macfee

Greg Hackbart

Jake Dwinell

#### Learning . . . Working . . . Living

### Programming - Moments That Matter

On behalf of our Program Committee Chair, Sam Comfort, I would like to introduce you to some of our curriculum planning.

Through our research, we continue to develop curriculum that is focused on increasing **Social Role Valorization (SRV)**. SRV is a description of how people in society are treated differently or potentially devalued depending on the roles they hold or are assigned by others. Our curriculum aims to positively influence SRV through community immersion and themes that focus on social relationships, civic responsibility, community navigation, residential living, pre-vocational and vocational, and wellness. Additionally, *Moments That Matter* will meet students where they are in these thematic areas and build upon those foundations.

It is our goal that, upon graduation, our students will have the skills to live interdependently, be prepared to obtain competitive employment, and/or to pursue other post-secondary education options. Next month, we will begin introducing you to our curriculum themes with a little more detail, so stay tuned!

**Research Revelation:** According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, office of Development Disabilities, there were 1,212 applications for disability services in 2017. Of those applications, 425 did not meet eligibility requirements—or a 35% denial rate.

### Development—Revving UP, but DONATE NOW!

While we continue to plan our development, **don't let that stop you from donating.** You can donate by going to our website:

[www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org](http://www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org).

There is simply no way we will be able to offer our programming without your support. For an overview, programming like this is expensive. To provide the necessary expertise in curriculum delivery—and to meet the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)

standards—we will need to hire highly qualified staff at the student/teacher ratio of 4:1.

While we are using existing successful models for our approach, we desire to offer the same quality programming at a significantly reduced rate of tuition for our students. Comprehensive programming costs for organizations that offer these services have shown that the overall cost per student, per year is between \$55-60,000. Of these costs,

it is typical to place tuition around \$45,000 per year, per student.

**We want to be different.** But it begins with you and many more like you. Take a moment, click on our website, and hit the “DONATE” button. If \$100 is your amount, consider \$125. If \$1,000, consider \$1,500. Bottom line, your contribution—regardless of amount—will go a long way in helping us provide these services. More to follow—including upcoming fundraising events! Stay tuned!



# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 2

APRIL 2018

## Board of Directors

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Jake Dwinell

Greg Hackbart

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## The Making of a Non-Profit Moving forward.

by President, Dr. Stuart Stofferahn

The conversation began in October 2015. I have kept my paper calendar organizers since that day (for me, it is MUCH easier to open a book, flip to a page and see my entire month of appointments in front of me), and each month is busier than the previous month. Littered amongst the myriad of NTC appointments are “life” appointments – hospice volunteering, Bob Ross painting classes, James Taylor concerts, dissertation work, haircuts, family vacations . . . nostalgia, worry, failures and celebrations.



I consider these three calendars (and counting) part of our “legacy” NTC documents. They are the books I bring out to share with other people in the same way they might bring out photo albums and walk guests through a family vacation. They bring forth the exact same powerful emotions – maybe even more so. They show the journey one day at a time – which is exactly how we have come to this point today. We have discovered, however, that this journey would have its fair share of frustrations amid the celebrations and navigating would incorporate adhering to what has become known as the “Stockdale Paradox: Never lose hope that you will accomplish your goal, but at the same time recognize the brutal realities ahead of you.” It sounds intimidating, but for us, it translates this way:

### No matter what, move forward.

Certainly, we have paid attention to the steps backward (there are fewer and fewer these days), but we focused on the steps forward. Sometimes they seemed like gigantic leaps, but upon closer review, they have been just a series of tiny steps camouflaged in the context of combinations of e-mails, passing comments, unsolicited encouragement, or confirmed appointments. Even if the sum-total for the day was a net-negative, we could still look at the day and truthfully say that we took a step

*Continued on Page 2*



## The Making of a Non-Profit, Continued

forward. At first, it simply helped us sleep at night. It was only upon reflection that we realized it was a central tenet – one that drives us today.

This philosophy has also kept us from going too fast, as sometimes a tiny step forward is enough. Think of it as crossing a bridge as you build it. If you proceed too quickly, one of two things will probably happen: 1) Everyone falls into the river, or 2) you make it to the other side, but you look back to see a bridge that was obviously constructed without blueprints or foresight. Neither is optimal.

And speaking of moving forward . . . none of this can be accomplished without your help. Soon, you will see a new tab on our website that informs everyone of “How You Can Help”. Each person can make a huge difference in making this dream become a reality. First, please consider a donation. It’s very easy to do – just click the little yellow “donate” button on the website ([www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org](http://www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org)), and the prompts will lead you. Second, advocate. Help spread the word of what we are accomplishing and consider assisting with an informational/community event. Simply send us an e-mail at [info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org) to get the process started. However you decide to participate, you will play a part in helping us move forward. One step at a time.

On behalf of a grateful board,

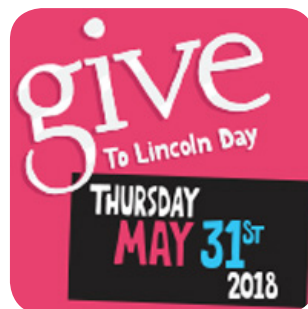
**Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn, President**  
Nebraska Transition College

## Give To Lincoln Day is May 31!

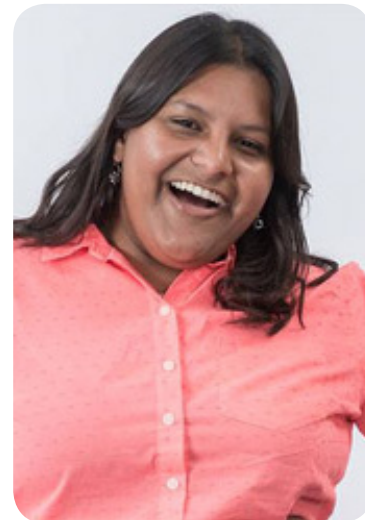
When Lincoln comes together, big things happen! For 24 hours, on Give to Lincoln Day, every donation given to local nonprofits is made bigger by matching funds through the Lincoln Community Foundation.

Nebraska Transition College is part of this drive! Even better, online donations can be made beginning on May 1 – so get ready to make a difference!

**Visit [www.givetolincoln.com](http://www.givetolincoln.com) to donate today!**



## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Aakriti Agrawal is the Data Analyst for a healthcare technology startup in Lincoln. She has a passion for education and leadership and works with numerous non-profits in Lincoln. As a Board Member and Event Coordinator with Nebraska Transition College, she will be helping with logistics and event planning for the organization.



## Research Revelation

The subject of workplace accommodations for people with a disability is oftentimes a source of worry for employers because of the assumed cost associated with them. However, very current research completed by 41 government agencies to include the Department of Labor, Education and Health and Human Services revealed that the majority of workplace accommodations have no associated costs to businesses. Further, of the accommodations that had cost associated with them, 37% had a one-time cost of \$500 or less with only 4% of accommodations resulting in ongoing annual expenses (Iyer and Masling, 2015).

Iyer, A. & Masling, S. (2015). Recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting people with disabilities: A resource guide for employers. U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



Nebraska Transition College is a Public Charity Non-Profit organization under IRC Section 501 (c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions made to NTC under IRC section 170.



**NEBRASKA  
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## Programming • Moments That Matter

As we continue to develop our programming and curriculum, we thought we would share some of our proposed curricular themes. Each theme represents a block of instruction that will span our students' courses of study with Nebraska Transition College.

- **Social Relationships:** Students will explore the enduring association based on inference, love, solidarity, regular business interactions and other types of social commitments.
- **Community Navigation:** Students will learn and operate with the various options available for navigating the community and the various linkages to services and groups necessary to improve well-being and interdependence.
- **Residential Living:** Students will experience the feeling of "my space" and "shared space", living with a roommate, and living within an inclusive, integrated community environment.
- **Civic Responsibility:** What does it mean to vote? Are there ways for me to volunteer? Why is this important? Can I make a difference?
- **Pre-Vocational and Vocational:** The focus here will be on developing employability skills, job-readiness, and career choices that align with student interest and the development of natural employer supports.
- **Wellness:** What does it mean to "be well"? This curriculum theme will develop skills to enhance physical and emotional well-being in addition to improving resiliency.

Interwoven among all of these themes will be financial literacy, budgeting and planning. As we begin to move into our next phase of development, we will be looking for additional curriculum development specialists who have an interest in special education curriculum design and implementation. If this is your passion, and you would like to be part of something that is legacy-building, please reach out to us at [info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org).

## We are happy to announce our first LEGACY DONOR!

Holding the NTC sign is Mr. Brian Meyer of Hudson, Wisconsin. Brian has a very personal connection to NTC as his son, Kyle, started this dream back in October 2015 by asking the question, "Where am I going to go to college when I graduate?" Brian's gift will help us continue to develop our programming and outreach. If you would like information on how to become a Legacy Donor, please e-mail us at [stustof@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:stustof@nebraskatransitioncollege.org) or by messenger through our Facebook page at Nebraska Transition College.

**Thank you Brian!**



## NTC Supporter Spotlight • Meet Hallie, The Face Behind The Web Page

It all started on innovation campus at The Mill. A couple sorority sisters and I sat on comfy couches and listened to Stuart pour his heart out to us. I had never seen such passion about one cause. I've always tried to be involved in non-profits as a way to give back and the passion around this organization pulled me in. Little did I know that day how big of an impact I would be able to make, and how big of an impact this cause would have on my life.

I started out making a poster and some stickers for our first meetings. Stuart then asked me if I wanted to start working on a splash page. I wanted to catch people's eyes, get them interested in donating. From there it grew into a full website with over 2000 visitors from all over the world, people from Germany, Russia and India have seen our page.

I've been able to see my work help this organization move from an introductory meeting to a registered Non-Profit. I have learned how to create a visually appealing and interesting website, how to connect it to a custom web address. I've been able to use the skills I am learning in school to push an organization towards success and see real life applications of my learning.

I chose to work with NTC to help me grow as a person, find my purpose, and lead myself to success. Now NTC and I can help others do the exact same thing.



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# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 3

MAY 2018

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## The Making of a Non-Profit

by President, Dr. Stuart Stofferahn

I am an avid reader, and Jimmy Carter is one of my most recent favorites. He had a very turbulent presidency, but the focus of my esteem centers around his accomplishments after he was president. He has eradicated disease, built homes for the poor and won the Nobel Peace Prize . . . just to name a few.

In his writings, he talks of close acquaintances who have demonstrated firm belief in themselves and in other people or in seemingly impossible dreams. He names specifically Millard Fuller, the founder of Habitat for Humanity which now has built more than 2.5 million homes in a total of seventy countries. In an interview with the former president, one of the Habitat staff members told him that "Millard has the dreams, and then we inherit the nightmare of fulfilling his vision."

I laughed out loud as I considered the big-hearted, selfless, compassionate, do-gooder people who have said "yes" to bring NTC to life.

I'm no Millard Fuller, and I don't have a former president knocking on doors to build support for NTC (if President Carter is reading this, I wouldn't mind your involvement at all). BUT I do have faith in myself, our board, and our small army of volunteers. What's more, the mission of NTC and the justification of its existence gains more and more urgency with every conversation I have with parents, teachers and community members. It is this urgency that feeds the motivation to breathe life into a "seemingly impossible dream". And while I HOPE fulfilling this vision isn't a nightmare, all of us involved can probably come to a consensus that it certainly isn't easy – unless you compare it to the struggle that families continue to bear across our state and nation.

Consider the conversation I had recently with a parent. Her son is 19 years old and living at home. He has a brilliant mind. He is compassionate, talkative and semi-

*Continued on Page 2*





## The Making of a Non-Profit, Continued

independent. He was diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder at age seven – somewhat unusual, as most parents I have visited with, the diagnosis has been given at earlier ages. The education he received while enrolled in high school was phenomenal, but since then, he has struggled with finding his “fit” in this world, because the services offered through a free and appropriate public education are no longer available. He has been employed, but the support he needs to be successful has been lacking, adding to his isolation. The lack of social support systems and friend-networking has meant that the most comfortable place for him is at home – his potential unfulfilled. All the while, mom and dad carry a burden most of us neurotypicals cannot fathom to understand as they ask the question – what will happen when we are not around? While this question enters the thought process for everyone from time to time, it is a question that never leaves the mind of these parents.

Fulfilling the vision of NTC takes the burden of this family and so many more into consideration as we ask ourselves if our current reality is the best we can do? Is this just how it is and forever will be? Is the burden these parents carry a burden they must carry alone? If the measure of greatness of any nation is the way in which we care for those most vulnerable, how are we doing?

This is the “why” behind Nebraska Transition College. We are at the starting point of something that will contribute to clearing a pathway and removing barriers that prevent so many individuals from fulfilling potential – potential that currently sits trapped behind barriers that exist for no good reason whatsoever.

It is time to move NTC from “concept” to reality, and this is where you come in. You have the power to help in so many ways. Watch for opportunities to participate and contribute. “Like” our FaceBook page (Nebraska Transition College) and visit our web page frequently ([www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org](http://www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org)). Participate in one of our upcoming volunteer training sessions that will begin on May 18 (see article in this newsletter). Donate today with a financial contribution. Help move the needle.

Help carry the burden.

So very thankful,  
Dr. Stuart Stofferahn, President



## Research Revelation

### CDC Release: Autism Prevalence Jumps 15 Percent

On April 27, 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released its biennial update of the estimated prevalence of autism among children in the United States. The analysis was performed utilizing medical records of 8-year-old children obtained in the year 2014 and, where available, educational records from 11 monitoring sites across the nation.

Among the key findings from the report, the estimate of children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has increased from 1 in 68 to 1 in 59 – a 15 percent jump over the 2012 study. While the prevalence of ASD reflects a nationwide average, the highest and lowest rates varied greatly – from 1 in 34 in New Jersey to 1 in 77 in Arkansas. The variation was mostly attributed to access of educational records and may suggest a higher overall rate of ASD if access was equal across the United States.

You can read the full study here: [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/ss/ss6706a1.htm?s\\_cid=ss6706a1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/ss/ss6706a1.htm?s_cid=ss6706a1_w)

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**NEBRASKA  
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## **Announcing Our Very First Volunteer Training Opportunity • May 18 • 7:00-7:45PM**

It's time to get your NTC on! We Need YOU! Come JOIN the FUN! Help us make a DIFFERENCE! Can I get an N-T-C?!!

On Friday, May 18th, we will be hosting our first-ever official volunteer training seminar for anyone interested in helping us in specific ways. The entire training session is under an hour, and we will provide a beverage and a little snack – not to mention a fantastic opportunity to help us move that needle! The specifics and sign-up sheet will be posted on our Facebook Page (if you are not already following us, stop what you are doing and follow us today!), but if you are not a Facebook page fan, you can e-mail us at [info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org) for information and a reservation.

**Space will be limited to 25 people, so get signed up TODAY!**



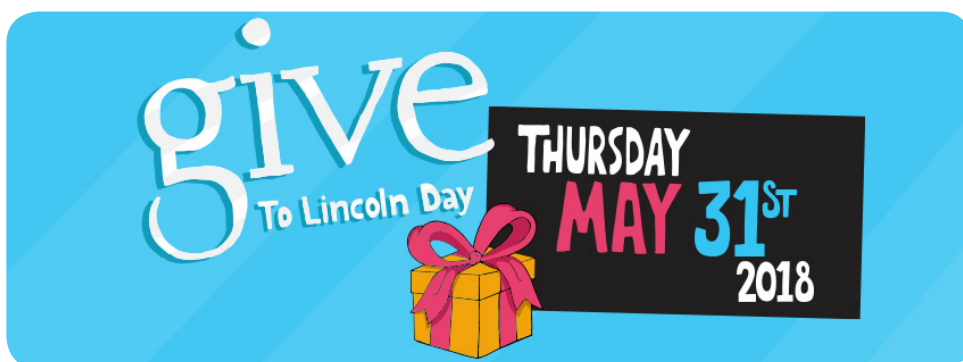
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**Visit [www.givetolincoln.com](http://www.givetolincoln.com)  
to donate today!**



## Meet Bark.

We would like to introduce a brand new comic strip written by our very own board member, Jake Dwinell.

His strip is called "Bark the Aardvark". It is about Bark . . . an average aardvark with an average job, an average home and an average life. But hidden just beneath the surface of all this average-ness is something much more.

Jake will be introducing his characters one at a time before bringing them together in a strip that will have one frame, two frames or many frames - it all depends on what Bark has to say. Sometimes it will be "old school" and raw (like below), and sometimes it will be computer-aided. Jake's call! **Stay tuned!**



This is Bark.  
He is an average aardvark, aaaa  
with an average job,  
an average home,  
an average life.  
but bark isnt as average as most people think  
He's rather shy, has a very high intelegence level,  
and aspires to be an author... If only people could see  
He's not so average. He's Bark.





## NTC Supporter Spotlight • Meet Ann

My interaction with NTC began through a co-worker and friend - Sam Comfort, a NTC board member, passionate advocate for all humans, and just overall amazing human being.

Sam approached me about helping with a project that involved graphic design and creating a logo. That is when I first learned of Nebraska Transition College.

From day one I was thrilled to be helping a local non-profit get their brand going. Later, when I learned of the mission, vision, and the passion that the board members had for Nebraska Transition College, it only hooked me more.

As the momentum in the non-profit continued to build, so did my desire to help. Whether it's a direct mail piece, or this very newsletter you are reading, it's possible that I may have had something to do with the design of it.

I am honored to help empower people of all abilities and to watch NTC grow into the mighty organization that I know it will be.

**"If we are to achieve a richer culture, we must weave one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place." - Margaret Meade**



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# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME I • ISSUE 4

JUNE 2018

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## 200/25

*by President, Dr. Stuart Stofferahn*

I read this morning that a televangelist in Louisiana is beginning his quest to raise \$54 million for a private jet. Since this will be his third, I have no doubt he will get there.

On a slightly smaller scale, I am asking **200** people to give **\$25 each**. For the **month of June**.

So, yeah, it's a smaller ask, but just as significant. I will make it super easy to do too – all you have to do is click... [right here](#). You will be taken directly to the donate screen. Nothing left to do but fill in the number "25" and a few other digits, and you will feel **WONDERFUL** the rest of the day! If you happen to slip and type in, say, "50" or "100", it's just because your fingers were doing what your heart was telling them to do.

Your investment will pay for our curriculum. Our curriculum will be the blueprint for our students. Our students will become more able to fulfill their potential. Fulfilling potential leads to more productive, inclusive, integrated communities. More productive, inclusive, integrated communities lead to . . . unlimited possibilities.

You are investing in **UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES**. All for just \$25.

The simple fact is that without financial support, NTC is just an idea; an ephemeral, conceptual solution to a real-world problem. The **GOOD NEWS** is that the hard part has been done – finding the people who are interested in solving the problem, investing blood, sweat, and tears on nights, weekends and holidays – and every minute that we can pull away from our families and our jobs. The next step is to focus on NTC full-time. And that's where you come in.

We do **NOT** need a private jet. But we **DO** need what a private jet can do – get us from one place to another. For that, we need \$25 from 200 people.

So very thankful,  
Dr. Stuart Stofferahn, President

LEARNING. WORKING. LIVING.



## Research Revelation

In a national survey of consumer attitudes towards companies that hire people with disabilities, Siperstein, Romano, Mohler and Parker (2006) interviewed 803 adult consumers and found that over 90% were more favorable or much more favorable toward companies that hire people with disabilities – and found no variance regionally. Additionally, they found that almost all of the public agreed that they would prefer to give their business to companies that hire people with disabilities – consistent across gender, age, and level of education. An Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity study revealed similar results, finding that 93% of customers said that they preferred to purchase from a company that employed individuals with disabilities (Economy, 2014).

Siperstein, G., Romano, N., Mohler, A., & Parker, R. (2005). A national survey of consumer attitudes towards companies that hire people with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 24(2006), 3-9

Economy, Peter. (2014, December 19). 11 great reasons to hire developmentally disabled employees. Inc. Retrieved from <http://www.inc.com/peter-economy/11-great-reasons-to-hire-developmentally-disabled-employees.html>

## NTC Volunteer Spotlight • Meet Lynett

My husband and I have been married for 23 years (after starting on a blind date!). After adopting three wonderful boys, our family moved to Lincoln, NE from Chicago where I put my nursing career on hold to be a stay-at-home mom. When our youngest was preparing for Kindergarten, we received a phone call asking us to provide foster care for a one-month-old baby boy. Now almost eleven years later, he brings us great joy and will keep us young for a while yet! Currently, I have the privilege of serving as the Children's Literacy Outreach Coordinator for Indigo Bridge Books & Café.

Autism (Aspergers specifically) is a way of life for us. Through many ups and downs we have learned patience on a whole new level. Patience for our son's different way of learning and what some may consider his different way of doing life. The more difficult challenge for us has been the patience required in trying to get others to accept MJ's "differences". Our world is set up in what feels like very tiny boxes with very specific rules, not allowing for people who may have a different way of seeing, hearing & feeling life. We all need to not just think out of the box, but, in my humble opinion, throw away the box! Embrace each other with kindness, patience and love.

It is my hope and prayer that with NTC our community will open their eyes and hearts and welcome people who are different. They have so much to teach us and so much to offer.





## Announcing Our Next Volunteer Training Opportunity • June 15 • 7:00-8:30PM

It's time to get your NTC on! We Need YOU! Come JOIN the FUN! Help us make a DIFFERENCE! Can I get an N-T-C?!!

On Friday, June 15th, we will be hosting our official volunteer training seminar for anyone interested in helping us in specific ways. The entire training session is just under ninety minutes, and we will provide a beverage and a little snack – not to mention a fantastic opportunity to help us continue to take those steps forward! The specifics and sign-up sheet will be posted on our Facebook Page (if you are not already following us, stop what you are doing and follow us today!), but if you are not a FB page fan, you can e-mail us at [info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org) for information and a reservation. Space will be limited to 25 people, so get signed up TODAY!



Nebraska Transition College is a Public Charity Non-Profit organization under IRC Section 501 (c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions made to NTC under IRC section 170.



**NEBRASKA  
TRANSITION  
COLLEGE**

### NTC Volunteer Spotlight • Meet Ben

My name is Ben Theye and I live here in Lincoln. My wife Alisha, and I have been married for three and a half years and are expecting our first child in June! She works in the Lincoln Public School system and is working on her Master's Degree in Special Education at UNL. Through her schoolwork and job, I have learned more about her students with special needs and the obstacles and successes that they experience. When looking to get more involved in the Lincoln community, NTC looked like a natural fit. The mission of NTC is very important and helps to fill a void currently in our community. In addition, the opportunity to help get an organization such as this off the ground and operating is very exciting. I look forward to working with everyone at NTC!



## Meet Snark.

We would like to introduce a brand new comic strip written by our very own board member, Jake Dwinell.

His strip is called "Bark the Aardvark". It is about Bark . . . an average aardvark with an average job, an average home and an average life. But hidden just beneath the surface of all this average-ness is something much more.

Jake will be introducing his characters one at a time before bringing them together in a strip that will have one frame, two frames or many frames - it all depends on what Bark and his friends have to say. Sometimes it will be "old school" and raw, and sometimes it will be computer-aided (like below). Jake's call!

This is Snark the Marmoset.  
He is a close friend of Bark.  
He has very poor hearing,  
and is practically blind without his glasses.  
He works at the local coffee shop,  
called starred-varks,  
which is run by Bark's uncle.  
He's a really nice guy,  
with a lot of jokes to tell.  
Even if he can't hear the people laugh.



**NEBRASKA  
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LEARNING. WORKING. LIVING.



# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME I • ISSUE 5

JULY 2018

## Board of Directors

Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn

President

Sam Comfort

Vice President

Beth Baldwin

Secretary

Mike Chittenden

Treasurer

## Board Members

Aakriti Agrawal

Jake Dwinell

Greg Hackbart

Darren Macfee

Cindy Mowery

Dan Williams



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## We All Die

*by President, Dr. Stuart Stofferahn*

I know – depressing right? But I bet it caught your eye.

It is the beginning of a quote from Chuck Palahniuk, an American novelist. The full quote is here: We all die. The goal isn't to live forever, the goal is to create something that will.

It's better with the entire quote together, isn't it?

While Kyle Meyer is certainly part of the inspiration that has led to the formation of NTC, it is only part of the story. Intermingled within this story is another part of who I am and how I tick. For the past five years, my dog and I have served hospice clients on our scheduled Monday mornings. We try to never miss a Monday. Vacations, appointments... all scheduled around this sacred time. Over 500 hours and more than 60 clients. Buckley and I, our clients, and those sacred seconds.

Visiting with our first client, we were discussing a book by Maggie Callanan entitled "Final Gifts". A client in that book revealed that she hadn't ever noticed the second hand on the clock until she was diagnosed with a terminal illness. After some reflection, and just prior to Buckley and I leaving for the day, our client asked us a question that simultaneously transformed my life and also left me yearning for more time in every day:

**"What are you doing with your seconds?"**

Our time with these incredible people during their final months, weeks, days...seconds... has taught us that there will never be enough seconds. The challenge is to use the seconds we have wisely...for something meaningful...for something that will be here when we are no longer.

Enter NTC, an idea. Meaningful utilization of our seconds to create something that will remain when we are gone. The most unselfish act of giving of our time, talents and treasures now for something that will serve students for generations to come.

**What are we doing with our seconds? We are building Nebraska Transition College, and I can't thank you enough for being part of something that will outlive all of us.**

So very thankful,  
Dr. Stuart Stofferahn, President



## **Announcing Our Next Volunteer Training Opportunity • July 28• 9:00-10:30AM**

**Announcing our very first volunteer training opportunity IN OMAHA on Saturday, July 28 from 9:00-10:30 AM. Donuts and coffee will be provided! Location to be determined and announced via email or Facebook.**

It's time to get your NTC on! We Need YOU! Come JOIN the FUN! Help us make a DIFFERENCE!  
Can I get an N-T-C?!!

The entire training session is just under ninety minutes, and we will provide coffee and Dunkin Donuts – not to mention a fantastic opportunity to help us continue to take those steps forward! The specifics and sign-up sheet will be posted on our Facebook Page (if you are not already following us, stop what you are doing and follow us today!), but if you are not a FB page fan, you can e-mail us at [info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org) for information and a reservation. Space will be limited to 10 people, so get signed up TODAY!



### **NTC Volunteer Spotlight • Meet Cindy & Jeff**

My name is Cindy Voehl. I grew up in a tiny town in Kansas where I learned to be friendly to everyone.

I moved to Seward, Nebraska in 1990 to attend Concordia College. I married Jeff Voehl in 1993. To our union, three beautiful children were born. Timothy, our oldest was born with the genetic disorder NF. During his short life he battled a brain tumor which claimed his life.

His younger brother Andrew struggles with high functioning Autism. Andrew is a bright, caring young man who has recently begun his journey into the "real world" after graduating from high school.

Miriam is our youngest. She is a beautiful young woman inside and out. We have thoroughly enjoyed being the parents of these children.

Besides being a parent, I have also enjoyed working in our local public school system and parochial preschool. I enjoy the great outdoors and I will walk in any weather. I use my daily walk to pray and prepare for my day.

My greatest joy is helping others and my greatest desire is to make a difference in the world. I am excited to be involved with NTC!

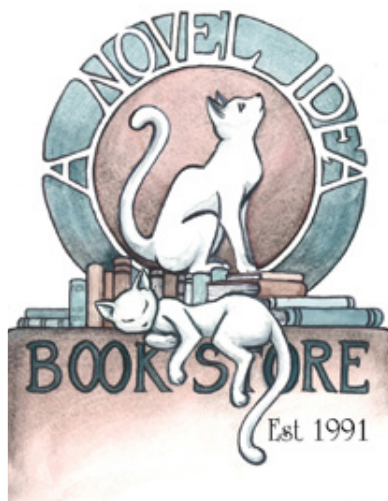


## Every Tuesday...for THREE MONTHS!

Come on down to A Novel Idea bookstore on any Tuesday from now until Tuesday, September 26, and **10% of EVERY PURCHASE on those days will go to NTC!**

You have to see this CUTE little store and meet the resident felines who patrol the bookstore all hours. They are located at 118 N. 14 Street in Lincoln and the hours are Tuesday, 10:00-6:00 PM.

**And give the owners a great big hug and say THANK YOU!**

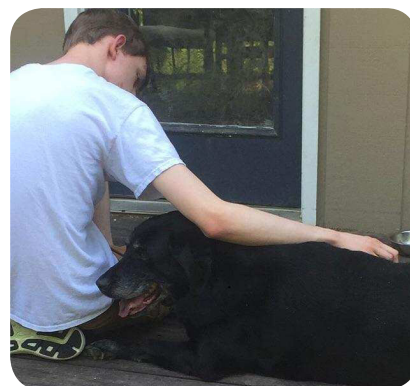


## Parting ways with a dear friend.

We would like to take the opportunity to share some saddening news. Board member Jake has asked to dedicate this month's comic strip to his service dog who crossed the rainbow bridge a few weeks ago.

**"In loving memory of my service dog Lilo, who had to be put down recently. She helped me become who I am today, and I cant imagine where I would have been in the past 12 years without her. She was more than a service dog she was my best friend."**

Our condolences go out to you, Jake.



## NTC Volunteer Spotlight • Meet Mandy

For the past 17 years I have worked for the Air National Guard in Nebraska and Arkansas in multiple capacities.

I currently work as the Base Services Manager. Prior to this, I served as an Air National Guard Health Professions Recruiter for Nebraska and enlisted recruiter for Arkansas.

Spending nearly 8 years in recruiting is where I found my passion for education. I began substitute teaching while I lived in Bentonville, Arkansas.

Being fortunate enough to have Dr. Stuart Stofferahn as a military supervisor, but also a mentor, I watched the idea of NTC began and watched it grow to what it is now.

I hope some day to be a part of the educational team.



**NEBRASKA  
TRANSITION  
COLLEGE**






## Meet Arch.

We would like to introduce a brand new comic strip written by our very own board member, Jake Dwinell.

His strip is called "Bark the Aardvark". It is about Bark...an average aardvark with an average job, an average home and an average life. But hidden just beneath the surface of all this average-ness is something much more.

Jake will be introducing his characters one at a time before bringing them together in a strip that will have one frame, two frames or many frames - it all depends on what Bark and his friends have to say. Sometimes it will be "old school" and raw, and sometimes it will be computer-aided (like below). Jake's call!



This is Arch. As you can see he's tall, even for a giraffe. He is so tall that he was kicked off the GBA (Giraffe Basketball Association) soon after his career began. No longer being famous doesn't make him feel bad. He doesn't like being in photos anyway, even if they can't ever get his head in the shot.



## What an Exciting Month of Fundraising!

We have two updates to bring to you in this newsletter.

**First, during the May Give to Lincoln campaign, we had 32 donors (AWESOME!) combine to give almost \$6,000 to Nebraska Transition College! And a special shout-out goes to our anonymous donors – there were several of you do-gooders!**

Second, one of our Omaha board members, Cindy Mowery, her husband Kevin, and their daughter Alyssa hosted a special wine-tasting fundraiser at her home on June 9. It was a very special evening, as we had the opportunity to spend several hours bringing the message of NTC to so many special people. **In the end, we almost matched the combined giving of the Give To Lincoln day! So much gratitude that words cannot express!**





## Research Revelation

This is an excerpt from the research I performed in Phoenix, Arizona. I interviewed businesses who had a robust policy of hiring individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder:

*Each employer reported varying degrees of positive employee influence – in the form of either perceived increased compassion, increased communication, or increased individual job performance. In one example, an employer explained that his employees were never known to go out of their way to either say hello to new employees, much less help them in any way. The culture was more one of “to each his own”. However, upon encouragement from his night manager, the employer witnessed for himself that “everyone seemed to want to help him (the employee with autism)...then they started treating each other better, helping each other more.” Excerpt from Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn, BECOMING INDEPENDENT: EMPLOYER PRACTICES THAT ENHANCE SUCCESS FOR EMPLOYEES WITH AN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER*

If you are interested in reading about similar experiences, please check out the resources listed below:

Blahovec, Sarah. (2016, February 24). Why hire disabled workers? 4 powerful (and inclusive) companies answer. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sarah-blahovec/why-hire-disabled-workers\\_b\\_9292912.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sarah-blahovec/why-hire-disabled-workers_b_9292912.html)

Hartnett, H., Stuart, H., Thurman, H., Loy, B. & Batiste, L. (2010). Employers' perceptions of the benefits of workplace accommodations: Reasons to hire, retain and promote people with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*. 34 (2011), 17-23.

International Labour Organization. (2010). *Why should you hire people with disabilities?* [Fact sheet]. Retrieved from [http://www.businessanddisability.org.il/disabilityfactsheets\\_why\\_hire.pdf](http://www.businessanddisability.org.il/disabilityfactsheets_why_hire.pdf)

Siperstein, G., Romano, N., Mohler, A., & Parker, R. (2005). A national survey of consumer attitudes towards companies that hire people with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 24(2006), 3-9



**NEBRASKA  
TRANSITION  
COLLEGE**

**LEARNING. WORKING. LIVING.**



# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME I • ISSUE 6

AUGUST 2018

Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn

Executive Director

## Board of Directors

Sam Comfort

President

Beth Baldwin

Secretary

Mike Chittenden

Treasurer

## Board Members

Aakriti Agrawal

Jake Dwinell

Greg Hackbart

Darren Macfee

Cindy Mowery

Dan Williams

## Audentis Fortuna Iuvat

by Executive Director, Dr. Stuart Stofferahn

This Latin phrase has been translated to: Fortune favors the bold.

What I have found is that there is more to this translation than pure “one language to the next” – which of course is true in most translations. Communication is mostly made of up subtleties and nuance – most of which can get easily lost in translation.

While opinions differ, scholars argue that for it truly to translate into “fortune favors the bold”, *audentis* should read *audacis*. The way it is written above, one could argue that the actual translation might read more like this:

***Fortune favors the ones who dare.***

Dare . . . take the risk, have the nerve, find the courage.

On July 18, 2018, the Board of Directors of Nebraska Transition College made the decision to name me as its first Executive Director. On August 1, I resigned my position as the President of the Board of Directors and began my responsibilities as the Executive Director.

They dared to take another step forward in this journey. They took the risk, they had the nerve, they found the courage. Anyone who has ever been a part of starting a non-profit will understand the enormity of this action, the giant leap forward.

It seemed a bit providential, then, to run across this poem by one of my favorite poets, Mary Oliver in her book *Felicity* (2017):

Moments

There are moments that cry out to be fulfilled.  
Like, telling someone you love them.  
Or giving your money away, all of it.

Your heart is beating, isn't it?  
You're not in chains, are you?

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## Audentis Fortuna Iuvat Con't.

There is nothing more pathetic than caution  
when headlong might save a life,  
even, possibly, your own.

As a board member, the buck stops with you when it comes to organizational responsibility, but this can often lead to a permanent inability to move forward – always allowing imperfection to dissuade or excuses to sidetrack. In this case, however - and as Mary Oliver points out – our board was tuned in to the potential that quieted the caution. There are lives waiting for us.

I am very proud to serve this board, our community, and our future students. Now let's go uncover that next leap of faith.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn  
Executive Director

## Letter from Board President Sam Comfort

How do you start an article introducing yourself to people you admire?

### I will start with Hello!

My name is Sam Comfort. I am privileged to be the new Board President of Nebraska Transition College. My road to today, started much the same as many of you, a conversation with Stuart about his vision. I have worked in disability services for nearly 15 years. In that time, I have fantasized of a program that would offer comprehensive training and services to individuals with disabilities to mitigate the "gap" or "cliff". The board's vision and enthusiasm of our volunteers can make this program a reality.

From my initial conversation with Stuart, to planning sessions, board meetings, hours spent on nights and weekends to advance the ambitious goals of NTC. I have loved it all.

I want to thank everyone taking the time to read this newsletter. Your interest and advocacy means everything to the board. Together we can accomplish great things. Stay tuned, some great things are already happening!



## **Announcing Our Next Volunteer Training Opportunity • August 25 • 9:00-10:30AM**

**Announcing our very first volunteer training opportunity IN LINCOLN on Saturday, August 25 from 9:00-10:30 AM. Donuts and coffee will be provided! Location to be determined and announced via email or Facebook.**

It's time to get your NTC on! We Need YOU! Come JOIN the FUN! Help us make a DIFFERENCE!  
Can I get an N-T-C?!!

The entire training session is just under ninety minutes, and we will provide coffee and Dunkin Donuts – not to mention a fantastic opportunity to help us continue to take those steps forward! The specifics and sign-up sheet will be posted on our Facebook Page (if you are not already following us, stop what you are doing and follow us today!), but if you are not a FB page fan, you can e-mail us at [info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org) for information and a reservation. Space will be limited to 10 people, so get signed up TODAY!

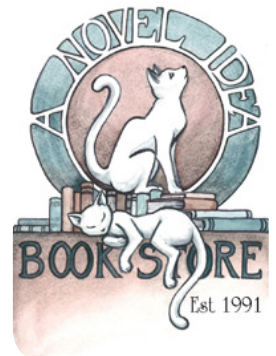


## **Every Tuesday...for THREE MONTHS!**

Come on down to A Novel Idea bookstore on any Tuesday from now until Tuesday, September 26, and **10% of EVERY PURCHASE on those days will go to NTC!**

You have to see this CUTE little store and meet the resident felines who patrol the bookstore all hours. They are located at 118 N. 14 Street in Lincoln and the hours are Tuesday, 10:00-6:00 PM.

**And give the owners a great big hug and say THANK YOU!**



## **Research Revelation**

The most recent statistics show that our national unemployment rate is on a downward trend – now sitting at 3.9%. Good, right? More like FANTASTIC!

But the devil is in the details. According to recent research done by the Brookings Institution, the unemployment rate of people who have a disability and are in their prime working years (ages 25-54) currently stands at 60%.

You did not read that incorrectly. 60% unemployment rate.

You can read the entire article here: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2018/07/25/only-four-out-of-ten-working-age-adults-with-disabilities-are-employed/>

**NTC . . . Now more than ever.**



## NTC Volunteer Spotlight • Meet Heidi

Heidi lives in Omaha and is the proud mom of an 18-year-old who was diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder at age 2.

In addition to her volunteering her time with NTC, her son is also interested in working to advocate for children with disabilities.



## Meet Yarn.

**We would like to introduce a brand new comic strip written by our very own board member, Jake Dwinell.**

His strip is called "Bark the Aardvark". It is about Bark...an average aardvark with an average job, an average home and an average life. But hidden just beneath the surface of all this average-ness is something much more.

Jake will be introducing his characters one at a time before bringing them together in a strip that will have one frame, two frames or many frames - it all depends on what Bark and his friends have to say. Sometimes it will be "old school" and raw, and sometimes it will be computer-aided (like below). Jake's call!

This is Yarn. He is one of the laziest sloths in the world.

He is always seen wearing a Christmas sweater that he hasn't taken off in six years. He says it will be time to put it back on as soon as he takes it off.

He is a fantastic artist, known for painting incredible self portraits onto mirrors. But he doesn't move much, so how hard could it be?





# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME I • ISSUE 7

SEPTEMBER 2018

Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn

Executive Director

## Board of Directors

Sam Comfort

President

Beth Baldwin

Secretary

Mike Chittenden

Treasurer

## Board Members

Aakriti Agrawal

Jake Dwinell

Greg Hackbart

Tina Henderson

Darren Macfee

Cindy Mowery

Dan Williams



## Competitive Wine Tasting Event • September 28, 2018

7-11 PM • Fuse Co-working Space (151 N. 8th St, Lincoln)

**You read that right . . . COMPETITIVE wine tasting! And for a GREAT CAUSE!**

The Bacchanalian Society of Lincoln is hosting a wine tasting event for Nebraska Transition College on Friday, September 28 at Fuse Co-working Space, downtown Lincoln.

**SPACE IS LIMITED!** Tickets are \$25 each, and the idea is to organize a team to bring to the event (2-4 people) and each team brings three bottles of EITHER a favorite chardonnay OR cabernet sauvignon.

The rest of the details and ticket information can be found on our Facebook Page or the Bacchanalian Society of Lincoln Facebook page, or [you can purchase tickets by going to this website](#). SPACE IS LIMITED, so once the tickets are gone, they are gone. So grab a friend or two, get your tickets and some wine, and join us for a wonderful cause and a little celebration to boot.

Oh yeah . . . and you may just walk away with some bottles of wine too! Remember, it's a competition, and the prize is – of course – WINE!

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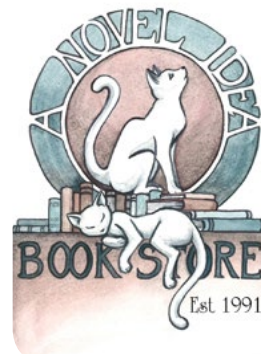
4

## EVERY TUESDAY . . . until ~~THE END OF THIS MONTH!~~

**UNTIL THE END OF DECEMBER!! A Novel Idea bookstore ROCKS!**

Come on down to A Novel Idea bookstore on any Tuesday from now until THE END OF DECEMBER, and 10% of EVERY PURCHASE on those days will go to NTC! You have to see this CUTE little store and meet the resident felines who patrol the bookstore all hours. It is located at 118 N. 14 St and the hours are Tuesday-Wednesday, 10:00-6:00 PM (but you really don't need to know about the "Wednesday" part).

And give the owners a great big hug and say THANK YOU!





## Special Brews With Kinkaidier Brewing & Green Flash Brewing

Katie Mulinix, one of our NTC volunteers, has been working to bring two fantastic breweries together to make a special brew **JUST FOR NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE!**

The breweries are [Kinkaidier Brewing Company](#) and [Green Flash Brewing Company](#), and through this limited edition brew, they have agreed to donate a portion of the sales to NTC for as long as the brew lasts. **How awesome are these people??**

I'll tell you how awesome . . . they would like us to name the beer! I extended this opportunity through our e-mail list and asked everyone to submit a name for us to consider. Your responses came pouring in, and our board has come up with the top three selections:

#1- [REDACTED]

#2- [REDACTED]

#3- [REDACTED]

Now, I know what you are thinking. You are thinking that we were going to reveal the top three choices to you NOW and do the unveiling mid-late October during our Oktoberfest celebration. You would be thinking correctly – that was exactly what we were going to do. But then we got to thinking . . . wouldn't it be even MORE exciting to keep you in even MORE suspense by unveiling THREE names a day or two before the celebration and the winner the night of? Makes much more sense, doesn't it?

**We can't wait to share the name, and we can't wait to see you all in October. Stay tuned!**



## NTC Board Member Spotlight • Meet Mike

Michael is the Director, Medical Management Operations at Centene Corporation.

Michael Chittenden is a professional in the Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) field with over 30 years' experience. Michael most recently was the Executive Director for The Arc of Nebraska, Inc., where he successfully advocated on behalf of all people experiencing I/DD and related conditions at the state capitol.

Additionally, he has been a Behavior Management Coordinator and Executive Director for Mosaic, an Executive Director for ResCare and a Regional Director for Bethesda Lutheran Communities, where he established and maintained positive relationships with governmental, social service, advocacy, religious, education and other business leaders within the state to help secure full inclusion into the community of those he supports.

Mike currently serves as the Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee for Nebraska Transition College.



## Announcing Our Next Volunteer Training Opportunity • September 22 • 9 -10:30 AM

Announcing our very first volunteer training opportunity IN OMAHA at First National Bank at 114th and Dodge on Saturday, September 22 from 9:00-10:30 AM (Donuts and coffee will be provided, and it's an away game, so no rush to the stadium)!

It's time to get your NTC on! We Need YOU! Come JOIN the FUN! Help us make a DIFFERENCE! Can I get an N-T-C?!!

The entire training session is just under ninety minutes, and we will provide coffee and Dunkin Donuts – not to mention a fantastic opportunity to help us continue to take those steps forward! The specifics and sign-up sheet will be posted on our Facebook Page (if you are not already following us, stop what you are doing and follow us today!), but if you are not a FB page fan, you can e-mail us at [info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org) for information and a reservation. **Space will be limited to 10 people, so get signed up TODAY!**



**CLICK HERE TO  
DONATE TO  
NTC TODAY!**



## Research Revelation Hope.

It is the over-riding theme wherever we go when we describe the vision and mission of NTC.

For this month's Research Revelation, we have a video to offer.

Click this link ==> <https://youtu.be/3b5OGx-v6Ao>

There is no reason Nebraska cannot create the same environment, the same partnerships, the same opportunities, the same inclusiveness, the same integration . . . the same. Not different. The same.

**NTC . . . Now more than ever.**



## Meet Starch.

**We would like to introduce a brand new comic strip written by our very own board member, Jake Dwinell.**

His strip is called "Bark the Aardvark". It is about Bark...an average aardvark with an average job, an average home and an average life. But hidden just beneath the surface of all this average-ness is something much more.

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This is Starch. He is a camel who is oddly skinny. As a kid, he was made fun of because he didn't have a hump. He learned to hide this by wearing an industrial army green backpack every where he goes. He works with bark, but is very anti-social, so they dont talk as much as they could. He isn't alone though. There are always people who can relate to you. You just have to look.

## A Letter From The Executive Director

We have a lot going on.

We have a new board member (and family) to introduce to you next month, we have more volunteers, we have continued growth in our newsletter outreach, and we have some fun events coming up to share – in which we hope you will participate.

We are also getting very close to announcing a very special collaborative partnership. Did I mention that we are also working on offering two classes for students to enroll this coming spring?



### **We've been busy. We'd like to stay busy.**

For that, we need your help. Staying on track to develop the necessary programming for Nebraska Transition College students will require generous people to give generously. To accommodate our donors and do-gooders, we have some events coming up in which you will have the opportunity to participate. We have made it even simpler by offering an on-line avenue [to donate by clicking on this link](#). Your gift right now will significantly impact our ability to create integrated programming in an inclusive environment.

Let's keep this momentum going.

Thank you for being part of this journey –

Stuart Stofferahn  
Executive Director

## Upcoming Events!

### **September 19: Johnson County Transition Council College Fair, 6:30-8:30 PM, Metcalf Avenue, Overland Park, KS**

We have been invited to participate in this year's transition fair in Kansas City! We will be there touting all the wonderful things NTC brings to the options table. If you would like to stay tuned in to things happening in Kansas, "like" their page on Facebook. Good things happening!

### **September 23: Streets Alive! Streets of Belmont, 1:00-4:30 PM**

Streets Alive! provides an opportunity for Lincolniters of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to access free and useful information. Lincoln Streets Alive! will include 100's of diverse exhibitors that provide a wide variety of health, wellness, fitness, support, care, and other information in an interactive and engaging way that includes games, contests, and giveaways. Come on down and join us for some fun – and stop by our booth to say hello! [For more info, click here!](#)

### **September 28: Bacchanalian Society Competitive Wine Tasting Fund Raiser, 7:00-11:00 PM, Fuse Co-working space, 151 N. 8th Street**

The Bacchanalian Society of Lincoln is a group that hosts wine tasting events in order to raise funds for local, charitable organizations. This year, the society has chosen NTC as the recipient of their good deeds! The description of the event can be found through Facebook by looking up Bacchanalian Society of Lincoln, and you can also see the event details on our page. Tickets are \$25 each and are available through the event details on the page, or [you can click here](#). You will want to purchase your tickets soon, as there is a limited number available. Don't miss out on this fun event!





# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME I • ISSUE 8

OCTOBER 2018

Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn

Executive Director

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Sam Comfort

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Greg Hackbart

Tina Henderson

Darren Macfee

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## Why NTC? Read about TJ, his family, and his journey.

Twenty-seven years ago, I was a new mom.

TJ was completely happy and loved... and normal. He met all the milestones. I was adamant about making it to check-ups, keeping shots up to date, introduced all foods at the time it said on the papers I received from the clinic. I had this.

TJ was always very well behaved. As he got older, we noticed he did not like fuzzy blankets or shirts that were tight in the neck area. Things with hoods and jeans were out. He did not like grass, especially wet grass. TJ did not play with playdough, finger paints or sand; he did not like things that felt "weird". He did not like potatoes – not even French fries! But he was addicted to milk. If I did not put milk in his bottle, then in his sippy cup, he would throw it. He could not sleep without his chocolate milk before bedtime. As he got older, he would go through a gallon of milk a day. TJ did not like music, except occasionally a rare song, and it would have to be very repetitive. I could sing to him, that was the only music he liked.

When he learned to talk (on schedule), he would ask lots of questions about how or why we did things different than we had originally said. For example, if I said we were going to Super Saver and then Walmart and went to Walmart first, he would question over and over why.

## School:

School was a challenge from the start. Pre-school was in a small town where he had about 20 kids in his class. After school he would go to daycare while I worked. I would see TJ in the evenings and weekends. This is normal. But I had to rely on others to keep me updated on his progress.



## Why NTC? Read about TJ, his family, and his journey. (Con't)

TJ's daycare did not believe in being left-handed. She would slap his hand and try to make him "right handed". He missed out on this valuable time for learning to color and do crafts. When we learned how he was being treated, we pulled him out immediately. Valuable time lost.

TJ also attended kindergarten in the same school. He learned to read and was generally learning with the class. He did no crafts or drawing if he could get out of it. But he read well, and that's the basis for everything – right? I wasn't concerned. We had a lot of parties for birthdays and holidays, and TJ's social skills were fine – right?

When we moved to Cedar Rapids, we decided to keep TJ in kindergarten again. This would give him a better chance at learning the new routine and a better understanding of art.

I'll never forget the lady who told me "Well, when you move to Cedar, maybe TJ will have kids there that relate to him better." Her son was TJ's best friend at the time. She obviously saw more than I had.

### Diagnosis:

In second grade, I was called into a meeting at the school. TJ isn't doing okay. He's behind. He's struggling. He can read well, but that's it. He won't ask questions. He is failing math. He needs evaluated. I'm still a new mom – I don't know what this means. I go with everything they tell me to do. Through the school evaluations that included a lot of names and titles I didn't recognize, TJ was diagnosed with ADD, sensory issues, and on and on. I didn't know what most of them meant. I just knew they were telling me my perfect little boy wasn't perfect.

Unfortunately, our school had limited resources, and their best way of teaching the "special kids" was to take them out of the room and place them with a special ed teacher, who basically taught the same thing the same way but in a different room. Assignments were shorter and more verbal. OT was once a week. There wasn't much available or offered for really helping TJ in the different way he learned.

I went to the IEP meetings and did as I was told to do. I let TJ be taken out of class for special ed. I let him do special assignments different from the

rest of the class. I let him be "different."

At his next IEP meeting, I'll never forget the school psychologist telling me, "TJ will never get better grades than C's and D's." At this point, I was getting this "mom thing" figured out. No one was going to tell me what my son can and can't do – I knew him better and I was his backbone.

We went to a PEP convention. I learned how to advocate. It was life-changing, and I highly recommend it.

At the next IEP meeting, I began to insist that TJ be taught – really taught. We let him use green paper because he loved the color green. We gave him cardboard hands to help him ask questions. We had one teacher who would go to his locker and help him find his homework – she knew to look for the green paper. I used his IEP to help him in the ways he needed it. I took him out of band and gave him an additional study hall. We bypassed having TJ learn cursive, he did not have the muscle tone for it. And we put him on the computer as often as possible. We did everything we could think of. Despite this extra help, the school just didn't have the knowledge to deal with ADD and TJ's "quirks".

But at home, I helped him with his homework every night. I knew he was learning, despite his grades. I quickly learned that grades didn't mean much. TJ did get Cs and Ds – and As and Bs. It depended on what teacher he had and what "help". Who passed him to get him by, who really helped. We were all over the place – I ignored the report card. It did not show a real story.

TJ knew how to work – he had a job since he was 9 – from the feedyard, paper route, to the locker in town, to Pizza Hut. I knew a lot of people, and a lot of people were willing to help. But these were very limited jobs, as even those who wanted to help could only do so much and they also became frustrated. We were working with a kid who will not ask questions. This means he looks uninterested and unmotivated. He's not a self-starter. He cannot determine what needs to be done next. He had no organizational skills. Try employing that!

To add to the challenge of helping TJ learn to



## Why NTC? Read about TJ, his family, and his journey. (Con't)

work, he also cannot read social cues. This means he does not know when someone is joking or being serious. He cannot communicate with co-workers well, as he does not understand small talk. He doesn't do well with background noise – still does not like music.

### Graduation:

When TJ graduated, I'll admit my tears weren't happy tears. They were "he's not ready" tears. He wasn't nearly ready to go out into the world. I made his graduation video – the song I chose was "Catch Me When I Fall" - about a mom catching her child. I knew TJ would fall – that's the sad part, the really sad part. But I was determined to make those falls short and as painless as possible.

### But how?

We had TJ enrolled in a community college. They promised they knew how to handle his "quirks." We were promised so much help and many services. But when we walked on that campus, there wasn't anyone. When we asked for the services, who to go to, who to talk to, we were left with blank looks. Some recommended a tutor or talk to his advisor. His advisor knew nothing. TJ did not pass the first quarter with high enough grades to maintain his financial aid. We then tried online classes. This wasn't structured enough either. TJ quit school with zero learning, a big tuition bill and a lot of frustration.

So he went to work at Walmart with the help of Vocational Rehab. He was hired for the holiday season, but he was laid off in January.

TJ's psychologist gave him the new diagnosis of Aspergers. At that time, it was on the autism spectrum. I dove back into the internet – it was like reading about my child. Every little issue. Sensory, milk, the stiff gait when walking, lack of social skills. This was TJ.

But this did not give us any additional services or help. I could learn better about how he was wired. But we needed help now. Real help. Where was everybody?

Now what? We started looking into moving to Omaha. There MUST be more services there. We were desperate for help.

Then a friend of mine mentioned the Job Corp. Hmmm – wasn't that for kids with behavioral issues? TJ did not fit that category. She insisted I look into it. I went online and was amazed at what I found. Yes – they helped kids with ADD, Aspergers and social skill issues! I called them and they had a lady come out right away. She did all the paperwork with TJ. She was help.

As a family, we took TJ to the Job Corp in Chadron. It was the worst day of my life. I cried the entire six hour drive home. I was leaving my child in the hands of someone else. I had learned not to trust anyone. I had learned that I had to advocate for him and only me and there was no one else. I was having to learn different and it was hard to let go.

We called and visited every opportunity we had. I communicated with TJ's instructors as often as possible without being a pain. He was doing really well. Making friends!! TJ had friends!! He learned to stick up for himself. He learned social skills and cues.

But TJ was not okay with the learning. It was hands-on and lots of involvement with the instructors. He wasn't used to this and he felt "stupid" that he needed help. Again, he wouldn't ask questions. He had a bad attitude about learning this way. It was what he needed, but he didn't know how to accept it. The Job Corp was too big for the individual self-esteem help TJ needed. TJ graduated the Job Corp with little work-related knowledge, but his social skills were much more advanced compared to what they had been two years before. TJ could work.

We again leaned on Vocational Rehab for help and TJ returned to Walmart. This time he was hired for night-time maintenance. It was quiet and repetitive. Voc Rehab was able to advocate for him in my place. I leaned on them a lot for insight where I could help.

TJ then announced he was getting his own apartment with his friend he met at the Job Corp. TJ wanted to be independent! We got the two boys moved in and settled. They are independent, pay their own bills – clean to the best of their "unorganized ability". I left the mom notes on the

## Why NTC? Read about TJ, his family, and his journey. (Con't)

fridge to help them out. Or maybe those notes help my own sense of survival.

Presently, TJ still works at Walmart. He just got a letter thanking him for five years of service.

This is TJ's story from a mom's point of view. Yes, even today I am frustrated and struggle with how to handle TJ and his future. I struggle with how I handled the past. I didn't have the information I needed. When TJ graduated, Nebraska Transition College did not exist. It wasn't an option. I felt trapped with few options, and I navigated those to the best of my ability.

What NTC will offer, I had to find every aspect for TJ on my own. I had to find help in the community, help with his social issues, help with vocational needs, help with education, and finally his living arrangements.

At times all I had to rely on was my own unconditional, unwavering love for this child. It got TJ to where he is today. But to be able to rely on the assistance and continued support from NTC would have been priceless.

## Special Brews With Kinkaidier Brewing & Green Flash Brewing

Katie Mulinix, one of our NTC volunteers, has been working to bring two fantastic breweries together to make a special brew **JUST FOR NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE!**

The breweries are [Kinkaidier Brewing Company](#) and [Green Flash Brewing Company](#), and through this limited edition brew, they have agreed to donate a portion of the sales to NTC for as long as the brew lasts. **How awesome are these people??**

I'll tell you how awesome . . . they would like us to name the beer! I extended this opportunity through our e-mail list and asked everyone to submit a name for us to consider. Your responses came pouring in, and our board has come up with the top three selections:

#1- [REDACTED]  
#2- [REDACTED]  
#3- [REDACTED]

Now, I know what you are thinking. You are thinking that we were going to reveal the top three choices to you NOW and do the unveiling mid-late October during our Oktoberfest celebration. You would be thinking correctly – that was exactly what we were going to do. But then we got to thinking . . . wouldn't it be even MORE exciting to keep you in even MORE suspense by unveiling THREE names a day or two before the celebration and the winner the night of? Makes much more sense, doesn't it?

**We can't wait to share the name, and we can't wait to see you all in October. Stay tuned!**

UPDATE: Our Brewers are actively pursuing Nebraska products to put together an awesome beer. This takes time and patience . . . so our Oktoberfest will most likely take place in November. Instead of "Christmas in July", it will be "Oktoberfest in November"! Stay tuned!

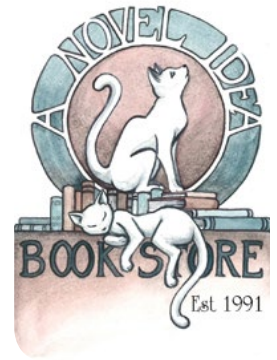




**EVERY TUESDAY . . . until ~~THE END OF THIS MONTH!~~**

**UNTIL THE END OF DECEMBER!! A Novel Idea bookstore ROCKS!**

Come on down to A Novel Idea bookstore on any Tuesday from now until THE END OF DECEMBER, and 10% of EVERY PURCHASE on those days will go to NTC! You have to see this CUTE little store and meet the resident felines who patrol the bookstore all hours. It is located at 118 N. 14 St and the hours are Tuesday-Wednesday, 10:00-6:00 PM (but you really don't need to know about the "Wednesday" part).



And give the owners a great big hug and say THANK YOU!

### **NTC Volunteer Spotlight • Meet Andrea**

My name is Andrea Street. My husband Luke Karohl and I will have been married for 7 years this October. We have two wonderful, hilarious, and brilliant daughters. Both Eleanora (5) and Layla (2) keep us on our toes. We also have two beagles, Osborne and Wrigley, who help keep us all in line.

I grew up in Grand Island, Nebraska. I come from a long line of educators. These people have dedicated their life to the field of education and have been incredibly influential in my life. I learned from them early on that education, service and acceptance is of the utmost importance. I graduated from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln with a degree in Secondary Special Education. I am currently in my fourteenth year of teaching, focusing on vocational education and helping transition age students learn skills to successfully obtain and maintain employment upon graduation.

I believe that every individual, given the right tools, can be a part of their community. I am excited to be involved with NTC and help spread their mission to help individuals with all learning needs learn skills to be a part of their community.



### **NTC Board Member Spotlight • Meet Tina**

Tina currently is the vice president of communication strategy and the editor of two publications for the Nebraska Farm Bureau. Much of her professional career has been in communications, including working in broadcast journalism after college. She began her 24-year career in non-profit communications/development at Nebraska Farm Bureau in 1991. She was promoted to Vice President/Communication Strategy in April of 2012. She has served on the 4H Foundation and the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lincoln Board of Directors. She and her husband Bruce are the parents to their adult son Michael who is diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome, a form of Autism. They have helped him to navigate a world of obtaining school support, transportation challenges and receiving independent living skills. They continue to be advocates for their son as he goes through adulthood. Tina serves on the development committee.



## Bacchanalian Society of Lincoln Event Update

On Friday, September 28, the Bacchanalian Society of Lincoln hosted a competitive wine tasting fund raiser for Nebraska Transition College. We had about fifty participants and about 20 different delicious wines to taste. We also had a surprise match donation midway through the evening which was eagerly pursued right up to the last minute – ultimately met and exceeded. A great big THANK YOU to the Bacchanalian Society for hosting this fun event!



**CLICK HERE TO  
DONATE TO  
NTC TODAY!**



## Research Revelation

*From A Hidden Market: The Purchasing Power of Working-Age Adults With Disabilities* by Michelle Yin, Dahlia Shaewitz, Cynthia Overton and Deeza-Mae Smith, April 2018.

You can find the entire report by [clicking here](#).

- The total after-tax disposable income for working-age people with disabilities is about \$490 billion, which is similar to that of other significant market segments, such as African Americans (\$501 billion) and Hispanics (\$582 billion);
- Discretionary income for working-age people with disabilities is about \$21 billion, which is greater than that of the African-American and Hispanic market segments combined and;
- Disposable and discretionary income varies by disability type and by state—information that can help business leaders as they make plans for accessing the disability market.

Our entire conceptual design revolves around the expectation that our students will graduate into independence through employment, post-secondary educational opportunities, or both – adding to the already incredible purchasing power of people with disabilities. This market translates into a powerful voice in almost every aspect of business and community.

NTC . . . Now more than ever.



## Meet Spark.

**We would like to introduce a brand new comic strip written by our very own board member, Jake Dwinell.**

His strip is called "Bark the Aardvark". It is about Bark...an average aardvark with an average job, an average home and an average life. But hidden just beneath the surface of all this average-ness is something much more.

Jake will be introducing his characters one at a time before bringing them together in a strip that will have one frame, two frames or many frames - it all depends on what Bark and his friends have to say. Sometimes it will be "old school" and raw, and sometimes it will be computer-aided (like below). Jake's call!

For every good person in the world, there is one who isn't so good. This is Spark the armadillo. He's Bark's rival at the office the two work at. His hobbies include being mean to Bark, and being mean to Bark. He is always the bad guy, except to their boss, who he'll butter up anytime he can to get what he wants. This doesn't bother Bark though. He knows Spark might become the CEO of the company some day, but Bark will have moved on to bigger and better things by that point.



## A Letter From The Executive Director

I know it must be frustrating to be kept on hold in anticipation of some of the things we are working on. Just imagine how we feel as we continue to prepare the way, put in the work, make the connections, only to sit on the surprise – much like wrapping a present and resisting the urge to tell the recipient what's inside.

For now, you will have to trust that we have a couple upcoming announcements that will make the time waiting worth it.

**In the meantime, we need your help.** Staying on track to develop the necessary programming for Nebraska Transition College students will require generous people to give generously. We have made it even simple by offering an on-line avenue to donate by [clicking on this link](#). Your gift right now will significantly impact our ability to create integrated programming in an inclusive environment. As we enter the season of gift giving, please remember Nebraska Transition College as one of those places on your “to-do” list of recipients.

Let's keep this momentum going.

Thank you for being part of this journey –

Stuart Stofferahn  
Executive Director



**NEBRASKA  
TRANSITION  
COLLEGE**

**LEARNING. WORKING. LIVING.**



# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2019

Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn

Executive Director

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Jake Dwinell

Cindy Mowery

Kady Wendt

Jamie Gibson

Lyle Wheeler



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## Nebraska Transition College WinterFEAST

Dave Nelson, Executive Chef at the Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker Hotel and Jeff Hanson, Head Brewer at Green Flash Brewing Company have teamed up to bring us an exquisite five-course meal specifically created to pair with the sometimes subtle, sometimes pronounced nuances of hops, malt and yeast.

Saturday, February 16 • 6:00 PM • Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker Hotel

Tickets can be purchased on the homepage of our website:

[www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org](http://www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org)

## MENU:

### ***Hoppy Birthday - American Pale Ale***

*Root Vegetable Blini with Black Tobikko and Cured Lemon*

### ***Sea to Sea - Zwickel Lager***

*Braised Mussel with Beer Beurre Blanc*

### ***Magic Rooster Quad - Belgian-style Quad***

*Magic Rooster Quad Granita*

### ***Eldo IPA - India Pale Ale***

*Spiced Beef Tender with New Potatoes*

### ***Atypical Imperial Wheat Porter – Imperial Wheat Porter***

*Semifreddo*

**Tickets will be available for a limited time.** Looking to secure your Valentine's Day plans early? This is the PERFECT venue! Want to get a jump on beating those wintertime blues? Food, drink, and jocular to the rescue! Looking for a place to be on a cold, winter night with seven of your closest friends (and 92 jovial acquaintances)? Purchase a table and join us for a REALLY fun evening - and support a fantastic mission all at the same time! **DON'T WAIT TO GET YOUR TICKETS! The space is limited, and they will be gone before you know it!** (See graphic, page 3)



## **Nebraska Transition College and Southeast Community College . . . a match made in heaven!**

Nebraska Transition College and Southeast Community College have come together to form a collaborative relationship that will bring class offerings to the 88th and O campus in Lincoln, NE – starting THIS SPRING, April 2019! Our first class is specifically designed for employers who want to learn more about inclusive employment, and the other two are our student “101” classes in two curriculum streams – Pre-vocational and Vocational, and Wellness. We have designed the offerings to run successively if registrants would like to take both classes but do not have the flexibility to commit to more than one evening.



The classes will be offered through [Southeast Community College Continuing Education](#) department, and they will be available for registration in early February 2019. Our first classes will be offered at a GREATLY reduced rate while we continue to build and adjust. Class size will be limited due the specialized nature of the courses, but don't worry – we will continue to offer classes each semester! Our curriculum is research-based and taught by highly trained, highly qualified instructors with years of special education and transition experience.

Our curriculum is designed to help empower a pathway to independence through employment and community support systems. Eligibility requirements will be generally the same as those found on our website under “Programming”, and you can find them by [clicking here](#). Please keep in mind that our eligibility requirements are meant to be as inclusive as possible taking into consideration the design and purpose of the curriculum. Reach out to us if you have any questions or need clarification. We LIKE the gray area!

### **Introduction to Inclusive Employment**

If you are reading this description, you are an employer, and it is likely you are curious about disability employment and inclusive hiring initiatives. The purpose of this class is to help you create a program that successfully integrates people with disabilities into your own workforce. Class meets one evening each week over eleven weeks. Participants will engage in interactive activities promoting hands-on learning. Topics will include disability categories, awareness of implicit biases, myths/fears associated with hiring people with disabilities. Class will meet Thursdays from 6:30-8:30 PM, April 4 – June 13. Maximum 15 registrants.

### **Soft Skills to Pay the Bills**

Soft Skills to Pay the Bills focuses on everyday interpersonal skills that job seekers need to succeed on the job. Communicating clearly and appropriately, remembering work directions, working well with others, and problem solving will be among the topics covered. Class will meet Thursdays from 6:30-8:30 PM, April 4-June 13. Maximum 15 registrants.

### **Unlocking Your Best Self**

Social and emotional wellness focuses on everyday strategies and skills to develop self-esteem, self-awareness, problem-solving and interpersonal skills. Topics such as mindset, personal strengths, safety, relationships, stress, time-management, and goal-setting will be covered. This course will foster healthy behaviors that lead to improved social and emotional wellness outcomes. Class will meet Thursdays from 4:00-6:00 PM, April 4 – June 13. Maximum 15 registrants.

## Nebraska Transition College would like to introduce you to the newest additions to our board of directors!

### Jamie Gibson

Jamie is the Director of Field Management, Midwest Region, for Cystic Fibrosis with more than 23 years of development and fund-raising experience. She has volunteered or served on the boards of many non-profits and has also led them as an executive director. She has a nephew who is 23 years old with autism, and while he is high functioning, his life has been complicated, filled with periods of difficult situations that required a lot of patience and assistance. Her goal is to work with the board and ED on developing a short-term fundraising and development plan in 2019 while working to flush out a strategic plan for 2-5 years into the future. Jamie will co-chair our development committee.

### Lyle Wheeler

Lyle is an attorney in Lincoln, NE, and he has been working with NTC since the early days of incorporation. He works with many nonprofits and is subsequently frequently asked to serve on many boards – which has made him very selective. As our time together increased, Lyle became more and more excited at the potential of NTC and the positive impact it will have within the community. Serving NTC as a member of our board was the natural next step. While he will bring legal expertise to the discussion, he has also been a very successful entrepreneur with considerable business experience. He will serve on the development and finance committees. In his words, he “believes this organization is poised to thrive and make lasting impacts for individuals, families, and the community.”

### Kady Wendt

Kady is a ten-year veteran special education instructor, who is extremely passionate about seeing students succeed and gain independence for a thriving adult life. She is currently serving her third year as the Project SEARCH instructor with the Papillion La Vista Community Schools. She currently leads a team of two education professionals providing real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent-living skills to help students with significant disabilities make successful transitions to a productive adult life. Kady has her Master's in Educational Administration K-12 from Chadron State College. She also holds a Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education K-12 and a BA in Psychology from Hastings College. Kady will head our programming committee with NTC.



## Nebraska Transition College presents *Winterfeast.*

Come join us in celebrating the launch of a very unique project...  
**Atypical Ale.** A Collaborative Project.

Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup> 2019 at 6:00pm  
Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker Hotel  
333 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

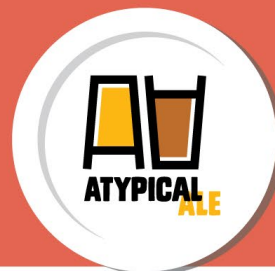
**Winterfeast.** A five-course meal, each paired with a specific beer.  
Proceeds to benefit Nebraska Transition College

VIP: \$100/ticket (also includes Atypical Ale beer glass, elevated table service)

Individual: \$75/ticket

Table: \$65/ticket (must purchase 8 tickets)

For tickets and additional details: [www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org](http://www.nebraskatransitioncollege.org)



## A Letter From The Executive Director

Happy New Year!

2018 was one for the books! Our amazing supporters have provided the financial means to create programming that will be offered this April 2019, with more class offerings this summer and fall. We continue to reach more and more people with our mission and vision, and our board continues to be visionary in its approach.

I don't know about you, but I can't WAIT to see what 2019 brings! In fact, how about some hints on what we are working on?



### **Southeast Community College Programming Collaborative Relationship**

We expect this relationship to continue and expand. We will be offering three classes starting in April but look for more offerings this summer. This fall will offer a re-set to the classes we have offered, but it will also be an adjustment for everyone as we shift to semester classes instead of quarter.

### **Atypical Ale Project**

As you have read in the newsletter, we are offering a delectable dining experience on February 16th. **I hope to see you all there to help me savor the pairings of Dave Nelson and Jeff Hanson.** It will be an unforgettable experience. This project has served to bring businesses together to collectively support the mission of NTC, but also to serve the community by hosting events meant to shine a light on how we can come together to meet challenges. Watch for this to really gain speed this year. For a sneak peek, check us out on FB: Atypical Ale Project.

### **Omaha Connections**

Putting the cart before the horse is probably even a little early, but I am just so excited about the conversations we have been having with several people and organizations in Omaha that I can't keep it in anymore! Suffice it to say, watch for more news on this front in the coming months.

### **Development**

I hope at some point in the future, you can meet Jamie Gibson. Mentioned earlier in this newsletter, she joined the board in December and will co-chair our development committee – specifically as it relates to fundraising. She brings a wealth of experience in this area, and she will have an incredible impact in 2019 and beyond as she leads this area of development. In fact, she has already had an impact, as she made herself available to us during the entirety of our Giving Tuesday, Giving November campaign. It is no coincidence that we met 150% of our goal.

### **Volunteers**

We will have more and more options for volunteers to serve in varied roles. Yes, there is ALWAYS fundraising to do, but there will also be event planning, coordinating, and programming options as well. Stay tuned!

Before we know it, 2019 will be half-way over! Hang on . . . it's going to be a wild ride!

From all of us at NTC –

Dr. Stuart Stofferahn  
Executive Director





# NEBRASKA TRANSITION COLLEGE

NTC NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 23

MARCH 2019

Dr. Stuart P. Stofferahn

Executive Director

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Lyle Wheeler

## Our Classes Are Online And Ready For Registrants!



Southeast Community College and Nebraska Transition College have come together to form a collaborative relationship that will bring class offerings to the 88th and O campus in Lincoln, NE – starting **THIS SPRING**, April 2019! Our first class is specifically designed for employers and

business entrepreneurs who want to learn more about inclusive employment, and the other two are our student “101” classes in two curriculum streams – Pre-vocational and Vocational, and Wellness. We have designed the offerings to run successively if registrants would like to take both classes but do not have the flexibility to commit to more than one evening. Each individual class will meet twelve times during the quarter (see “Course Dates”).

## Implementation Phase

Our first phase of curriculum and program development is on-going - led by our chair, Kady Wendt, and a talented group of highly credentialed professionals. A critical component of curriculum development is “beta” testing. In other words, though our curriculum is research-based and modeled after similar successful organizations, until it is implemented and tested locally, any expected outcomes will be purely theoretical. Our first set of class offerings are part of that implementation phase – the next step. Our team will be meeting regularly to prepare lesson plans and coursework, share challenges and successes, and make adjustments necessary to optimize expected outcomes. Once classes have ended, we will evaluate the courses and share the outcomes with our constituents – both through our newsletter and public forum that will be scheduled in the summer.

## Eligibility

Our eligibility requirements can be located on our website under the “[Programming](#)” tab. However, if you have ANY questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us. The eligibility requirements are purposefully broad, so we can have those conversations. You can reach us by [e-mailing](#) or by calling Dr. Stofferahn at 402-560-4627.

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The mission of Nebraska Transition College is to empower individuals with autism or other disabilities to learn, work, and live within our communities.

## **Our Classes Are Online And Ready For Registrants!**

### **First Course Offerings**

#### **Introduction to Inclusive Employment**

If you are reading this description, you are an employer, and it is likely you are curious about disability employment and inclusive hiring initiatives. The purpose of this class is to help you create a program that successfully integrates people with disabilities into your own workforce. Class meets one evening each week over eleven weeks. Participants will engage in interactive activities promoting hands-on learning. Topics will include disability categories, awareness of implicit biases, myths/fears associated with hiring people with disabilities. Class will meet Thursdays from 6:30-8:30 PM, April 4 – June 13. Room U 118. Maximum 15 registrants.

### **Soft Skills to Pay the Bills**

Soft Skills to Pay the Bills focuses on everyday interpersonal skills that job seekers need to succeed on the job. Communicating clearly and appropriately, remembering work directions, working well with others, and problem solving will be among the topics covered. The quarter will begin and end with mock interviews with community business leaders rating students on skills and areas for improvement. Staff members will evaluate the outcomes of both interviews and measure growth based upon feedback from business leaders. Class will meet Thursdays from 6:30-8:30 PM, April 4-June 13, Room U109. Maximum 15 registrants.

### **Unlocking Your Best Self**

Social and emotional wellness focuses on everyday strategies and skills to develop self-esteem, self-awareness, problem-solving and interpersonal skills. Topics such as mindset, personal strengths, safety, relationships, stress, time-management, and goal-setting will be covered. This course will foster healthy behaviors that lead to improved social and emotional wellness outcomes. At the end of this class, students will be able to identify skills and strategies to promote social and emotional wellness as measured by weekly classroom assessments and student self-rating scales. A final portfolio of information and strategies will be compiled over the course of 12 weeks for students to use as a resource in their daily living. Class will meet Thursdays from 4:00-6:00 PM, April 4 – June 13, Room U10. Maximum 15 registrants.

### **Course Dates**

The first day of classes is Thursday, April 4. The last day is July 14.

### **Cost**

The cost of each class offering is \$149.

### **Registration**

We have provided a couple VERY EASY steps to register for our classes. You can [register through our website here](#), or you can go directly to the [SCC registration link here](#).

All you have to do is type in the name of the class and hit submit. You can read about the classes and also get registered!

### **Deadline for Registration**

The DEADLINE for on-line registration is April 2, 2019. There is a maximum registration for each class, so our recommendation is to get registered early.

### **Questions**

Please direct your questions to

[info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org) or by calling Dr. Stofferahn at 402-560-4627.



## WinterFEAST 2019 is in the books!

Old Man Winter tried to play a part in dampening our spirits, but he had no idea what he was up against!

With over 60 attendees, a splendid time was had by all. Thank you's go out to Janis Davis and The Lincoln Marriott Cornhusker Hotel, Executive Chef Dave Nelson, and Green Flash Brewery & Eatery and Head Brewer Jeff Hanson.

We can't wait until WinterFEAST 2020!



## 100's of Men Who Care

We are humbled to be the recipients of one of the most recent 100's of Men Who Care events in Lincoln. The impact of this group has been tremendous, and the combined efforts of this group and 100's of Women Who Care has topped \$300,000 to nonprofits across the state. Follow them on the Facebook pages and plan to attend their events!





## Public Forum - Community Input Welcome

We need your input and participation as we prepare for our first class offerings this April through Southeast Community College! We have scheduled two public forums at the following locations:

**March 19, 6:30-8:00 PM**  
**Eiseley Branch Library, Lincoln**  
**1530 Superior Street**  
[Facebook Event Calendar](#)

**March 21, 6:30-8:00 PM**  
**Goodwill Industries, Omaha**  
**4805 N. 72 ST**  
[Facebook Event Calendar](#)

Snacks will be provided at each location!

During each public forum, our programming staff will offer detailed descriptions, weekly objectives, and expected outcomes of the [classes we will be offering this spring through Southeast Community College](#). Most importantly, it will be an opportunity for us to obtain input from parents, community members, and potential students - which is why it is so vital that we fill the rooms each evening.

## Meet Bark.

**We would like to introduce a brand new comic strip written by our very own board member, Jake Dwinell.**

His strip is called "Bark the Aardvark". It is about Bark...an average aardvark with an average job, an average home and an average life. But hidden just beneath the surface of all this average-ness is something much more.

Jake will be introducing his characters one at a time before bringing them together in a strip that will have one frame, two frames or many frames - it all depends on what Bark and his friends have to say. Sometimes it will be "old school" and raw, and sometimes it will be computer-aided (like below). Jake's call!



# CLICK HERE TO DONATE TO NTC TODAY!



## A Letter From The Executive Director

Hello March (and spring . . . eventually?)!

### ***Nothing About Us, Without Us.***

We have lots of opportunities for you to join us for conversations as we continue to build! Public forums in March, monthly Atypical Ale Project forums, events, Facebook forums . . .

We work diligently to provide these opportunities, because your input is vitally important to our entire development. Our programming is research-based (and will soon be evidence-based as well), but *reality* must also play a part. What I mean is that while we can put together an A+ curriculum, we need community input to shed light on any missing components or blind spots. Parents need to be involved in conversations regarding curriculum, potential students need to be involved with mission and vision decisions . . . *Nothing About Us, Without Us.*



We have two upcoming public forums – March 19th in Lincoln, and March 21st in Omaha. We would like to pack the houses for both events. Our programming staff of volunteers will be on hand to present the curriculum progression to date, and we will have plenty of time for discussions. To ensure we have enough snacks and beverage, we would like to get an estimate on how many may attend. You can let us know if you will be attending through our Facebook events (see article above), or you can e-mail us directly at [info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org](mailto:info@nebraskatransitioncollege.org).

### ***Building the Vision***

Our mission talks about what we do. Our vision talks about where we want to go and where we want to be.

We couldn't be prouder to offer our first classes through the collaborative relationship we have built with Southeast Community College. They have provided us with the pivotal first step toward the vision of building programming throughout the entire state of Nebraska.

And those last few words speak to our vision – *the entire state of Nebraska.*

I have had countless conversations with parents and potential students who have expressed frustration that post-secondary programming like ours is just not available in their communities. Their frustration is warranted, and I feel it poignantly with each conversation I have. It was the reason I began this journey in the first place.

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## A Letter From The Executive Director

*"We LOVE what you are doing, but I live in \_\_\_\_\_, not Lincoln."*

So many times, the reality of proximity and transportation challenges stymie continued conversations with parents and potential students. A weeknight class 50, 75, 150 miles away just isn't a reality for most of us – regardless of disability or demographic. But it is precisely this reason that our conversations and engagements need continue, regardless where you call home.

Today, we are working on fulfilling our mission while laying the groundwork to build our vision. Bringing classes to communities across Nebraska is completely dependent on successful development now, which is why the importance of our relationship with SCC cannot be understated.

### ***Lincoln is just the starting point.***

Your input and contribution (whether time, talent, or treasure) – regardless where you reside – is the lifeblood of the vision of Nebraska Transition College. Whenever you can, we request that you join us for a forum, event, or discussion. Tell a friend about us. Engage a neighbor. Attract a crowd.

Our work now will take us to Chadron, Bridgeport, O'Neill, Falls City, Hastings, Omaha . . . wherever a supportive community resides. And that is not a short list in Nebraska.

With gratitude,

Stuart

Dr. Stuart Stofferahn  
Executive Director



**NEBRASKA  
TRANSITION  
COLLEGE**

**LEARNING. WORKING. LIVING.**