

AUGUST 2023

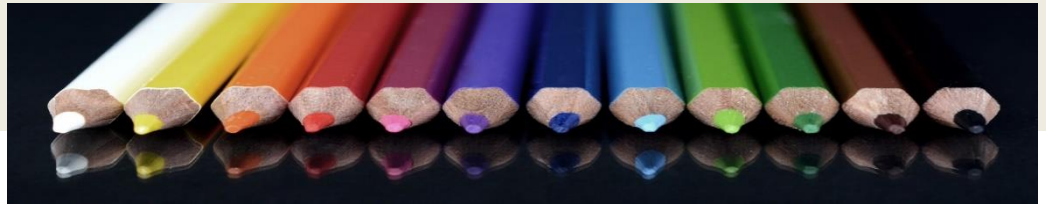
# THE APA TIMES

COMPASSION – RESPONSIBILITY – INTEGRITY – RESPECT



**MICHELLE PAYNE &  
REBECCA ROLLING**

For July Rebecca has earned the employee of the month. Rebecca has brought stability to her position, very quick to get things done, and always has a positive attitude. Rebecca has gone above and beyond to show compassion for the residents and staff here at APA. Rebecca exemplifies what it means to show hardwork and dedication. If you see Rebecca tell her congratulations!



## *DID SOMEONE SAY PARTY!*

August 22<sup>nd</sup> was the end of summer bash! We had hotdogs and hamburgers! Due to the pesky temperatures outside we had to move our corn hole tournament inside, but that did not stop the fun! With a resident paired up with one staff they fought their way to the top of the winner's bracket, some sadly fell just short! Also, a huge shout out for Don and Carie coming to visit, it's always a great time!

**1<sup>st</sup> Boyd's Team**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Geppert's Team**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Emily's Team**

**4<sup>th</sup> Karst's Team**



# Yearly Reflection



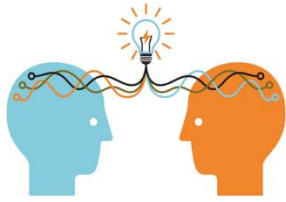
**JOHNATHAN TRUNKEY-  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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My first year in the Executive Director role has now ended. It's been an extraordinary year, full of many great memories and challenging experiences. Throughout the year, I've learned so much about the organization, myself, and the dedicated staff that keep the residential treatment profession alive. I compiled a list of the top 5 things I've learned in the past year. A lot of these are repetitive lessons I've learned throughout my lifetime, but were more relevant this past year. These lessons pertain to business and life altogether.

## **1. Do not stress too much.**

I laughed as I wrote this because most people would describe me as having an anxious personality. We plan and plan some more, but most outcomes are beyond our control. This was never clearer in the past year. As I reflect on all that has transpired, I'm reminded of the countless situations that we couldn't have planned for, but they all worked out in the end. I am a firm believer that most things have a way of resolving themselves if we do our part to be prepared.



*“Coming together is  
a beginning;  
Keeping together is  
progress; Working  
together is success.”*

*-Henry Ford*



## **2. There is no "I" in teamwork.**

In the business world, individual accolades and achievements are not real. Yes, we can do great things on our own, but I would argue that there are always people around us who help us get there. Over the last year, I have never been so aware of how reliant I am on my team. For us to achieve our goals as an organization, we need talented and dedicated staff. From direct care staff to my position, we fail or succeed together. Those dreaded group projects in school taught me something!

## **3. Know when to coach vs. discipline.**

This would not be a surprise to some, but I was a zealous, driven supervisor in my first years. My nickname was "bulldozing Betty". I valued productivity and efficiency over anything else. When people failed, I assumed it was a lack of personal dedication and motivation. Over the years, I understand that some performance issues are because of ineffective support and supervision. As a director, I strive to create a culture of leadership, taking responsibility, and providing a safe and supportive environment to grow. I believe people bloom when they are empowered and given the tools to do so.

## **4. Remember why we are here.**

Residential work is difficult, and the politics surrounding residential work are even more challenging. People often start with great intentions but lose their purpose along the way. We always remember that every decision we make must prioritize the kids and families that we serve. The impact of our decisions cannot be understated. We have a responsibility to them and the people that fund us. Our residents' wellness and their safety should be the first thing on your mind.

## **5. Take time to reflect.**

It is important to build into your schedule periods of quiet and reflection. "Stop and smell the roses" is often the idiom that comes to mind. In America, everything is go-go-go. We have fast food and fast-paced work environments. Everything is about beating the clock and getting the most out of the day. I have learned that you must stop and consider the successes that you have had over the last weeks, months, and years. This is essential to re-energize. No job should be so busy that we don't have time to celebrate successes and plan for the future. We need to take time to celebrate ourselves and each other.

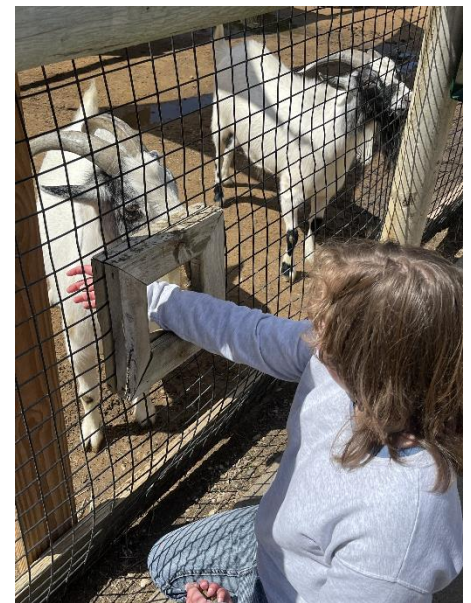




# Zoo Trip



During the week off of school, some of our residents got to enjoy a trip to the zoo in Sioux Falls, SD. While there they got to feed some goats! Most of the resident's favorite attraction was the bears! The bears were very active and one was even playing in the water! After the zoo, we went to the park and enjoyed a nice picnic and some playground time before coming back.





We are excited to announce to the public for the first time that Aurora Plains Academy has officially launched Spark Alternative School. Our state-approved alternative program provides a structured setting for students in grades 5–12 who may struggle behaviorally in a traditional school setting. The staff at Spark Alternative School will work to provide a trauma-informed, therapeutic approach to the behaviors that the student could exhibit within the school. In an alternative student's eyes, they will follow a very similar school schedule as before. Class sizes will be small, which will help provide the student with a more individualized education and help with behavior management. The one thing that sets us apart from other alternative schools is that we are able to provide clinical services on-campus to the students. The overall goal of Spark Alternative School is to provide stabilization, coping skills, and reintegration into their home district.

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## *ALL-STAFF MEETING*



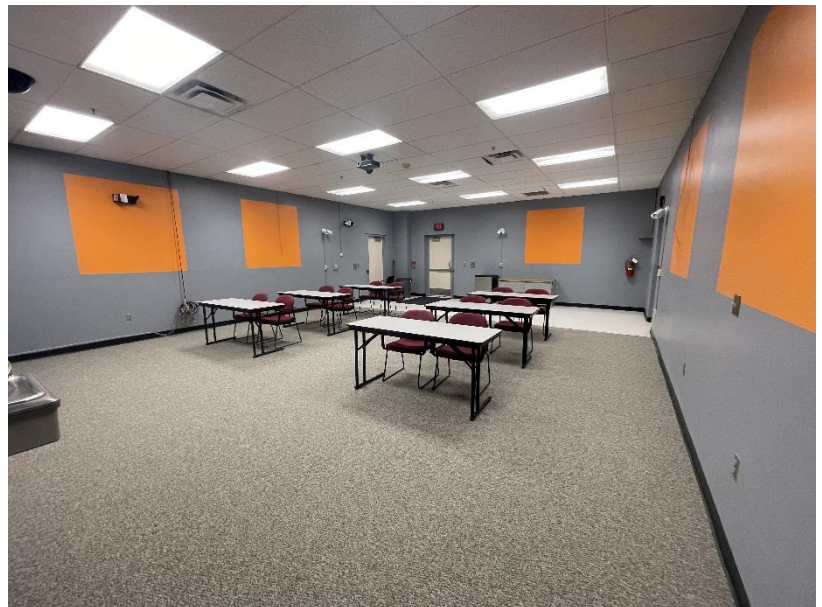
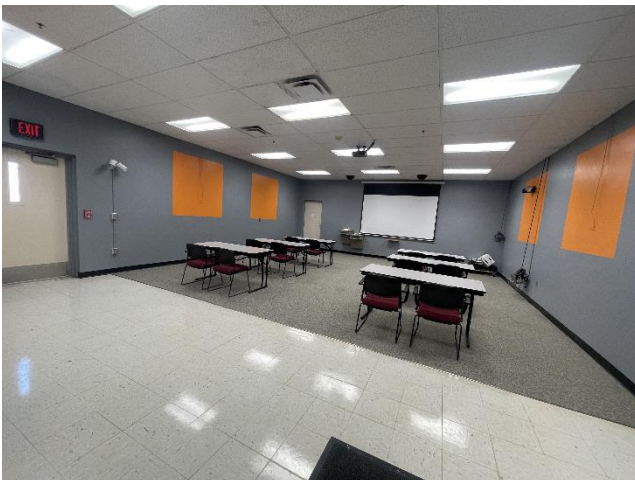
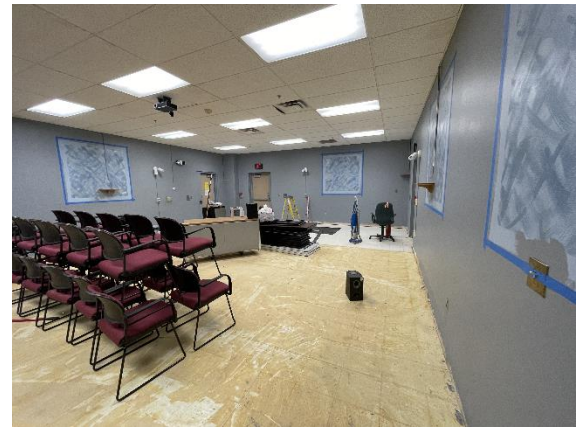
*September 19<sup>th</sup> @ 9am*





# MAINTENANCE PROJECT

For many weeks the training room/annex theater had been closed for a little renovation project. We like to call it “Modernizing 101.” During the week’s carpet and paint colors were picked out. Through many yes’s and no’s we finally came to an agreement... What was the annex theater was exclusively going to be a training room. Thank you to the maintenance team for tolerating the many changes and color options.





Patricia Bush

Trevor Boyd

Kathy Guindon

Tawana Leckrone

Toni Hiemann

Jessica Selland

Jewell Wonnell

Dayne Clark

Clive Bremser

John Hulbert

Derek Wahl

Daniel Buchmann- 16 Years

Jennifer Bradwisch- 9 Years

Marcus Hill- 1 Year

Tiffany French- 1 Year

Celia Zaeringer- 3 Years

Scott Charboneau- 3 Years

Matthew Wechter- 3 Years

Todd Karst- 2 Years

Cayden Whitaker- 1 Year

Bryan Smith- 1 Year

Vicki Harmdierks- 1 Year

Jaci Harmdierks- Teacher



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**I work with some pretty AWESOME coworkers!! Not afraid of letting their silly side out! 🥰 "O" you are a ray of sunshine!!**

