



LIFTT

Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow

The LIFTT Connection
Newsletter

JULY 2022

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 4

LIFTT ESTABLISHES NEW EMERGENCY FUND

**LIFTT is pleased to announce a \$30,000 grant from the
ORO Y PLATA FOUNDATION
to create the "Jackie Kimbrough Emergency Fund,"
to assist LIFTT consumers in financial distress.**

Named in honor of Jackie Kimbrough, a former employee of the agency who passed in 2021, LIFTT plans to use the Emergency Fund to help people with disabilities meet unanticipated expenses. To qualify for assistance, consumers cannot receive assistance from any other available federal and state program funding. The expenses that can be paid for with funds from the emergency fund vary from significant home repairs to replacing appliances.



LIFTT is a Montana 501(c)(3) Corporation organized as a (CIL) Center for Independent Living. As part of a nationwide network of CILs, LIFTT provides people with disabilities with Independent Living (IL) services in the area formed by the eighteen counties: Big Horn, Carbon, Carter, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, Golden Valley, McCone, Musselshell, Prairie, Powder River, Richland, Rosebud, Stillwater, Treasure, Wibaux, and Yellowstone.

According to Carlos Ramalho, LIFTT's Executive Director, the creation of this fund is, "an effort to help our consumers – persons with disabilities – stay in their homes, live independently, be able to participate in their communities, and avoid institutionalization."

"LIFTT would like to thank the Oro y Plata Foundation for this generous grant to get the fund started; we hope many others will help make it grow over time by their contributions," Ramalho said.

If you are interested in donating to LIFTT for the Kimbrough Memorial Fund or one of our other projects go to <https://liftt.org/get-involved/donate-support/> or contact Executive Director Carlos Ramalho at (406) 294-5190, carlosr@liftt.org

If you are a person with disabilities, you can receive LIFTT services free of charge. Please consider getting involved with LIFTT not only by becoming a consumer but by becoming a peer mentor, attending the peer mentor meetings, and volunteering. You can start your journey by visiting our website at liftt.org or by calling (406) 259-5181.



KUDOS TO GLENDIVE!!

Jen Hawkinson, IL Specialist, from the LIFTT Office proudly displays the Nonprofit of the Year Award presented by the Glendive Chamber of Commerce.

"We were taken completely by surprise," said Jen. "But what a wonderful acknowledgement of the hard work our office has put in over the last year to serve people and families living with disabilities in eastern Montana."



LIFTT would like to welcome **Tara Robison** to our team! Tara will be working part time in the Billings Office as an Independent Living specialist. 406-294-5191, tarar@liftt.org

STAFF PROFILE: Nancy Grigsby



How anyone ends up anywhere is an indefinite patchwork of dispositions and happenstance, along the current of life. “Well I don’t even know where to begin,” said Nancy Grigsby.

Glendive has been a common thread throughout Grigsby’s life, along with providing care for those who seem to need it most. After moving away to Beach, ND., to be near a mother who needed assistance, she returned to Glendive in 2007.

She’s worked in different group homes for Autistic Children and Bipolar and Schizophrenic adults, a testament to anyone’s reservoirs of empathy and patience. Nancy found out about LIFTT and their mission through a friend and began in April as an IL (Independent Living) Specialist.

“I love this job, I wish people knew more about it,” she said. “It’s such a good resource and people have a hard time asking for help. We’re down to earth and not judgmental. It’s like a family, just helping you along the way.”

She appreciates the outreach of LIFTT and seeing people fully grasp the calling of the program, preserving dignity for those with disabilities and ensuring a life of unencumbered independence.

“Telling people ‘hey this is what we do’, there is this ‘ah-ha’ moment and then they realize what we do is pretty special,” she said.

Nancy has the exciting opportunity to work with the EMT/ LIFTT PCA Program to provide increased care assistance for those living with disabilities in Eastern Montana. The program helps subsidize the family members providing for those with disabilities living in their homes. Caring for family members with a disability is a full-time job.

“To keep people living independently at home is really important,” she said. “How does (the care provider) financially survive if they’re not getting paid?”

Many of the people who need this assistance, physically or financially, can’t qualify for Medicaid. The AEMT/LIFTT program seeks to aid those left on the margins. The program has shed light on the nuance of these bureaucratic nightmares, and the realities of these distinctly rural concerns. How do you gauge who is deserving of assistance and who isn’t?

“Say they inherited a farm, and that’s all they have to their name, but that’s too many assets to qualify (for Medicaid)” she said. “This program takes over where that leaves off.”

As an IL Specialist Nancy works one-on-one with consumers to help them stay living as independently as possible. “We help them along the way,” she said. “It’s exciting just to be able to help people. I love that.”

DENNIS & PHYLLIS WASHINGTON FOUNDATION

LIFTT Receives General Operations Grant

Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow (LIFTT) is pleased to announce receiving a \$10,000 grant from the Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation in conjunction with Montana Rail Link, to support LIFTT’s general operations.

LIFTT is a Montana 501(c)(3) Corporation organized as a Center for Independent Living (CIL). As part of a nationwide network of CILs, LIFTT provides people with disabilities with Independent Living (IL) services in the geographical area formed by eighteen counties in southeaster Montana.

According to LIFTT’s Executive Director Carlos Ramalho, “LIFTT plans to use the grant to supplement the resources usually used to pay for its daily expenses. The high inflation rates have had a negative impact on our budget. This grant makes it possible for LIFTT to continue to provide services to the persons with disabilities living in Southeast Montana.”

“LIFTT would like to thank the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation and Montana Rail Link for this generous grant; we hope others will acknowledge the importance of what LIFTT does and help.” Ramalho said.



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

How to strengthen the partnership between CILs and Pre-ETS

Growing up does not have to be a scary thing for anyone! No matter our age, we are all experiencing growth and change.

Youth with disabilities, however, need to remember that there are amazing things about growing up! There is no need to be intimidated by the future because it always holds good stuff for those willing to live life to the fullest. As a Center for Independent Living (CIL), LIFTT is an advocate for change in the lives of individuals, public and private institutions, and corporations.

As LIFTT's Executive Director, I want to find innovative ways to provide independent living services to the younger generation of citizens of Southeastern Montana living and studying with a disability. These innovations will continue to strengthen the existing partnership between LIFTT and the Pre-ETS.

The term Pre-ETS is an acronym that stands for Pre Employment and Transition Services. Pre-ETS is part of the Montana Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services division of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. It supports programs that help disabled young adults still attending high school prepare to transition into higher education, careers, and life.

To transition means growing up and becoming an independent, responsible, and productive

citizen. Given the opportunity, youth with disabilities are willing to face the challenges of having different life experiences. When provided with the necessary ADA accommodations, they succeed.

It makes perfect sense for LIFTT to work hand in hand with Pre-ETS because 'youth transitions' is one of our six (6) core services. It is LIFTT's mission to open doors to the disabled youth and fill their toolboxes with skills they can use as adults regardless of their path for their future, be it work or higher education.

LIFTT wants to encourage and motivate disabled students by promoting conferences and workshops, training, counseling, college application coaching, resume writing coaching, and providing them with a safe space to relate to their peers. We will also help them find a work site or educational institution that is willing to allow them to gain work experience or study while being supported as part of their transition process.

We invite you to join us in this new adventure in leading our disabled youth on the path of freedom, maturity, respectability, discovery, learning, and success!

Thank you, Carlos Ramalho



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We are on the web @
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LIFTT's Mission— Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow, Inc. is a Montana non-profit organization committed to empowering persons with disabilities to live freely and equally in Southeastern Montana through the provision of independent living services which reduce societal barriers.

ADA32 ★★ ★★ ★★
★ 1990 - 2022 ★★ ★★ ★★
Americans with Disabilities Act
Celebrate the ADA! July 26, 2022

Please join LIFTT
in a celebration
of 32 years of ADA!
12 noon –2pm
Tuesday, July 26
at the LIFTT Office,
1201 Grand Avenue.

Complimentary hotdogs, beverages, and other refreshments!

**GRRRRR,
GREAT!!**

SCAN THIS QR
CODE TO GET
IMMEDIATE
ACCESS TO
THE LIFTT
WEBSITE!

<https://liftt.org/>



If you know someone who would like to get a copy of the LIFTT newsletter mailed directly to their home or office, please contact Jed Barton at 406-294-5186, jedb@liftt.org

LIFTT is a not-for-profit agency governed by a consumer-controlled Board of Directors whose lives have been personally impacted by a disability. It is funded in part by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in 1992 (Title VII - Independent Living Services), and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (Disability Employment Transitions Division (DETD)).



Peer Support Group

Would you like to connect with others living with disabilities?

Join the weekly fellowship of LIFTT's online peer support group. Whether it's games or supportive deep discussion, you're sure to enjoy the new perspectives and the positive sense of belonging.

Join LIFTT host Tanya Thomas for our online peer support groups every Thursday at 3pm.

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/93017341646>

Meeting ID: 930 1734 1646

One tap mobile +13462487799, 93017341646# US