



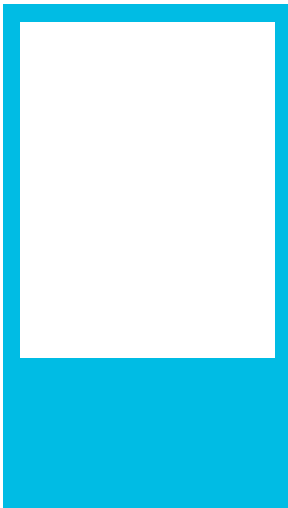
MARCH 2005  
v.02.03

# MOSAIC

Opening Doors to Extraordinary Lives



# Tipping The Scale



I am writing to you with an urgent message. President George W. Bush's budget proposes cutting \$60 billion dollars from Medicaid over the next decade. While we recognize the serious threat that the growing federal deficit presents to our country, a cut of this size will seriously impact people with disabilities. The people Mosaic supports depend

upon Medicaid for 95 percent of their services. As parents, guardians, family, concerned citizens and employees of Mosaic, I am asking you to join Mosaic in seeking protection for the Medicaid funds that help open doors to extraordinary lives for people with disabilities. We do understand that our nation's leaders face immense challenges in balancing the many priorities our nation holds domestically and abroad. We can help them see the impact a cut of this size would have on people who often have no voice in our national debates.

Here are several points about Medicaid funding for disabilities and how it works.

- Medicaid funding is shared by the federal and state governments. The proposed budget would reduce federal support for Medicaid and give states the choice of picking up the shortfall or reducing funds for entitlements and what are called "optional" services. Most of Mosaic's services and supports fall into the "optional" category. We believe that the supports Mosaic and other organizations provide to people with disabilities are not optional for them. These supports address basic quality of life issues. We're concerned that many states, because of their requirements to balance their budgets and because they are still tending recovering economies, will not choose to fund "optional" services.
- Medicaid touches many lives daily. The program guarantees coverage for more than 8 million people with disabilities. Medicaid provides economic stimuli to states and localities and plays an important role in the workings of the health care system.

- Medicaid is a cost-effective way to provide services. Medicaid spending over the last two years has increased by 6.7 percent, almost half the 12.5 percent increase in private insurance rates over the same period. As strange as it may sound, Medicaid, as a governmental program, actually works and more efficient than any current alternatives.

I hope you will help us. We need your help to send a clear message to our elected representatives in Washington, D.C. Our message to the President, senators and representatives is that Medicaid does work! It alone did not create the federal deficit. Cuts to Medicaid by the federal government will only shift the burden to the states, few of which have the resources to avoid making cuts as well. As a nation, we should change Medicaid. But we should change it to strengthen the program for the benefit of the people who rely upon it for the basic services they need to enjoy secure and healthy lives. Please add your voice to this national debate. You may be the one responsible for persuading the key vote that tips the scale in favor of people with disabilities.

[www.mosaicinfo.org/administration/stories/2005/03/president.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/administration/stories/2005/03/president.htm)

Legislators' contact information:

<http://vote-smart.org> or Sharon Walters, Mosaic, 877.366.7242 x1129

Medicaid reform issues:

[http://www.ancor.org/2004/issues/medicaid/medicaid\\_reform.html](http://www.ancor.org/2004/issues/medicaid/medicaid_reform.html) or Sandy Volker, Mosaic, 877.366.7242 x1120

**MAKE THE CONNECTION!** When you make your voice heard in Washington, let Mosaic know:

mail: Advocacy Department

Mosaic

4980 S. 118th St.

Omaha, NE 68137-2220

phone: 877.366.7242 x1129



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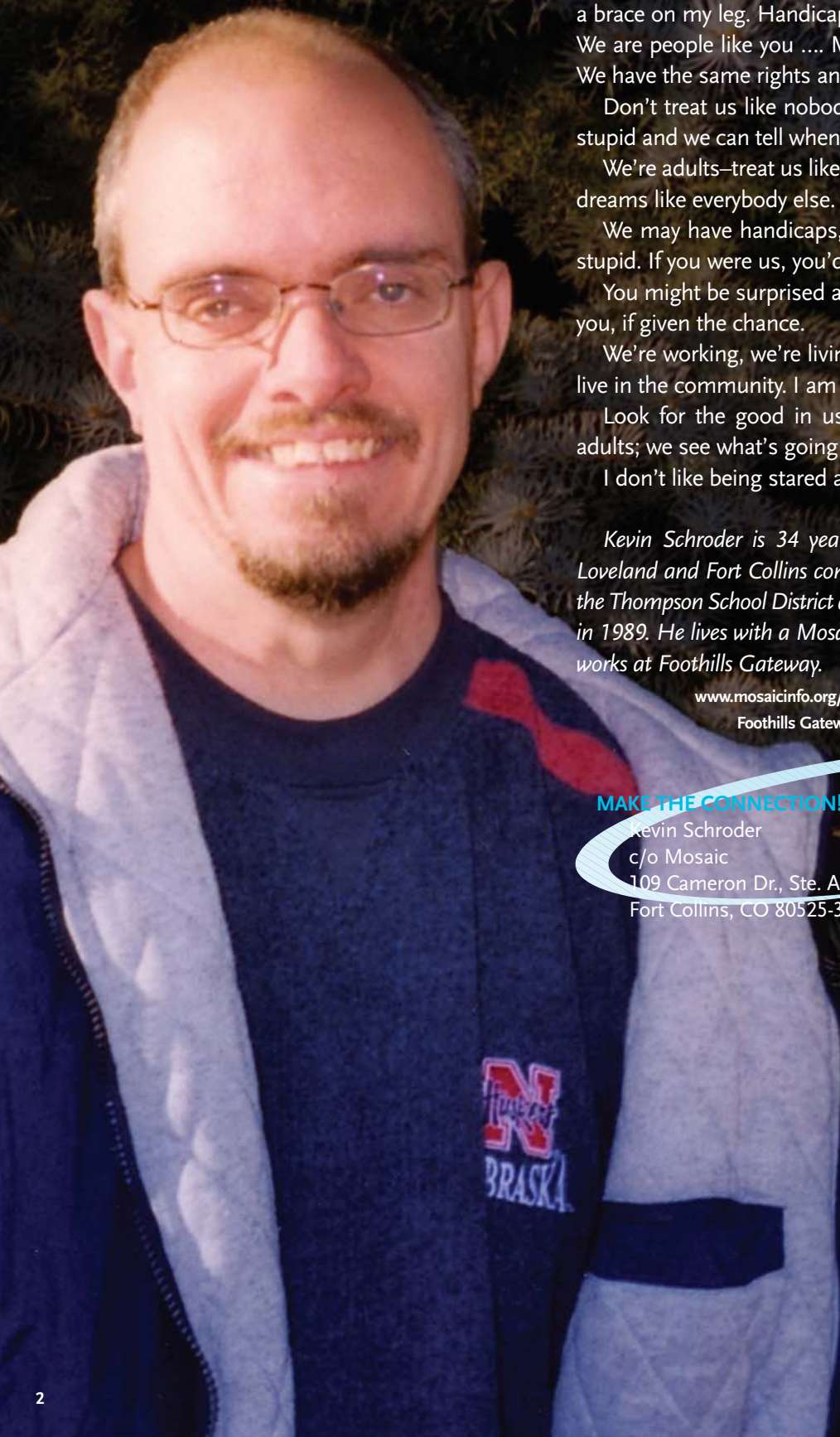
Cover: Linda Aaker visits with children served by IMPACT Romania.  
Cover image courtesy of Linda Aaker.

Mosaic's magazine shares stories and insights about the ministry of Mosaic.  
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Mosaic ■ 4980 S. 118th St. ■ Omaha, NE 68137-2220  
www.mosaicinfo.org  
info@mosaicinfo.org ■ 877.3MOSAIC

# Treat Us Fairly

by Kevin Schroder, Fort Collins, Colo.



Handicapped people are treated poorly. We are not nobodies who can do nothing.

My name is Kevin. I've been labeled as a slow learner and I have a brace on my leg. Handicapped people aren't treated well or fairly. We are people like you .... Most of you haven't given us a chance. We have the same rights and feelings as anyone.

Don't treat us like nobodies or bad people. We're not dumb or stupid and we can tell when you're ignoring us or putting us down.

We're adults—treat us like adults. We have feelings, thoughts and dreams like everybody else. We want a chance.

We may have handicaps, but don't treat us like we're dumb or stupid. If you were us, you'd want to be treated well.

You might be surprised at what we can do. We might just shock you, if given the chance.

We're working, we're living and we are independent. I work and live in the community. I am as independent as I can be.

Look for the good in us! We especially want respect. We are adults; we see what's going on and care about others.

I don't like being stared at; please say hello if you look at me. ■

*Kevin Schroder is 34 years old and has grown up in Colorado's Loveland and Fort Collins communities. He attended public schools in the Thompson School District and graduated from Berthoud High School in 1989. He lives with a Mosaic host home provider in Fort Collins and works at Foothills Gateway.*

[www.mosaicinfo.org/colorado/stories/2005/03/schroder.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/colorado/stories/2005/03/schroder.htm)

Foothills Gateway, Inc.: [www.foothillsgateway.org](http://www.foothillsgateway.org)

**MAKE THE CONNECTION!** Share your responses with the author:

Kevin Schroder  
c/o Mosaic  
109 Cameron Dr., Ste. A  
Fort Collins, CO 80525-3802



# Our Call: Compassion in Action

by Randall G. Donner, Faith Connections and Volunteer Coordinator

Prior to coming to Mosaic, I served as Religious Coordinator at the Nebraska State Penitentiary. Although the primary focus of my job was religion, I was not free to share my faith, since the state did not want to be seen as supporting one belief system over others. Volunteers conducted all direct ministries and I coordinated their services. Inmates practiced Christianity, Islam, Wicca and several other religions.

As a ministry of the Church, Mosaic offers compassion in action.

It was a challenging work environment, yet my understanding of salvation in Christ motivated my work. I hoped that my actions would share the Word *and* the words which I could not openly express.

It is refreshing to be back with an organization in which I can be openly Christian. Our roots are in, and our ties are to, the Lutheran Church. That does not mean we exclude others in any way: we do not. But it does mean we can publicly share what motivates our organization to serve: faith in Christ.

Service in love is a hallmark of Christianity and it is a hallmark of what we do at Mosaic. Other organizations can provide the same services Mosaic does. But other organizations cannot provide those services in the same manner we do. It is not a quantitative difference. It is a qualitative difference.

As Jesus ministered to the body and spirit of

people with diverse beliefs (Jews and non-Jews alike), our call today is the same. The motivation of Jesus was the Father's will. Ours should be the same. *Why* we do what we do matters.

We are a ministry of the Church. And the Church is the body of Christ at work in the world today. Does that mean all of our employees are Christian? No. And I know that not every employee sees her or his work with Mosaic as a ministry. (I'm idealistic, but not naïve.)

But I also know that a unique quality of caring within Mosaic crosses faith lines. It respects all people and does not discriminate. It is the power of a faith that is not threatened by other beliefs, the power of a faith that motivates the organization to compassion.

Visit a sight of Mosaic's ministry and see that compassion. Volunteer your time with Mosaic and share in that compassion. Give your prayer support to Mosaic and strengthen that compassion. Offer your financial support to Mosaic and secure that compassion for those we serve now and will serve in the future.

Whatever one's faith, compassion is clearly a sign of God's love. Our call is compassion in action. Thank you for being a part of it.

[www.mosaicinfo.org/publicrelations/stories/2005/03/compassion.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/publicrelations/stories/2005/03/compassion.htm)

## The Mosaic Foundation's Charitable Gift Annuities

- A lifetime income for one or two people
- A significant tax deduction
- Attractive interest rates, fixed for your lifetime\*
- A worthy social investment, helping to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

For more information about charitable gift annuities and other planned giving opportunities, please contact:  
**The Mosaic Foundation, 4980 S. 118th St., Omaha, NE 68137-2220.**  
**877.366.7242. [giving@mosaicinfo.org](mailto:giving@mosaicinfo.org). [www.mosaicinfo.org](http://www.mosaicinfo.org).**

\* The Mosaic Foundation bases its annuity rates on the suggested rates published by the American Council on Gift Annuities. Annuity sales in all states where registration is required shall be made through the ELCA Foundation.

Please send information about the benefits available with a charitable gift annuity from The Mosaic Foundation.

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Birthdate(s) of the annuitant(s) is/are:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ 2005/03  
Month/Day/Year Month/Day/Year

# Shopping With a Purpose

by Linda Aaker, Chairperson, Mosaic Communities Board of Directors

Impatiently, my husband, Bob, and I searched the long racks of boy's shoes, scrambled in sizes, with lonely singles nestled in half-filled boxes or scattered on the floor. Was a European size 38 equal to an American size seven? We could have been in a Costco or a Sam's Club. But we weren't. We were shopping in Bucharest, Romania, at Carrefour for Janotz, George, Cristina and other children with developmental disabilities. They live in three group homes Mosaic supports through its IMPACT Romania project. We were shopping because it costs less to buy goods in Romania rather than to ship them from the U.S.

Our guide through the maze of language, money and sizes was the project's residential director, Olga, who clutched the crucial shopping list tightly in her fist. Sturdy shoes for the older boys topped her list. Winter was approaching. Feet grew fast, budgets less quickly, and shoes are relatively expensive.

After rummaging through the shoe rack and examining the merits of various pairs, we made our selections and moved on. Next we searched the overpopulated aisles for several items: underwear for several girls shyly entering puberty; backpacks for 11 children attending school (different styles and colors for older and younger, boys or girls); house slippers for all 22 children who reside full-time in the homes; two pairs of socks for each child; turtlenecks—as many as we could find in the proper sizes; and one small coat to replace one lost by its owner.

The store reminded me of the crowded conditions I'd seen in the pictures of the institutions where these children once lived. On limited funds, the government was able to provide only two staff members in the evenings for 80 children ages 3 to 14. When the children went outside for fresh air, they sat in a neat row propped along the concrete wall separating the orphanage from the outside world. Apparently



Mosaic touches the lives of Romanian children with disabilities.

running around was not encouraged; playing was not something these children did easily.

So late one afternoon, I had walked outside the house where we were staying, and ambled over to the group home next door. Fall's cold weather was hanging lightly in the air; lush green grass—remnants of a rainy summer—filled the space between the two houses. Soft waning sunlight lit the faces of Janotz, 8, kicking the lone soccer ball aimlessly, George, 12, bobbing his head in his wheelchair, and Gabby, the young houseparent.

Gabby has hands but no arms, the result of a birth defect. She had lived in an institution herself until age 15, when her parents reclaimed her. Smart, fun and with her personal understanding of our children's previous lives, she is a role model for us and the children.

"Janotz," I called, and then indicated he should yell out my name, and pass the ball. He caught on to the game and sent the sphere flying past me. "Gabby," I called, retrieving the ball and sending it her way. On Janotz's next turn, he properly yelled out my name, but his kick went awry; the ball careened into George's wheelchair. We all looked at George. Suddenly he squealed with delight and tried to move his lower limbs. He settled for my handing him the ball, which he promptly dropped beside his chair. The four of us continued the game until the cold drove us inside. All of us had a great time playing together.

Janotz had played the game outdoors in frayed house slippers.

After a week in Romania, I understood better the children's response when we visited their homes. Swarming around us, they had pulled our arms towards their rooms and neat beds. Then, beaming, they had yanked open their closets to display their very own clean but sparse clothes. Keeping growing children in clothes is difficult in any country. That is why we had been shopping in Bucharest.

And what did our shopping trip cost us as a donation to the program? Two hundred and fifty dollars—and a piece of my heart. ■

[www.mosaicinfo.org/advocacy/stories/2005/01/romania.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/advocacy/stories/2005/01/romania.htm)

**MAKE THE CONNECTION!** Use the envelope in this magazine to support Mosaic's work in Romania and add "IMPACT" as a note on the envelope.

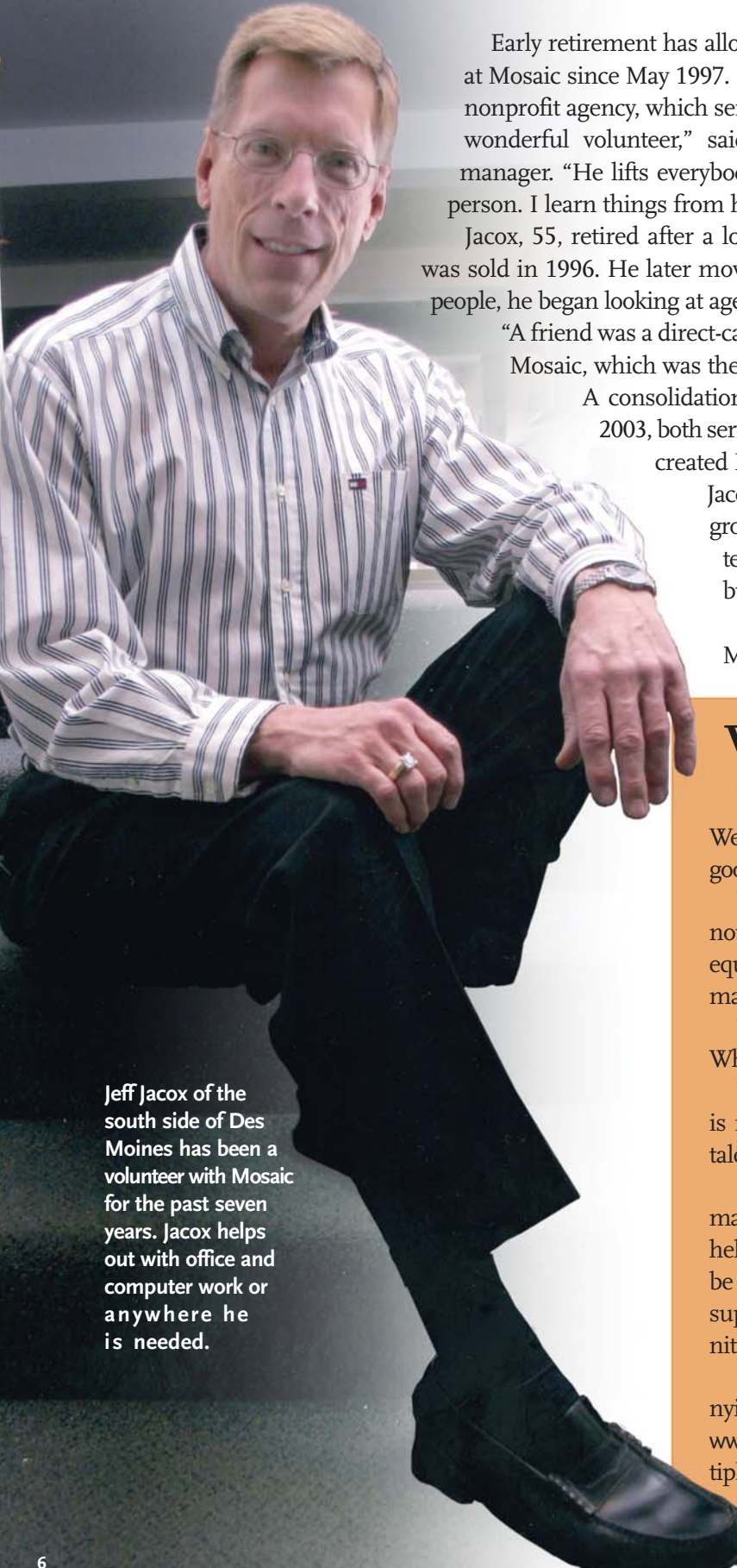
# Spotlight On Des Moines

Centrally located in Iowa, the capital city was one of the “Five O’s” at the time of consolidation. Like four other locations, the city and surrounding area had “overlapping services” supplied by both legacy organizations, Bethphage since 1983, Martin Luther Homes since 1984.

Since consolidation, the agency has worked feverishly to provide supports for clients, advancement for employees, and opportunity for community involvement. Unless otherwise attributed, the following five stories are written by Karen Jackson, Community Relations Manger for the Des Moines agency., and highlight the accomplishments of many individuals and groups since July, 2003.

# Volunteer Helps Agency Run More Smoothly

by Renda Lutz, Des Moines Register Staff Writer



Jeff Jacox of the south side of Des Moines has been a volunteer with Mosaic for the past seven years. Jacox helps out with office and computer work or anywhere he is needed.

Early retirement has allowed Jeff Jacox to volunteer three afternoons a week at Mosaic since May 1997. His computer and business knowledge benefits the nonprofit agency, which serves people with developmental disabilities. "Jeff is a wonderful volunteer," said Karen Jackson, Mosaic's community relations manager. "He lifts everybody to a higher level. He is a very intelligent, bright person. I learn things from him all the time."

Jacox, 55, retired after a long-standing family business based in Fort Dodge was sold in 1996. He later moved to Des Moines, and feeling the need to be with people, he began looking at agencies to find volunteer opportunities.

"A friend was a direct-care provider and encouraged me to get involved with Mosaic, which was then Bethphage," Jacox said.

A consolidation of Bethphage and Martin Luther Homes in July 2003, both serving individuals with physical and mental disabilities, created Mosaic.

Jacox, of Des Moines' south side, has helped the agency grow into the age of wireless computers. Mosaic has technical staff at the agency's headquarters in Omaha, but Jacox's knowledge has been appreciated.

"Jeff is very adaptable to change," said Linda McManus, Mosaic's business manager. "He is a great

## Volunteer at Mosaic

by Randall G. Donner, Faith Connections & Volunteer Coordinator

We all have something we are good at. And what we're good at, we enjoy doing—for ourselves and for others.

What talent do you have? For most of us our talent is not unique. Perhaps we know other people who are equally as good at that talent as we are. But that doesn't make our talent any less valuable to us or to others.

What makes a talent valuable is not whether it is unique. What makes a talent valuable is how well it is used.

When we share our talent by volunteering, that talent is multiplied, not diminished. Want to multiply your talent? Offer it as a volunteer.

Mosaic has many opportunities for volunteers. It may be providing a technical service, like the computer help volunteer Jeff Jacox supplies in Des Moines. It may be providing a personal service, like giving someone we support a ride to worship. There are as many opportunities as there are varieties of people.

You've got something to offer. Fill out the accompanying form and return it to us. Or sign up online at [www.mosaicinfo.org/volunteers/](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/volunteers/). We can help you multiply your talent and discover the joy of using it well. ■

[www.mosaicinfo.org/volunteers/](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/volunteers/)

support with the computers. If someone is asking, 'How do I run this program?' he just pulls up a chair, sits down and digs in."

Formerly, Jacox worked in industrial sales and served as vice president of marketing for his family's business.

"It was inspiring and new to me, coming from a for-profit environment, to come into Mosaic. I have been expanded by this experience," Jacox said. "Volunteering gives me an opportunity to be with people. It's a win-win situation for both me and Mosaic."

Jackson credits Jacox with helping the Mosaic office operate more smoothly.

"We owe a great deal to Jeff and his computer expertise, as well as his savvy business sense," she said.

Jacox also helps the agency with filing, stuffing envelopes and organizing an annual golf tournament.

Mosaic serves more than 150 people in group homes and apartments in Des Moines providing a wide range of services, from 24-hour care to job-coaching assistance in area businesses. Mosaic's local offices are based downtown in the Homestead Building.

Construction of the Iowa Events Center displaced the agency from its former location, where clients had easier access to the office.

"Before the move I had more exposure to the clients,"

Jacox said. "I miss that. It was inspiring and rewarding to work with the clients who could help with office tasks. I enjoyed learning about their lives."

McManus said Jacox is a faithful volunteer who has outlasted some of the agency's paid employees.

"We've seen staff come and go. Jeff brings a lot of stability to our agency, and he will do anything we ask him to do," McManus said.

Mosaic's staff also appreciates Jacox's humor and personality.

"Along with his business sense, his great humor and compassion for all who he comes in contact with is truly needed and appreciated," Jackson said. "Working in a social-service agency with the population we do is extremely stressful as well as frustrating at times. With Jeff around, our load is lighter and our day brighter." ■

<http://www.mosaicinfo.org/iowa/stories/2005/03/jacox.htm>

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Photo by Arturo Fenandez, © 2004, The Des Moines Register and Tribune Company. Reprinted with permission.

Editor's Note: Jeff Jacox and David A. Jacox, Mosaic's President and CEO, are not related.

Please send information about volunteering in these areas:

- Direct service
- Technical and office help
- Faith sharing
- Prayer partnering
- Congregational representative
- Advocacy with government
- Maintenance and landscape
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:  
**Randall Donner**  
Faith Connections & Volunteer Coordinator  
Mosaic  
650 J St  
Lincoln, NE 68508-2900.

2005/03

## EXTRAORDINARY LIVES

### Giving Tree

"We always believed it was more blessed to give than receive...as long as you were not handicapped. Then your giving became downright embarrassing to others. After all, because of your handicap, everybody should have been giving to you—or so we thought. This warped belief condemned hundreds with handicaps to be perpetually typecast as the suffering man lying beside the road...never as the Samaritan who came by, stopped and gave help."

Robert Perske, *Hope for the Families: New Directions for Parents of Persons With Retardation and Other Disabilities*, Abingdon Press, 1981.

A chance to give to others. This was a goal for a group of Mosaic clients in Des Moines, Iowa, this past Christmas season. But the chance to give back to others doesn't always appear as often as people living in group homes might wish.

The idea of a "chance to give back to others" began to take shape for the clients as several staff members walked through the Festival of Trees and Lights in downtown Des Moines in November 2003. They real-

ized that the people Mosaic supports could design and decorate a tree that would truly reflect Mosaic and offer them the chance to give back to others.

Staff and clients at our Mosaic Treasures Store collaborated on the theme: "Home Is Where the Heart Is." Throughout 2004, 19 clients and staff handcrafted decoration after decoration to fill the eight-foot tree. On Sunday, Nov. 21, 2004, the tree began to take on the look of Mosaic. Adorned with cut-out dough houses, raffia ribbons and dark red hearts, the tree offered a visible testimony to the hard work and dedication of the people Mosaic supports.

The tree then stood with others at the festival in late November. The festival annually attracts underwriters who make donations and select trees for their businesses. The day after clients had decorated Mosaic's tree, ReMax of Des Moines became its sponsor. The clients' work on the tree helped the event raise over \$250,000 for Blank Children's Hospital in Des Moines.

Staff and clients are already busy with plans for a tree for next year's festival, where "Visions of Sugar Plums" will dance through everyone's heads as clients share their visions and dreams for the future. Through their time and talent, they opened doors to extraordinary lives for others! ■

[www.mosaicinfo.org/iowa/stories/2005/03/giving.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/iowa/stories/2005/03/giving.htm)

## Her Own Field of Dreams

Working at her job, keeping up an apartment and scheduling in sports practices are all in a day's work for Jody Dickson, a client of Mosaic in Des Moines, Iowa. Occasionally, she looks back on how far she has come.

Moving from Iowa to Texas and back to Iowa again, Jody grew up with grandparents, graduated from Ruby Van Meter School and eventually moved into a group home. Since then, Jody has faced life's challenges one by one to achieve the independence she enjoys today.



Hard work and determination have lead to great opportunities for Jody Dickson

After making great strides in managing her own life, Jody moved from a group home into her own apartment. Always an athlete, Jody now plays on several sports teams, including basketball, softball, soccer and track. With the support of Link Associates, the West Des Moines Park and Recreation Department and United Way, Jody's has earned the title of "Global Messenger" for Special Olympics.

She and others receive training and leadership skills through Special Olympics and visit civic groups and organizations, speaking about Special Olympics and its mission. As stated by Special Olympics, "As leaders and message bearers of the movement, Global Messengers communicate the powerful declaration of hope, acceptance, dignity and courage of Special Olympics athletes around the world. Only athletes can effectively relate the impact that the movement has had on their lives and the lives of their family."

With the help of Tammy Lintin-Rudd, a Mosaic staff member, Jody completed the training program for the Global Messengers program. Jody dons her uniform and takes her life story to others around Des Moines as a message of hope and triumph over many obstacles. Aside from speaking engagements, she will head for the Iowa Special Olympics games along with the rest of her basketball team later this year.

Team sports have played an important role in Jody's life. Her favorite parts of sports are, according to Jody, being with friends and winning. Her husband, Donald, even proposed marriage to her at a softball game a few years ago. With the help of two staff members, Carol Scherb and Kathy Wilson, Jody and Donald planned their ceremony and reception complete with the long wedding gown, cake, photographer, music and a dinner. They celebrated their first anniversary March 6.

Asked how Mosaic has helped her, Jody states that she has gained enough skills so now she only needs assistance with transportation and bill paying a few days each week. Asked what she enjoys about life, Jody said, "I like what I am doing. I like to clean my own apartment, sit back and watch some movies and shop for furniture for my own place."

Jody has discovered open doors to an extraordinary life, to her dream of having her own apartment, sharing it with her husband and pet cat and the freedom to work towards her own goals. When she tells her story as a Global Messenger, it is clear that Jody is a true competitor, both on the field and off. ■

[www.mosaicinfo.org/iowa/stories/2005/03/dickson.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/iowa/stories/2005/03/dickson.htm)

## Brothers United

Tom Morgan, a client living in a Mosaic home in Des Moines, Iowa, enjoys life with his three other housemates on a quiet street in the heart of the city. Tom spends his days attending Mosaic's Clive Activity Center, playing his keyboard for everyone to enjoy and working on his art projects. Church is very important to Tom. He never misses a Sunday service or the monthly church potluck. Tom enjoys people and looks forward to meeting and spending time with them.

In the 1950s, when Tom was a little boy, attitudes, ideas and treatment across the U.S. for people with developmental disabilities were quite different. When he was born, his family immediately placed him into a state hospital, not an uncommon practice in those days.

At the time of his birth, Tom's half-brother, Jim, had just been called to active duty in Korea with the U.S. Air Force. Jim never met Tom. Upon Jim's release from the Air Force, he returned to his native Minnesota to continue his education, while his father, stepmother and family moved to Seattle, Wash., to continue their lives. Living so far away, Jim had little contact with his father's second family, and none with his half-brother Tom. He had, in fact, assumed that Tom had died since no one ever talked about Tom.

Shortly before their father's death at 93 in 2003, Jim discovered that his half-brother was alive and residing in Des Moines. When their father died, Mosaic asked Jim to consider becoming Tom's guardian. Jim did not hesitate to agree. He then wanted to know as much about Tom as he could and excitedly made plans to meet the brother he had never known.

When Jim and his wife Diane arrived in Des Moines for breakfast, Carol Scherb, a Supported Living Coordinator for Mosaic, introduced them to Mosaic.

With gifts of art supplies in hand, Jim and Diane walked into Tom's home. Tom's joyful housemates and staff surrounded them. Tom, Jim and Diane spent the morning getting to know each other.

Carol said, "It was a meaningful time for everyone involved. I was very moved by witnessing Tom meeting his brother Jim for the first time." When it was time to leave, Jim promised to stay involved in Tom's

life, through letters and calls to Mosaic, in spite of the miles between them.

"It was a privilege for me to be a part of such a personal moment," Carol said. "What a joy it is to find an unknown treasure, especially when that treasure is your own brother."

After the couple's visit with Tom, Jim said, "It makes me feel so comfortable to know that Tom is well cared for and truly has a family with Mosaic."

Another day in Tom's life finds him drawing and doing what he most loves to do. Tom's life is richer now with the love of a brother and sister-in-law who are now a part of his life. Jim and Dianne have gone back to their home in South Carolina, also richer knowing that the bonds of a family can stretch across the miles and that a lost brother—now found—is in good hands with Mosaic. ■

[www.mosaicinfo.org/iowa/stories/2005/03/morgan.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/iowa/stories/2005/03/morgan.htm)



Brothers Tom and Jim Morgan meet for the first time.

**MAKE THE CONNECTION!** Send notes of encouragement or congratulations to these individuals or groups in Des Moines:

c/o Mosaic  
303 Locust St., Ste. 300  
Des Moines, IA 50309-1770.

## Do My Gifts Really Matter?

by Erin Bock, Annual Giving Coordinator

Fourteen years have passed since the Americans with Disabilities Act became law and yet it's still true that people with disabilities often do not enjoy the same opportunities to develop spiritual or faith aspects of their life. "According to a 2002 survey conducted by the National Organization of Disability, 47 percent of Americans with disabilities attend religious services at



Charitable gifts open doors to extraordinary spiritual lives.

least once per month, compared to 65 percent of Americans without disabilities." (Belkin, Douglas. "New Doors to Faith Slowly Opening: religions beginning to embrace disabled." Boston Globe, May 23, 2004.)

Choosing to participate in a community of faith is something that many of us take for granted. People with disabilities often don't have that choice.

Mosaic provides a variety of resources for spirituality and faith building. We publish devotional exercises to meet the needs of the people we support. We offer staff members diverse educational materials about different religious traditions so they may become familiar with their terminology and practices and better support people with disabilities in their religious practices. Mosaic also assists agencies in promoting spiritual nurture. These initiatives directly touch the lives of the people that Mosaic supports.

In the past, this column has discussed how gifts enable Mosaic to bring wholeness of life to oppressed people in foreign countries and to provide crucial, day-to-day services not funded by the government for the people we support. *Not only does your generosity make these vital activities a reality, but it also supports what sets Mosaic apart from other organizations of its kind.* Mosaic could not open doors to extraordinary spiritual lives without your support.

So, you see, your gifts really do matter! ■

[www.mosaicinfo.org/foundation/stories/2005/03/gifts.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/foundation/stories/2005/03/gifts.htm)

**MAKE THE CONNECTION!** Use the envelope in this magazine to support Mosaic and add "Gifts Matter" as a note on the envelope.

## Created to Worship by Jody O'Malley, Spiritual Liaison Coordinator, Manhattan, Kansas

“We are Sozo. We may look different, but we’re just like you.”

That’s how a group of people with disabilities, blessed with the gift to lead worship, introduce themselves to each congregation they visit.

What are the roots of Sozo? The word means “salvation” in biblical Greek. The group traces its roots back a number of years, when Martin Luther Homes, now part of Mosaic, began services for people with disabilities in Manhattan, Kan. I had the chance to work with a small group of people with disabilities who met weekly to study the Bible, worship and share their faith. My desire to teach adults with disabilities and my love of music reminded me of music’s power to teach. As we added music and movement—and then signing—to our devotions, the group discovered a way to worship through which they could identify with one another.

Their unique worship style captivated my heart. I was excited and inspired. If God could work through them to inspire my prayer and my worship, I wondered, what would happen if they were invited to minister to an entire congregation?

When Sozo leads worship, it is the most incredible experience! Hearts are softened, prejudices removed and minds are opened. This is what prepares the body of Christ for worship. The people in Sozo can accomplish things that sometimes we can’t, preparing a way for others to hear the spoken Word of God.

The members of Sozo bring new meaning to the word “worship.” They are welcomed, loved and respected wherever they go. They represent an important part of the body of Christ that some may think is insignificant—those with limitations regardless of what kind—that we can’t leave out of our congregations.

Sozo has ministered to several churches and organizations within and beyond the Manhattan community. During the summer months, Tuttle Creek Lake ministry calls Sozo to lead worship at least once a month at the campgrounds. When Mosaic celebrated its formation in late June 2003, Sozo traveled to Omaha, Neb., for the festivities. Wherever Sozo goes, its ministry is to teach and lead others as the members continue to learn about the joy of worship.

Sozo has overturned the traditional role of people with disabilities in many ways. Instead of receiving labored religious instruction, the members of Sozo joyously minister to others.

Mosaic in Manhattan sponsors Sozo. Its members include individuals who receive supports from Mosaic. Others use the services of different organizations.

“We are Sozo. We may look different, but we’re just like you.” ■

[www.mosaicinfo.org/kansas/stories/2005/03/sozo.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/kansas/stories/2005/03/sozo.htm)

**MAKE THE CONNECTION!** Send a note of encouragement to:

SOZO  
c/o Mosaic  
1201 Poyntz Ave.  
Manhattan, KS 66502-4361.



# Mosaic Gets Grant for Planned Giving Seminars

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans recently awarded an \$85,000 grant to Mosaic as part of its new Charitable Gifting Initiative.

Thrivent Financial announced the competitive, \$4.5 million, nation-wide initiative in 2004.

“The goal of this initiative is to partner with Lutheran organizations by providing seed money and training to improve their ability to generate funds to meet growth goals,” said Brad Hewitt, Senior Vice President at Thrivent Financial. “Thrivent Financial for Lutherans can provide this specialized help through both our financial representatives and our fraternal resources.”

“This partnership with Thrivent Financial is very significant,” said Dr. David A. Jacox, President and CEO of Mosaic. “Together, Thrivent Financial and Mosaic will begin hosting ‘Build Your Legacy’ seminars throughout the United States. These events will provide people with clear and concise information about planned giving options. The anticipated outcomes are positive for all involved.”

This grant will be used to educate and motivate Lutherans in charitable gifting options to generate potentially millions of dollars in new gifts that will benefit Lutheran institutions and organizations.

The grant program goals are to:

- Provide practical and personalized opportunities for people to learn about and respond to charitable gifting options.
- Equip church leaders with collaboration skills and techniques to open charitable-giving doors.
- Increase the number and amount of immediate and deferred charitable giving and product solutions among Lutherans and others.
- Develop cooperative relationships that join Lutheran institutions and organizations with Thrivent Financial (or other financial services companies) in offering charitable giving product options and services to Lutherans.

Mosaic receives seed money to start planned giving education events.



L to R: Keith Schmode, Managing Partner of the Nebraska Region, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans; Dr. David A. Jacox, President and CEO, Mosaic; Pete Bina, President and CEO of The Mosaic Foundation; Dennis Engelbart, Manager of Lutheran Community Services for the Nebraska Region, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

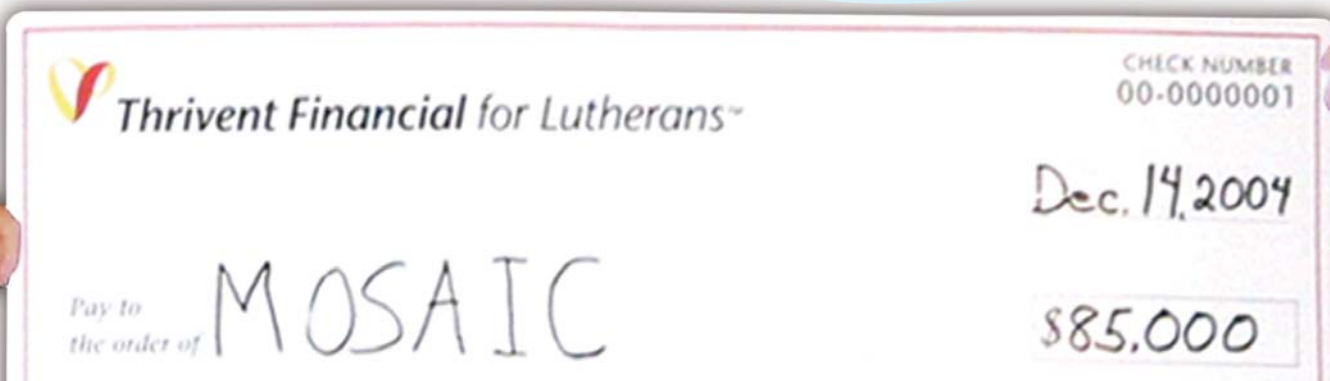
“The familiar forms of charitable gifting that have supported Lutheran organizations through the years are facing unprecedented challenges,” said Jim Yagow, manager of Lutheran Grant Initiatives at Thrivent Financial. “Grant recipients are projecting more than \$180 million in immediate or deferred monetary gifts as a result of this seed money. Not only is that a huge return on our grant investment, it will help establish stronger foundations for Lutheran ministries.”

Grant recipients include congregations, congregation coalitions, regional divisions of the three largest church bodies, small church bodies, high schools, colleges, universities, seminaries and independent organizations and institutions. ■

[www.mosaicinfo.org/foundation/stories/2005/01/thrivent.htm](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/foundation/stories/2005/01/thrivent.htm)

Thrivent: [www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com)

**MAKE THE CONNECTION!** Find out more about Mosaic’s “Build Your Legacy” Seminars. Call 877.3MOSAIC x1116 or e-mail [giving@mosaicinfo.org](mailto:giving@mosaicinfo.org).



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## Letters to the Editor

Mosaic will share signed letters as received—unedited and uncut—with fellow readers of the magazine. If you have a voice to share, send your letter to:

Mosaic Letters ■ 650 J St. ■ Lincoln, NE 68508-2900  
You may also e-mail your letter to: [letters@mosaicinfo.org](mailto:letters@mosaicinfo.org).

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## Affiliation

Mosaic is an affiliated social ministry organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a recognized service organization of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and a member of Lutheran Services in America.

## Mission

In partnership with people who have disabilities, Mosaic provides supports and advocates that all may realize God's gift of wholeness of life.

## Non-Discrimination

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■ **Thank you for your help.** 2005/03

NOTE: Updating preferences may require 12–15 weeks to take effect.

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# National Mental Retardation Awareness Month

by Randall G. Donner, Faith Connections and Volunteer Coordinator

Ask a person who is blind how often other people raise their voices and talk in exaggerated tones. Ask a person whose stride is uneven due to a congenital disability how often other people speak to him or her slowly or in child-like tones. Ask a person with mental retardation how often other people try to make decisions for them. These are common real-life occurrences. They are not done by people seeking to act in hurtful or disrespectful ways. But the actions are disrespectful and can be hurtful because they highlight a disability rather than acknowledge a person.

March is National Mental Retardation Awareness Month. People with mental retardation have abilities that often go unseen by others whose vision is obscured by already-conceived ideas about mental retardation. Our advocacy efforts at Mosaic seek to change that. You can be a part of that change.

Visit [www.mosaicinfo.org/nmra/](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/nmra/) and find resources to use during National Mental Retardation Awareness Month—church-related materials, press releases and other information. You can also find advocacy information to use all year around to help people with disabilities at [www.mosaicinfo.org/advocacy/](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/advocacy/).

Use this opportunity to raise your own awareness of the facts surrounding disabilities and to help others know more. In the end, ignorance is the real disability.

[www.mosaicinfo.org/nmra/month/](http://www.mosaicinfo.org/nmra/month/)



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