



THE
PATH
AHEAD

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tmg

Let's clear the path ahead.

tmgwisconsin.com

Keep up-to-date with TMG!

TMG has created a brand new “Events” section of the website to help keep you informed about events that TMG is hosting, attending or supporting! We’d love to see you when we’re out in your community!

To find out if there are events happening in your area, visit **tmgwisconsin.com** and click on “Events.”



To help you stay up-to-date between visits to the TMG website, we’ve also created an easy sign-up system so you can receive email alerts when new events have been posted. Just visit **tmgwisconsin.com** and click the “Emails and Alerts” button at the bottom of the homepage!

Upcoming Events of Interest

- ➔ **AUGUST 18**
TMG Dinner and Discussion:
Getting the Most Out of Your Community
Portage, WI
Please RSVP at:
www.tmgwisconsin.com/events/
- ➔ **AUGUST 23**
TMG Dinner and Discussion:
Getting the Most Out of Your Community
Hayward, WI
Please RSVP at:
www.tmgwisconsin.com/events/
- ➔ **SEPTEMBER 22-23**
2016 Wisconsin Aging Network Conference
Wisconsin Dells - Kalahari Resort
www.gwaar.org/wi-aging-network-conference-2016.html
- ➔ **SEPTEMBER 29-30**
20th Annual Crisis Intervention Conference
Wisconsin Dells - Kalahari Resort
www.uwsp.edu/conted/ConfWrkShp/Pages/Crisis/default.aspx
- ➔ **SEPTEMBER 30**
10th Annual Regional Caregiver Conference
New Richmond, WI - Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College

Haley Frieler



23-year-old Haley Frieler describes herself as a craft fanatic, extrovert and most importantly, a Wisconsin Badger. As a member of the 2015 UW Madison graduating class, Haley is making plans and taking action to start her career.

“I have been raised to be very independent,” said Haley. “My family never treated me any differently than my other siblings.” Haley remains determined to not let her spinal muscular atrophy keep her from achieving her dreams and living her life to the fullest.

When Haley was accepted to UW-Madison to study textiles and apparel design, she knew she’d need flexible support that met the needs of a college-aged person. “We talked to agencies that said the latest I could go to bed was 10 p.m. and the earliest I could get up was 9 a.m.,” said Haley. “I knew that as a college student, that was just not going to work.”

When a friend recommended self-direction, Haley visited her Aging Disability Resource Center and learned more about the differences between self-direction in IRIS and Managed Care. She chose to pursue the full self-direction of IRIS, using the TMG ICA. She chose Jon from the TMG IRIS Consultants in her area. “I emailed Jon, with a list of requirements,” said Haley. “In just two minutes, Jon and I had solved the world’s problems and I thought, ‘this is going to work!’”

Currently, Haley partners with Jon in her role as employer of her personal care workers – the people who provide the supports she needs to live a life that meets her expectations. “He really understands my lifestyle and how to help me live better,” said Haley. “He’s been great!”

In partnership with Jon, TMG and the IRIS program, Haley had a fulfilling college experience that has led her to new opportunities.

“TMG and the IRIS program provide support, but still allow me to run my life the way I want to,” said Haley. “I’m very active and very outgoing so it was a freeing feeling to know that IRIS would provide me that independence.”

Haley, unlike some young graduates, is starting her next adventure employed. She is returning to Southeast Wisconsin to work as a product development coordinator with Kohl’s, and is looking forward to her new job and apartment. “The apartment I found is incredible,” said Haley. “I’m going to be living downtown close to just about everything. I’m really excited.”

Haley will take this next big step without having to make drastic changes to her supports. She will continue to have access to the TMG ICA and the IRIS program. She hopes to continue her relationship with Jon. “He’s been so reliable and really incredible,” said Haley. “I hope to continue to work with him after my move to Milwaukee.”

Tony Macias



In the early 1980s, Antonio Macias, father, immigrant, dependable factory worker and community supporter, was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. It was a diagnosis that would impact not only Antonio's life, but that of his family. "The change that I saw him go through was just heart-wrenching," said Antonio's son, Tony. "I decided I wanted to know why this was happening to him."

While enrolled in a psychology program at a university, Tony took a course that gave him the answers he was looking for. Tony learned that because of his condition, his father had a difficult time interacting with and trusting new people. Tony determined this could lead to risks for his safety in the community.

Antonio's condition worsened when he developed Alzheimer's. His ability to be at home or attend events without support in the community became more difficult. It became increasingly difficult for Tony to maintain his work as an artist and personal trainer while also caring for his father. "I could no longer work and take care of my dad at the same time," said Tony.

It was then that Tony first learned about self-directed long-term care through his local Aging and Disability Resource Center and chose TMG as his father's IRIS Consultant Agency (ICA).

"I found out that the program could offset some of the costs it took to care for my father," said Tony. "I'm grateful because it had allowed me to continue to work until my dad's support needs increased and I needed to be his full-time caregiver." Antonio had worked and raised his six children in southeast Wisconsin. The access to IRIS meant he could remain in familiar surroundings, while Tony continued to work.

Antonio does best when things in his day are familiar to him. Tony is very grateful for the unique support and expertise his father's TMG IRIS Consultant, Jason, offers. As a Spanish-speaker with experience with Alzheimer's, Jason is the perfect fit. "He's absolutely fabulous with my dad," said Tony. "He speaks Spanish and truly understands him. He really knows how to interact with him."

The support of Jason, IRIS and TMG have allowed Antonio and Tony to continue to pursue their dreams while ensuring that quality community-based care remains available so they each can lead a fulfilling life.

"I've been able to make sure he's safe and comfortable," commented Tony. "We listen to classical music, watch soccer games and we even play racquetball together."

Tony explained that as a caregiver, he's learned about the obstacles and challenges that face individuals in similar situations. "I haven't been politically involved until I became a caregiver for my father," said Tony, "but I realize the power we have as caregivers and as community members is huge. We need to share our opinions, our concerns and our stories. We have a voice and we need to be heard."

To share your story, visit tmgwisconsin.com and click "Share Your Story."

Jason Downing



Jason Downing of Sheboygan Falls has resilience and determination that many would argue is unmatched. In 2008, Jason's life started over after surviving a traumatic brain injury.

“Because of his injuries, his options were to go to a nursing home or come home with us,” said Joanne Downing, Jason's mother. “For us, the choice was obvious.”

Since then, Jason and his family have worked to find the support Jason needs to recover at home. “We initially used Family Care,” said Joanne. “But Jason really needed more.”

With the help of their local Aging and Disability Resource Center, Jason enrolled in the IRIS Program in 2011. Jason's TMG IRIS Consultant, Connie, helped him create a plan of supports that included home modifications to create wheelchair accessibility; purchasing a specialized bed; and most importantly, hiring a coach through the local YMCA so Jason can continue his physical therapy which is critical to his continued recovery.

“Connie has been a great resource to us,” said Joanne. “She has helped us get the support Jason needed to work toward his goals.”

Jason now dedicates his time to recovering the skills many doctors told him he had permanently lost. With the help of his trainer at the Sheboygan Falls YMCA, Jason has been working to regain strength, coordination and mobility.

“His biggest focus right now is walking,” commented Joanne. When Jason first began physical therapy, he would ride the stationary bike. Since then, he has worked his way up to walking on a treadmill with the help of a gait harness.

“He's made really big improvements; it's incredible,” said Joanne.

Jason's hard work and dedication hasn't gone unnoticed. He was chosen as the highlighted YMCA member for the month of February, and was featured in their summer brochure. His story was even told in the local newspaper, Sheboygan Falls News.

In Jason's free time, he enjoys going to movies, hanging out with friends and using his iPad to play games that improve hand-eye coordination.

As for his physical strength and recovery, Jason says he won't let up. He will continue to be a permanent fixture at the Sheboygan Falls YMCA as he continues to build his skills and independence.

Join us at upcoming TMG events



On July 14th, TMG and Family Voices of Wisconsin co-hosted a gathering of TMG staff, people they partner with and community members at the Northside Milwaukee YMCA. This was the most recent in a series of eight local listening and learning events around the state. TMG hopes that through these events we can come together to learn more about what works to expand connections to local communities, and partner with people to create full, meaningful lives.

Portage, WI
August 18

**TMG DINNER AND DISCUSSION:
Getting the Most Out of Your Community**

RSVP by August 12

Hayward, WI
August 23

**TMG DINNER AND DISCUSSION:
Getting the Most Out of Your Community**

RSVP by August 17

[Visit **tmgwisconsin.com/events/** to register](http://tmgwisconsin.com/events/)



The best part about ***The Path Ahead*** is the stories from people who show how self-direction works for them every day in creating their best possible life. Would you like to share your IRIS experience with others in the program? Talk to your IRIS Consultant, or visit **tmgwisconsin.com** and click on “**Share Your Story**” at the bottom of the homepage. You might be featured in an upcoming issue of ***The Path Ahead!***



IRIS Expands to Rock County!

Here's what you need to know.

When will IRIS services be available in Rock County?

People who choose IRIS started receiving services on July 1, 2016. TMG is the exclusive IRIS Consultant Agency (ICA) in Rock County.

When will TMG begin IRIS Consultant Agency (ICA) services in Rock County?

Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) have begun enrollment counseling and will be sending us the names of the people who choose IRIS. TMG reaches out to people enrolling in IRIS right after we receive their referral information.

How does a person enroll in IRIS?

The enrollment process begins with the Rock County ADRC (608-741-3600). The ADRC will explain the long-term care options available to you, including IRIS.

What are TMG's qualifications?

TMG has provided consultant services in the IRIS program since it began in 2008, and is the only ICA that serves all 65 Wisconsin counties where IRIS is available, now including Rock County. 13,000 people in Wisconsin have chosen TMG as their ICA. Our staff of 580 includes 300 community-based IRIS Consultants.



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Empowering people to create meaningful lives in their communities.™

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