

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

2019 Missouri Mental Health Champions

Missouri Mental Health Foundation

*Changing
Attitudes,
Building Hope*

**Missouri Mental Health
Champions' Award:** *An
award presented to three
individuals annually -- an
individual living with mental
illness, an individual living
with developmental
disabilities and an individual
in recovery for substance use
disorders. The award
recipients make positive
contributions to their
community, exemplify
commitment and vision, and
their actions have increased
the potential for
independence in others with
similar mental health
conditions.*

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Please join us in CONGRATULATING the team of Richard & Angelo, Connor and Dan -- the recipients of the 2019 Missouri Mental Health Champions' Award!

Team Richard Cohen & Angelo Blanchard (St. Louis) – This team has faced the challenges of living with schizophrenia for decades, and Richard also suffered from childhood trauma. Their journey lead them to the Independence Center in St. Louis. Richard and Angelo are leaders of a successful mobile outreach program. Through their outreach partnership, they are visiting and contacting many individuals that live in residential programs, nursing homes or skilled care, hospitals, and their own residences. Their goal is to reach out to members who may be isolated and no longer engaged with the Independence Center Clubhouse. As a result of their efforts and commitment, they are developing a support network of members who know and care for each other. They are also the founding members of the IC Players theater group. Through their theater group, they perform regularly at the Independence Center social programs, as well as in the local community. Through their teamwork, they are filling a gap of need, sending a message of love, hope, dignity and respect.

Connor McGranahan (Rogersville) – Connor is bilateral profoundly deaf and lives with autism. The challenge of communicating with others, while dealing with sensory and environmental challenges, were very difficult as a child. However, even with these challenges, he has always been able to find a way to connect with others that do not face the same challenges. Finding employment was a challenge. Over the last few years, he has taken the step to sell his art projects to private buyers and spends much of his time volunteering in the community to grow the message of inclusion, art and sign language. His ability to bridge the gap with the hearing community has grown since he began taking classes with Art Inspired Academy. He has spoken to several groups about how art can make a difference for others, as well as the importance of volunteering and being accepting of others. He is a selfless young man that inspires others every day with his courage and unique ability to reach children on another level. He is a cheerleader and encourager, always wanting others to be happy!

Dan Hanneken (Columbia) – Dan's use of alcohol and other drugs began at a young age, resulting in multiple arrests, periods of probation and incarceration. For many years he struggled to be successful with his recovery... until he began to develop a passion for figuring out what he, and others, needed to maintain sobriety and avoid falling back into patterns of behavior leading to re-incarceration. He is now the Founder of "In2Action", recovery housing for 27 men with a history of substance use disorders that were recently discharged from incarceration, serves as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Missouri - School of Social Work where he teaches courses on addiction and treatment, served on the Columbia Mayor's Task Force for Community Violence, authored the "Ban the Box" legislation that now prevents employers from asking applicants about criminal history until a conditional job offer has been made, served as Chair of the Boone County Offender Transition Network, served as a Board Member of, and advisor to, Phoenix Programs, founded the Columbia Christian Re-entry Coalition, and served as leader of the Crossing Church Prison Ministry. Dan's passion is to better prepare professionals in providing effective services and supports to help others, and directly provide those who have not previously had a chance to succeed following incarceration. His life is ultimately driven by the fact that he was lost, and has been found. A reality he wants others to be able to experience.