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# WELCOME PACKET

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# core SERVICES

*of northeast tennessee*



<https://www.coreservicestn.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/coreservicestn.com>

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# ABOUT US

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## A non-profit organization

Core Services of Northeast Tennessee is a non-profit organization (501 c) supporting people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in Northeast Tennessee in the greater Johnson City area. We offer a range of services involving supported living, employment, funds management, nursing, and more. Core Services of Northeast Tennessee is licensed by the State of Tennessee Department of Health and Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD). We support approximately 50 adults with IDD.

The agency has completed Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities requirements for designation as a 'Person-Centered Organization.' We are also an "Enabling Technology Transformation Agency" and a provider mentor through the DIDD Tennessee Employment First Leadership Initiative (TEFLI).

CQL | The Council on Quality and Leadership offers accreditation, training, certification, research, and consultation services. Core Services recently received Person-Centered Excellence Accreditation with Distinction through CQL|The Council on Quality and Leadership. There are only a handful of organizations nationally that have achieved CQL's Person-Centered Excellence Accreditation, With Distinction. Core Services of Northeast Tennessee has just joined this exclusive group of providers that are aligning with the most rigorous standards in human services. Core Services of Northeast Tennessee was also a recipient of a [2017 CQL Award of Excellence](#), acknowledging successes in reducing rights restrictions and the 2022 CQL Presidents Award.

Core Services of Northeast Tennessee was awarded the 2022 Moving Mountains Award. Through the Moving Mountains Award, the [Institute on Community Integration](#), the [National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals](#), and [ANCOR](#) recognize organizations using leading practices in direct support workforce development that result in improved outcomes for people with disabilities. The award was presented at the 2022 Reinventing Quality Conference in Baltimore Maryland on August 1, 2022.

Core Services is governed by a Board of Directors:

Joan Angelopoulos

Teresa Dobbs

Bob Armstrong

Judy Fowler

James Bowman

Karen Leffel

Steve Box

Lori Marks

Shirley Casson

Cathy Muse

Donita Denton

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# HISTORY

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## Who Are We

**1960** 's a private non-profit organization was formed by caring and concerned parents and community leaders. The agency was to be known as The ARC of Washington County, later known as Washington County Community Residential Services, Inc. Services provided initially were those of support to parents and families of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**1980** 's a residential home for ladies and a residential home for men was established.

**1986** With the support of HUD the ladies of the first residential home, The Wacarca League Home for Ladies, was established as a group home.

**1996** a residence established for 8 men in the 1980's was also converted to a HUD group home.

**1997** as a result of the lawsuits against institutionalization in Tennessee, a ruling came about that an agency receiving federal funding through the Department of Mental Retardation could not provide both case management and residential services under the same corporation name. Therefore, on March 1, 1997, residential services was removed from the Arc of Washington County and placed under the old corporate name of Washington County Community Residential Services, Inc.

**2007** After approximately 10 years of utilizing the corporate name of Washington County Community Residential Services, Inc., the Board of Directors approved a name change and logo. Often times the old corporate name was associated with Washington County as a county service provider. With all of the above being confusing, the new name of "Core Services of Northeast Tennessee" was adopted. Core Services is the public name d.b.a. under the corporate name of Washington County Community Residential Services, Inc.

**2015** when the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid were requiring implementation of the Home and Community Based Setting Rules a new Executive Director and administrative team joined Core Services and a transformation began. In recent years the agency adopted the philosophy that people don't want a lifetime of good services, people want really good lives.

**2016** the agency joined a small group of Tennessee agencies and received Person Centered Excellence Accreditation through CQL|The Council on Quality and Leadership

**2017** the agency completed Tennessee DIDD training and was recognized as a Person Centered Organization

**2018** the agency was recognized by Tennessee DIDD as a Technology First Transformation Agency and a Tennessee Employment First Leadership Initiative Agency

**2021** the agency joined a small group of agencies nationwide and received Person Centered Excellence Accreditation through CQL|The Council on Quality and Leadership. The agency also became the first provider agency in Tennessee to achieve SHIFT Technology First Accreditation

**2022** the agency was one of two nationwide and to the 2022 Moving Mountains Award presented by the the [Institute on Community Integration](#), the [National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals](#), and [ANCOR](#)

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# OUR VALUES

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## Vision and Mission Statement

**Mission Statement:** We are committed to empowering people with intellectual disabilities to live a shared vision of a valued life in connection with family, friends, and community life.

**Vision Statement:** People with intellectual disabilities participate in, contribute to, and are valued members of their chosen community.

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## ARE WE THE RIGHT FIT FOR YOU?

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### We support the right for people to make choices regardless of their legal status

Many individuals supported by Core Services of Northeast Tennessee have court appointed conservators or other legal representation. There are a variety of ways to provide assistance to an adult with I/DD, including, but not limited to, representative payee, durable power of attorney, conservatorship, limited conservatorship, health surrogate, supported decision making and others.

Conservatorship is one of the most restrictive actions taken to protect a vulnerable person. Conservatorship involves going to court to legally remove a person's rights in areas such as where they live, medical and financial decisions. Each court order is specific to the rights that have been removed from that particular individual.

Core Services believes everyone has a right to make choices regardless of their legal status. Supported decision-making is an alternative to conservatorship. Supported Decision-Making is a method of developing decision-making skills by relying on a team of trusted individuals ("Supporters") to assist the person in collecting information, processing information, and coming to an informed decision. Core Services is committed to supporting people and their family and/or conservators to learn more about Supported Decision-Making as a means of providing a trusted and formalized environment for people to receive assistance with decision-making while still promoting self-determination.

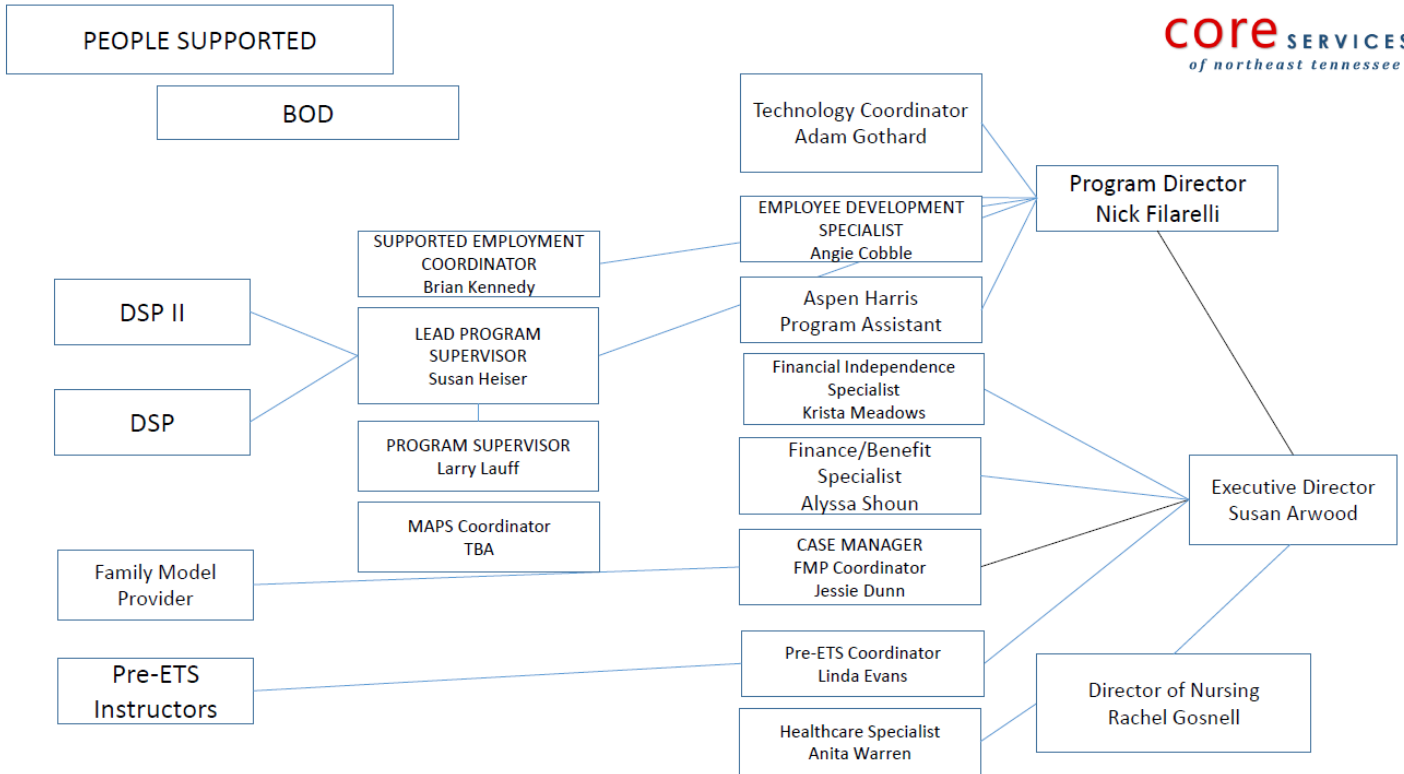
Core Services will advocate for people retaining rights, particularly those not addressed by the court order, through education with individuals supported, families and conservators.

While Core Services is dedicated to maintaining harmonious working relationships with family, conservators and friends of the individual, primary focus and concern will always be a person-centered focus that supports people to exercise choices, rights and responsibilities.

In all circumstances, including when conservatorship has been established, the individual has the right:

- to be treated with dignity and respect
- to privacy and confidentiality
- to exercise control over any aspect of life which the court hasn't delegated to a conservator
- to have the conservator consider her/his wishes, preferences and opinions

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Reviewed 2.27.24

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# MEET THE STAFF

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**Susan Arwood, Executive Director**

Susan found her dream job when she joined the Core team in 2014 after a 30+ year career with the TN Division of Rehab Services. She holds a BS degree from the University of TN and an M.S. degree in Rehab. Counseling from the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Susan holds SHIFT ETIS Specialization certification, is a Certified Employment Support Professional CESP and holds NADSP Credentials as DSP-1 and Frontline Supervisor FLS. Susan lives in Greeneville with her husband Mike. She loves spending time with her husband, daughter Casey and grandson Levi.



**Nick Filarelli, Program Director**

Nick has worked in the IDD field for almost 15 years. He came to Core Services in 2015 and has been the leading force in the development and growth of the agency's Enabling Technology Program. Nick holds NADSP Certification as a Frontline Supervisor FLS and SHIFT certification. In addition to holding the position of Program Director, Nick is also a Technology Champion and an accomplished public speaker.



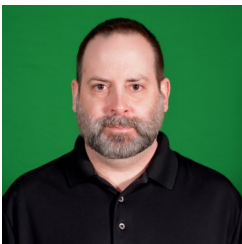
**Rachel Gosnell, Nursing Director**

Rachel joined Core Services in 2022. Rachel obtained her ASN at Walters State CC in 2018 and obtained her BSN at King University in 2021. She has a professional background in supporting people with IDD for more than 10 years. Rachel has one incredible little girl named Kendall and two ridiculously adorable pups named Lottie and Charlie. In her spare time, Rachel enjoys spending time with her family and traveling.



**Jessie Dunn, Case Manager**

Jessie holds an Associate of Science in General Studies from Walters State C.C. and has 9 years of experience working with people with IDD. She joined the Core Services team in 2014. Jessie is world famous for the "Core Services selfie" photos. She recently starred in a film with a leading role as Mrs. Doubtfire. Jessie holds the NADSP certified credentials of DSP-1 and Frontline Supervisor and is a Certified Employment Support Professional CESP.



**Adam Gothard, Financial Independence Liaison**

Adam studied Computer Science at Walters State C.C. He joined the Core Services team in 2019. He has worked with people with IDD for over 19 years. He is also one of Core Services Tech Champions. Adam has worked with computer technology for over 25 years. His favorite author is Michael Crichton. He also enjoys collecting Vintage Star Wars. Father of a redbone coonhound named Tiberius.



**Angie Cobble, Workforce Development Specialist**

Angie came to Core Services in 2018 after a career with the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Angie has 37 years of experience in the IDD field. She is a certified CPI Instructor, CPR/First Aid Instructor, Person Centered Thinking trainer and a certified Personal Outcome Measures Trainer and Interviewer. Angie holds the NADSP certified credentials of DSP-III and Frontline Supervisor.

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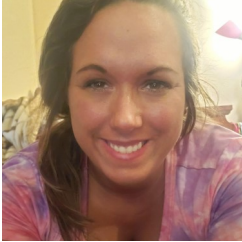
# MEET THE STAFF

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**Brian Kennedy, Employment Coordinator**

Brian Kennedy holds a Masters degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Kentucky. He joined the Core Services team in 2016 after a 22 year career with the TN Division of Rehabilitation Counselor. Brian is a Certified Person Centered Thinking Trainer, Certified Employment Support Professional CESP and Certified Personal Outcome Measures Interviewer. Brian is passionate about employment for people with disabilities and their valuable contributions to the workforce.



**Alyssa Shoun, Finance Specialist**

Alyssa has 12 years of experience working with individuals with IDD. Alyssa is a recipient of the 2017 Tennessee ANCOR DSP of the Year award. Alyssa is a certified Personal Outcome Measure Interviewer and holds NADSP Credentials as DSP-1 and Frontline Supervisor FLS.



**Susan Heiser, Program Supervisor**

Susan joined the Core Team in 2015. She has over 13 years of experience working with adults with IDD. Susan's three children, eight grandchildren and dog Gracie are the center of her life. Susan holds the NADSP certified credentials of DSP-1 and Frontline Supervisor.



**Anita Warren, Healthcare Specialist**

Anita joined the Core team in 2021 after almost 20 years in this field. She holds a BS degree in Psychology from East Tennessee State University. Anita lives with her husband Jim and her cat Bobby in Johnson City.



**Aspen Harris, Program Assistant**

Aspen joined the Core Services team in 2017 and since that time has held the position of Direct Support Professional, Healthcare Specialist and Program Assistant. Aspen is dog mom to Jypsy. She is passionate about anything Halloween or horror.

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# MEET THE STAFF

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**Krista Meadows, Program Assistant/Pre-ETS Instructor**

Krista is originally from Indiana where she attended Purdue University and majored in Special Education. She has over 15 years experience working with IDD individuals and over 20+ years working in the classroom. Krista has two amazing daughters. Carli, a senior at Lander University and Kennedy, a senior at Science Hill High School.



**Linda Evans, Pre-ETS Coordinator**

Linda joined the Core Services team in 2019 after a 35 year career with the State of Tennessee. Linda managed the start-up of the agency's Pre-Employment Transitions Services program. Despite a pandemic, under her leadership the agency is providing Pre-ETS services to over 500 students in seven counties at over 21 high schools and middle schools.

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## DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

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### The heart of our workforce

Core Services workforce consists of approximately 110 employees. This includes 15 administrative positions and 95+ Direct Support Professionals (DSP). The most important position at our agency is that of the Direct Support Professional. Direct Support Professionals—also known as DSPs—are individuals who work to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DSPs help those with disabilities to perform tasks, but focus on teaching those individuals how to perform those tasks on their own as well. In this way, DSPs differ from caregivers who do everything themselves. DSPs are more focused on helping people learn how to do things independently.



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# SUPPORTS

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## Supported Living

People receive the support they need to acquire, retain or improve skills necessary to reside in a home that is under their control and responsibility. Our philosophy is that everyone has a right to choose their home and housemates.

## Employment Support

Core Services has adopted an Employment First Philosophy. Anyone who wants to work should have that opportunity. Our experienced employment team will help find that dream job and provide just the right support to assure a successful career.



## Enabling Technology

Core Services is an Enabling Technology Transformation Agency. Technology allows an additional support option in a way that safely fosters independence and choice. Through the use of technology, people can define where, what and when they need supports to achieve their desired independence and preferred life.



# SUPPORTS

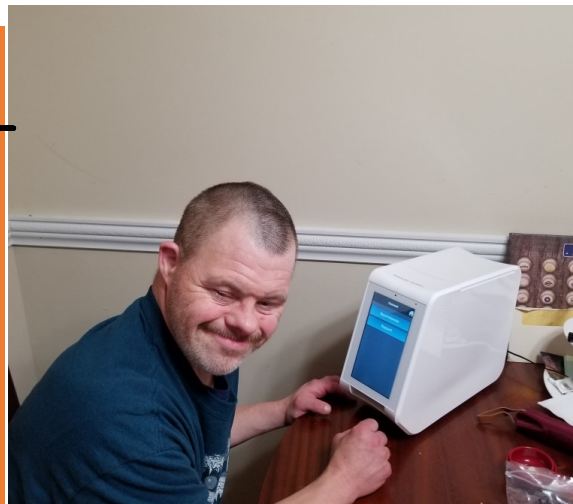


## Day Supports

People should have meaningful roles and inclusion in the greater community. People are supported to pursue their interests and desires such as have a career, access community resources, worship where they choose, visit friends, go on vacations,

## Healthcare Oversight

We play a vital role in helping people to achieve and maintain good physical and emotional health essential to their well-being. This includes: giving medications or assisting people to take medication while following all laws and safety rules, assisting people to learn disease prevention and maintain good health, helping people keep regular health and dental care appointments, following health care plans and properly using medical equipment, helping people learn the signs of common health problems.



## Nursing Services

A Registered Nurse is on staff to provide skilled nursing services that fall within the scope of the Tennessee Nurse Practice Act and that are directly provided to the person in accordance with a plan of care.

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# SUPPORTS

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## Pre-Employment Transition Services

Through a grant with the Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services instruction is provided in area middle and high schools for students with an IEP. This program is in collaboration with local educational agencies. Pre-ETS services are designed to be an early start at job exploration.

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## EMPLOYMENT FIRST AGENCY

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Core Services is an Employment First agency. The Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE), is the only national organization focused exclusively on Employment First to facilitate the full inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace and community. APSE defines Employment First as the following;

*“Employment First means that employment in the general workforce should be the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities receiving assistance from publicly-funded systems. Simply put, Employment First means real jobs for real wages.”*

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# HOW DOES SUPPORTED LIVING WORK?

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*Supported Living refers to a type of residential service selected by the person supported having individualized services and supports that enable the person supported to acquire, retain, or improve skills necessary to reside in a home that is owned or leased by the person and which supports each person's independence and full integration into the community, ensures each resident's choice and rights, and complies fully with standards applicable to HCBS settings delivered under Section 1915(c) of the Social Security Act, including those requirements applicable to provider-owned or controlled homes, except as supported by the individual's specific assessed need and set forth in the person-centered ISP.*

At Core Services people live in 1-3 person homes throughout the greater Johnson City Area. People rent homes and share the expense of the home/living expenses through their monthly income. As with anyone else in the community the rental lease is between the person and landlord. Individual choice and budget is used to find and select the appropriate home. Considerations include:

- What is the person's budget for living expenses?
- Does the person want an apartment, a condo, a house in the country?
- Do they know who they want to live with?
- If they don't have a housemate in mind what are the characteristics of their preferred staff?

Funding from the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Development Services and Employment and Community First Choices provides funding for Direct Support.

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## PERSONAL FUNDS & SSA REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE

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The policy of Core Services of Northeast Tennessee is to support People, as needed and in the manner requested to manage their own personal funds. People who desire greater involvement in the management of their personal funds but lack necessary skills shall be provided appropriate personal funds management training in accordance with their ISP. People who are unable to manage their personal funds may choose another person to act of their behalf, such as a social security representative payee.

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# WANT TO LEARN MORE?

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**core**SERVICES  
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