

# Echoing Hills Connection

Spring/Summer 2022



*Encourage  
Believe  
Inspire*





**A**s I reflect on the last several months, I realize a lot has happened!

Like others in our industry, we continue to face a shortage of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). Despite this, I am encouraged. I have seen our dedicated staff continue to step up daily to deliver services to those that depend on them.

Speaking of staff, I am excited to welcome two new members to the Camp Echoing Hills team. I believe their excitement and energy will create an unforgettable experience for our campers. With new camp activities and time-honored traditions coming together, it will be a memorable 55th summer!

Throughout the state, those we serve have been busy! I am inspired to see individuals practicing advocacy, volunteering in their communities, and living life. They have been active swimming, eating out, sledding, and more!

I believe that Echoing Hills continues to 'pave the way' for team members and those we serve. It's encouraging and inspiring to know you, our partners, are there helping along the way!

May God Bless You,

Tim Neville

*Timothy D. Neville*

President/CEO





# Today's Direct Support Professionals



It's a spring morning, and the birds are already awake and chirping. Becky talks about what she should wear and what sounds good for breakfast. Elly helps Becky get a shower, get dressed, and prepare to eat. Together, they talk about their plans for that day. Elly is one of Becky's Direct Service Professionals (DSPs).

A DSP works directly with individuals who have a disability. "I can spend quality time with the individuals I serve, truly getting to know them. What they like and dislike," states Elly, "I can see I am making a difference."

The profession is fulfilling; however, there is not enough staff. As a nation, we are facing a labor shortage crisis. The 2019 Staff Stability Survey Report, released by National Core Indicators, reports a 42.8% weighted average turnover rate nationally for direct support roles. Those who become DSPs feel called to the profession and its work; however, many find they must leave for financial reasons. The national median hourly wage for a DSP is a little more than \$12 per hour.



The industry (and Echoing Hills) are getting creative to recruit and retain DSPs by increasing starting wages (up to \$15 per hour at Echoing Hills!) and offering incentives like referral bonus programs, appreciation programs, and additional perks, including Employee Assistance Programs. "We know that if we want to provide exceptional support for the individuals we serve, we need to be an exceptional employer to our team members," shares Tim Neville, President and CEO of Echoing Hills. "It is part of what drives us to continue brainstorming ways to show value and our appreciation to our staff."

Elly encourages others to consider a career as a DSP. It is not something she thought she could do before coming to Echoing Hills; however, she quickly fell in love with the work. "It is not what I expected," shares Elly, "You see the individual's abilities and accomplishments. You play a part in their success. It is rewarding." "It would be hard without Elly and others like her," states Becky. "She helps me. She is like a sister to me."

We encourage you to share this amazing opportunity  
[ehvi.org/dsp/](https://ehvi.org/dsp/). Rewarding careers that make a difference!

# Camp Echoing Hills Welcomes New Faces



Last summer, Camp Echoing Hills welcomed Jimmy McNutt, Recreational Services and Outreach Director, and Heath Pawlak, Recreational Services Administrator.

Jimmy and Heath are excitedly preparing for our 55th year of camp! Both have a heart for serving Christ, and both are excited to be a part of His work here at the ministry.

**Let's find out more about them!**

## Can You Tell Us About Yourself?

**Jimmy:** I am married to Maria. We have five children. Before joining Echoing Hills, I served as a pastor, church planter, and ICU nurse. When not working, I enjoy working out, going on nacho dates with my wife, and spending time together as a family. We like to play board and card games. We also enjoy physical activities like hiking, biking, running, and swimming.

**Heath:** Before joining Echoing Hills, I worked in retirement homes for over ten years as a Memory Care Director, Activity Director, and as a Nursing Assistant. I have served in several capacities for churches and ministries. This service includes worship leading, youth ministry, and missions where I have served in India, Mexico, and Haiti. On the side, I enjoy visiting retirement homes to bring music therapy to those with dementia. My wife, Rocio, and I enjoy kayaking, hiking, music, theater, and sports. We are up for any adventure!

## What Drew You To Camp Echoing Hills?

**Jimmy:** I served as a Program Assistant at Camp from 2003 to 2006 and continued to serve in other ways over the years. Camp is where I met, fell in love with, proposed to, and married my wife! It is a special place for us! I came back to Echoing Hills after receiving a phone call about this opportunity. I love Camp Echoing Hills; however, I struggled with the decision as I was an ICU nurse and not looking to make a career change. Through prayer, I felt God was calling me to this ministry. I am so glad to be back!

**Heath:** The opportunity to serve God through following His call is what drew my wife and me to this camp. For months, Rocio and I were steadily engaged in specific prayer about God's direction. We felt God moving in our hearts to say goodbye to the retirement home job and even developed a newfound longing for wilderness and off-grid living. Within 30 minutes after putting in the notice at my previous job, I was hand-delivered information about a job opportunity from the least likely of sources, Jimmy McNutt the husband of a friend I had from childhood. Immediately, I was sure of God's direction. Through the interview process, and as Rocio and I walked toward this opportunity in prayer, it became clear and indisputable: God called us to Camp Echoing Hills. We are excited to be where God has us. We are excited to see how God leads from here!





## What Is Your Goal for Camp?

**Jimmy:** To provide a high-quality and safe camp that will excite our campers personally and spiritually.

**Heath:** To see our summer staff grow spiritually and form a bond that will last a lifetime. The world moves fast in opposition to God's commands, and it's easy to feel exhausted by it. I want this summer to be a breath of fresh air for our souls.

## What NEW Activity Are You Most Looking Forward To?

**Jimmy:** This summer, I'm not only excited about enhancing our current programs but also our side-by-side rides through the country. Getting out in nature without restrictions with friends should be one of the highlights of the camping experience, and we are hoping to provide that with these ATVs.

**Heath:** There are so many activities that I'm looking forward to – archery, ATV trail rides, the playfulness of the goats – but I think I am most looking forward to the pottery classes. We will have options to do ceramic painting, sculpting, and designing with clay this year. What will people make to take home with them? What creativity is waiting to be revealed by our staff and campers? I'm looking forward to adding a coffee cup to my collection.





## Celebrating Life and Inspiring Hope at EchoingU

### *Cooking Day Provides Full Stomachs and Big Smiles*

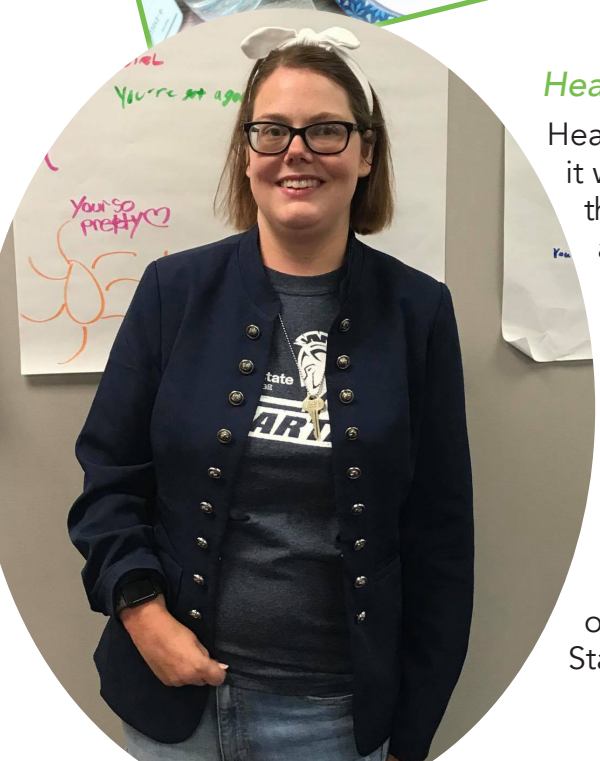
Team members of EchoingU of Southwest Ohio have begun to offer new choices to their program. After soliciting feedback from their students, they have introduced Bible study, exercise, cooking, Tik Tok dances, and learning about different cultures.

These choices create excitement for the students. It also provides additional opportunities to work on goals set in their Individualized Support Plans (ISP).

Recently, they devoted an entire day to focus on their favorite activity, cooking. Students played a part in selecting the menu for the day and took turns prepping, cooking, serving their friends, and cleaning up. One student shared, "I liked working together and being together like a family." Pauletta Wessel, a Habilitation Coordinator at EchoingU, says, "The goal is to have students be as independent as they can be, and cooking is one part of this. Activities like this show students what they are capable of, helping them with confidence and self-advocacy."



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an entire day to  
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### *Heather Enrolls at Stark State*

Heather has attended EchoingU for 4 years. In 2021 she decided it was time for a change in her life. Wanting to be known as more than a person with a disability, Heather decided to pursue her dream and enroll in college.

Attending Stark State, Heather is studying Human and Social Services. Ultimately, she would like to find a job helping individuals with disabilities through administrative work. She enjoys figuring out what makes a company great and how good programs thrive.

Heather continues to attend EchoingU and enjoys the lessons, the laughter, and the outings. She feels the program has had a meaningful impact on her life and prepared her for college.

"EchoingU has provided me with self-confidence, leadership opportunities, and happiness," shares Heather. "My professor at Stark State has noticed and even pointed out my self-confidence."



## Meet Toniema

Toniema Has Participated at EchoingU of Northeast Ohio For Three Years

### ***What Three Words Would Describe You?***

Confident, Sense of Humor, and Positive Attitude.

### ***What Are Your Hobbies and Interests?***

I enjoy reading, going to McKinley High School football games with my dad, listening to music, cleaning, and taking walks while listening to music. I also enjoy collecting pennies. My grandmother used to do it, and I like keeping the tradition going.

### ***Where Do You Find Encouragement?***

My church, my respite weekends, at home, and EchoingU. Ms. Cori and I started, "lock the key." I come to class at EchoingU, locking my problems away. I give Ms. Cori the key to hold on to so I can learn and have fun.

### ***What Do You Believe Are Your God-Given Talents?***

I can make connections with others easily, making them feel comfortable. I am very respectful and peaceful.

### ***How Do You Inspire Others?***

Through laughter, I'm a trip and love to tell jokes. When we go on outings, I often have everyone in the van cracking up. I am also very helpful to others.



### ***What Is Your Favorite Thing About Echoing Hills?***

Seeing friends, Ms. Jen, Ms. Cori, going on outings, having snacks, and cleaning up after snacks. I also enjoy what I learn – job skills, communication, independent living skills, and life skills.





## Meet Cori

Cori Kraft is a Habilitation Coordinator at EchoingU of Northeast Ohio

### ***How Long Have You Been With Echoing Hills?***

I have been with EchoingU of Northeast Ohio for three years; however, I have been with Echoing Hills for six years total.

### ***What Is Your Job Title And What Does Your Job Entail?***

I am a Habilitation Coordinator. My job entails overseeing the day-to-day activities of EchoingU. A big part of this includes being available for team members and empowering the individuals we serve to set and achieve their goals, pursue their dreams, and assist with living the life they choose.

### ***What Three Words Would Describe You?***

Insightful, Strong, and Genuine.

### ***What Are Your Hobbies and Interests?***

I enjoy reading, shopping, the BEACH, yoga, and exercise.

### ***Where Do You Find Encouragement?***

I find encouragement in inspiring others to become their best selves.

### ***What Do You Believe Are Your God-Given Talents?***

The people in my life that I love KNOW that I love them. I am an ALL-IN person when it comes to people. Not only am I able to see their strengths, but I have a way of inspiring them to rise up and step into their strengths, to be the best version of themselves. Plus, I am a whole lot of fun in the process! Laughter and joy are important, and I know how to bring them!



### ***How Do You Inspire Others?***

I inspire others by forming true relationships. I actively engage on a deep and personal level.

### ***What Is Your Favorite Thing About Echoing Hills?***

The students I serve, my EU team, and Jen Gatto!





# Paving the Way!

In 1967, Echoing Hills began 'paving the way' with a desire to revolutionize lives. Today, lives are changed every day thanks to this vision and the support of family and friends like YOU! Although Echoing Hills is located state-wide, the Central Ohio Campus alone welcomes over 700 people annually.

Nearly 50 employees serve 25 individuals through the residential program. Six employees serve 18 individuals on-site through the adult service program. Camp Echoing Hills serves approximately 325 campers, two full-time staff, 20 summer staff, and over 200 volunteers. The Warsaw Campus also houses approximately 30 employees at the Corporate Office. That's a lot of people coming and going, including family, friends, and volunteers, so you can understand how these driveways would see an enormous amount of traffic.

The last paving project took place over 25 years ago, with yearly maintenance and patching ever since. The patches have become a safety concern for those we serve with mobility sensitivities and for staff, family members, and other visitors on-site. We are currently seeking support from local foundations and donors to help with the 2022/2023 Campus Paving Project.

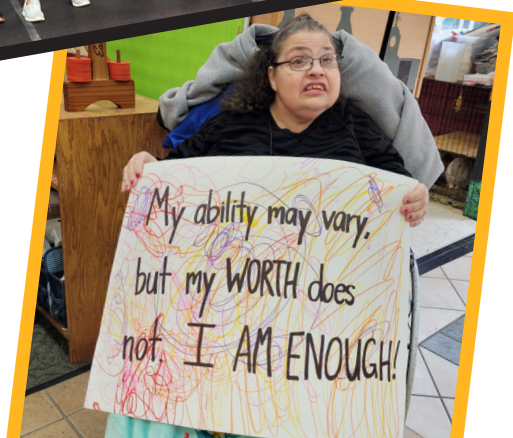
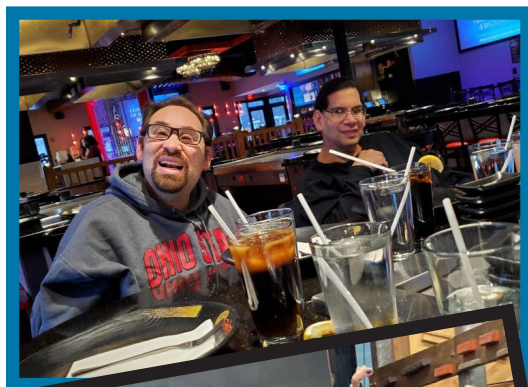
Would you support the Campus Paving Project today? As a ministry, we need to continue 'paving the way' so individuals with disabilities can experience life to its fullest! To learn how to make a gift, visit [ehvi.org/contact-us/donate/](https://ehvi.org/contact-us/donate/).

**Campus Paving Project**  
**Total Cost: \$267,000**  
**Raised to date: \$105,000**



Echoing Hills is consistently looking for ways to promote independence, self-advocacy, personal growth, and community integration for those we serve. Together, with your support, we truly are revolutionizing lives where people live, learn, connect, play, and worship!

- Preparing bags for the American Red Cross Sound the Alarm Campaign
- Enjoying Virtual Reality during an Enrichment Day at EchoingU
- Learning CPR and First Aid
- Celebrating first responders during a surprise luncheon at Echoing Connections
- Celebrating the Holidays together
- Revving up at the Cleveland Auto Show
- Delighting in Hibachi
- Seeing our favorite artist – Travis Tritt
- Enjoying the snow and going sledding
- Preparing for the March on Court in Athens
- Swimming
- Flexing our muscles at Ninja Hub

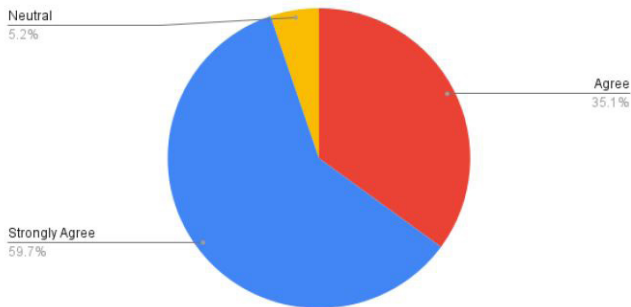




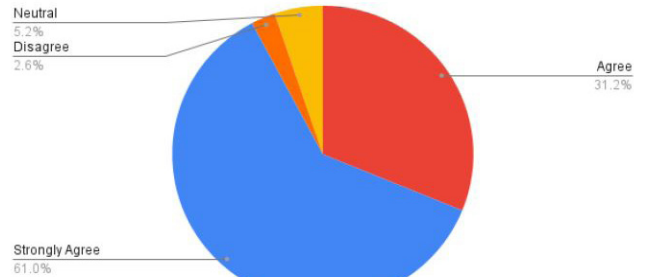
# ECHOING HILLS SATISFACTION SURVEY 2021

At Echoing Hills, we aspire every day to provide the best possible quality of life to the individuals we serve, and to treat them, our staff, and the community like family. Achieving this goal means listening to and learning from the people we serve and their families. We value their feedback and want to hear about the things we do right and what needs improvement.

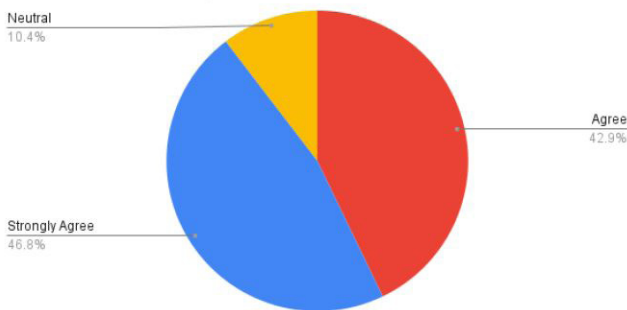
Echoing Hills staff are kind and patient when working with me / my family member.



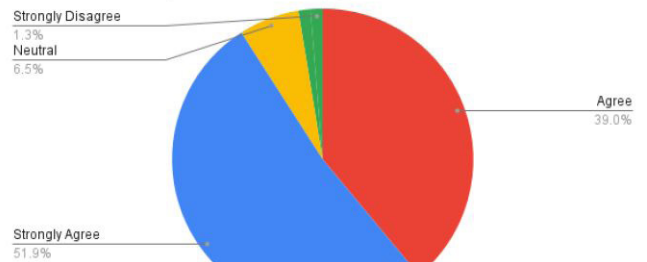
Echoing Hills staff are responsive to requests, questions, or concerns expressed by me / my family member.



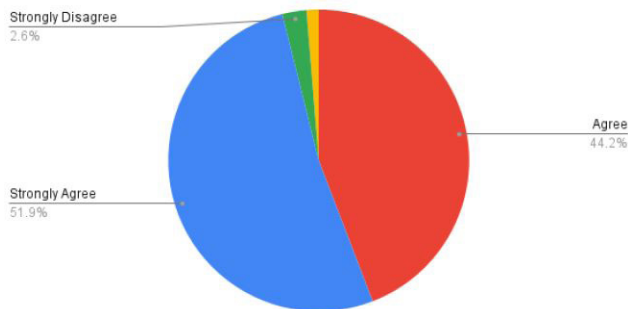
Echoing Hills gives Individuals the opportunity to plan and pursue their own vision and goals.



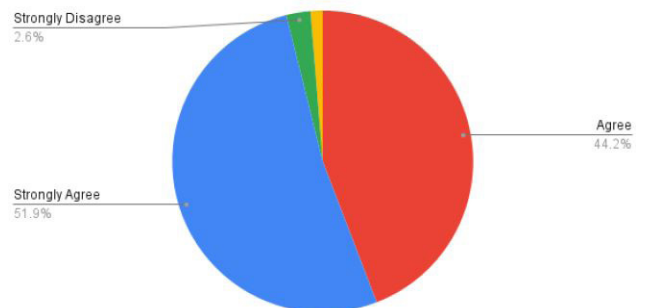
Echoing Hills staff knows what is important to me / my family member and help me achieve my goals.



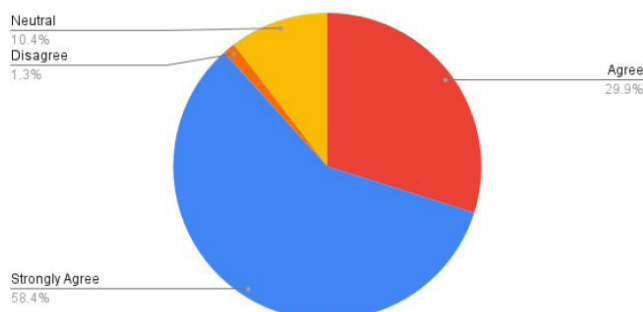
The Echoing Hills staff are supportive and provide services to meet my needs / needs of my family member.



The Echoing Hills staff are supportive and provide services to meet my needs / needs of my family member.



Echoing Hills provides comfortable and clean homes and service delivery locations.





# Your Gift at Work for a Lifetime!

We get asked how can I make a gift today, tomorrow, or in the future that will make the most sense for Echoing Hills, my family, and me. Everyone's story is different. Start by identifying your short-term and long-term financial goals and how they align with your charitable heart. Then learn about options and align them with your goals. This article will give a brief overview of one of the options. Future articles will dive deeper into other inspired giving types.

## Bequests

A bequest is a gift made through your will or trust. It is one of the most popular ways to support a cause. It is also one of the most flexible options. A bequest in your will is a great way to support Echoing Hills without impacting your current lifestyle. There are many benefits of making a bequest. You can leave a lasting legacy to be remembered, you can designate it for general or a specific purpose, which may be an option to lessen the tax implications.

A bequest is one of the easiest gifts to make. With the help of an advisor, you can include in your will or trust specifying a gift to Echoing Hills as part of your estate plan. A bequest can be made in several ways, including Specific, Percentage, Residual, or Contingent Beneficiary Designation. A Specific Bequest is a gift of a specified dollar amount or asset. A Percentage Bequest is a gift of a percentage of your estate. A Residual Bequest is a gift from the balance or residue of your estate. And a Contingent Beneficiary Designation is the designation of certain assets.

As you look to the future, we encourage you to work with your financial advisor and/or tax accountant to identify the best giving options for you and your family.

**Our Team Members are OUR Partners in Every Way!**  
Echoing Hills' employees contributed over \$11,300 in 2021  
through the Employee Giving Program!

Currently, we have over 50 employees that contribute  
to the Employee Giving Program. Together, they donate  
over \$450 each payday!



"I give through the EGP and designate my donation to Camp Echoing Hills. Camp is very special to our family as my son started attending when he was 18. He began volunteering in different areas after five years and is now 30. I see the ability to donate through the program as part of my first fruits to be given to the Lord. I know that God has blessed and used my son at camp. I feel the donations I give will help keep the Camp running to bless others," said Pauletta Wessel, Habilitation Coordinator at EchoingU of Southwest Ohio.

Echoing Hills  
36272 CR 79  
Warsaw, Ohio 43844



740.327.2311  
info@ehvi.org  
ehvi.org



Residential



Adult



Education



Recreation