

REJUV MEDICAL

EMILY MERTEN

By: Ellen Bartyzal

Photo courtesy of: Emily Merten



Providing Medically-Directed Fitness Guides Core Values

Three years ago, stay-at-home mom Emily Merten received a message from an old friend seeking part-time personnel guidance at Rejuv Medical. Thinking it would be nice to get out of the house for a few hours each day, Merten accepted. She assisted the clinic in human resources and expressed her vision of opportunities to create systemizing effective practices at the company.

After eight days of working part-time, Merten was offered a full-time position as the Director of Human Resources. Days later, she and her husband reversed roles and she accepted the position while he stayed at home to take care of their four children and became the family CEO.

"I came back that next day and started a whole new outlook—a whole new career," says Merten. Emily is now the Chief Personnel Officer and mother of 6 alongside her primary supporter Tim.

Rejuv Medical is a set of clinics in Waite Park and Savage that are focused on fitness, physical therapy, non-surgical orthopedics and more. Over the past three years, the Waite Park clinic has grown from one to four full-time personnel in the physical therapy department. Merten says their combination of a medical and fitness focus allows patients to be active in an environment that caters to their needs.

"We're not a street gym—you also get that medical component," says Merten. "So when someone has a bad back or bad knees, and they are being treated by Dr. Baumgartner, that information can go right over to the gym to whoever the personal trainer is going to be."

This process allows trainers to become familiar with patient restrictions and help them create a customized workout.

Merten experienced this medical fitness firsthand in the last year when she discovered that she has Lyme Disease and Chronic Epstein Barr Virus, something that has been creating stiffness for her throughout the day and especially after her workouts. She says working closely with doctors and physical therapists has made a huge impact on her condition.

"Without question, my quality of life has increased significantly which includes the full medical fitness component of having medical providers communicate directly with personal trainers to ensure workouts are protected as needed, as well as fully beneficial," says Merten.

Merten began her work at Rejuv by establishing more effective processes for recruitment, job descriptions, employee benefits/relations and the company's community involvement especially with organizations such as Catholic Charities Community Giving Garden, Place of Hope & March of Dimes Supporters.

Her commitment to performing extensive organizational and systematic enhancements helped her acquire the Chief Operations Officer position in 2015. Her work today consists mostly of planning, directing and overseeing Rejuv's operations policies, initiatives and goals.

Merten's latest projects at Rejuv include reinventing the company's Core Values along-side the Executive Team, establishing the EOS traction process—a system that helps guide purposeful meetings—, and streamlining a new Payroll and HRIS system that allows for easy off-site work. Merten says creating these systematic processes are essential in keeping the company running smoothly and holding all employees accountable.

Merten holds employees accountable by creating transparent job descriptions and daily checklists and also by giving credit where credit is due.

"People want to have the award and recognition, but in their own way," says Merten. "Some people like to have their name in lights in a big company email sense and others prefer maybe a little \$5 Caribou [giftcard]."

She says accountability is the key to creating dialogue at a company and allowing employees to feel good about their work.

"If you really map [responsibilities] out, it takes the questions away from your team members," says Merten. "And, when people have fewer questions, they feel more confident in their roles—knowledge truly is power."

Rejuv experiences tremendous pride in the work/life balance including flexible schedules, incentives, free memberships, career growth and the list goes on. The initiatives for employees that continue to build enhanced the opportunity to attain a Top Workplace award in 2016 for the first time and supports the last 3 years growth from 45 employees to 85 and counting.



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