

2014 Adult Leadership Award Nomination
Missouri Community Betterment
Nominee: Craig Thompson
Community: Clinton

It is human nature for a group of people to fall into the designations of leaders and followers. Some lead from a natural instinct, a desire to motivate others and chase after greatness, others use leadership as a way of climbing the ladder of success. It is simply not enough to say that the Clinton community has a great leader; what makes our community unique, is that we have Craig Thompson.

Craig Thompson has taken the community by storm since he first moved to Clinton in 1996 to work as a Physical Therapist. Craig dove headfirst into the Clinton culture. He joined the Elks Lodge and Rotary, and took pride in the community that would become his forever home. After several years of hard work and promotions from within the company he so greatly valued, Craig was entrusted with a spot on the administrative team at Golden Valley Memorial Healthcare (GVMH). He currently holds the position of Chief Operating Officer, where he is able to show compassion toward patients, enthusiasm for community betterment, and a true interest in the professional development of his staff. It is evident to anyone who has seen him at work how much he truly cares about the people encounters each day. As he walks down the halls of the 600+ employee facility, he knows the names of everyone he encounters and his upbeat demeanor is contagious among staff members.

Outside the hospital walls, Craig's impact is seen in every dimension of the community. His selfless nature is never forced, and he is genuinely enthusiastic about the many projects he takes on year after year. He has a hand in providing organization and leadership to the schools, the Chamber of Commerce, the youth and local civic groups. He is an elected a member of the Clinton School District Board of Education, where he plays an integral part in the selection of

public school leadership, developing and overseeing expansion projects, and paving the way for our communities' children to learn and grow. Craig's devotion to education doesn't end in the board room; he volunteers his time to ensure that plans for improvement are carried out and reach their maximum potential. Inside the schools, he leads the Bright Future's program which provides reading buddies to elementary school students. His animated personality and excitement for education show with each line he reads. To show his support for older students, Craig also currently serves as an advisor to the high school's community youth group, which allows volunteerism to begin at a young age.

Craig currently serves as the Greater Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce Comprehensive Plan Committee Chair, where he dedicates his time to developing a strategic plan for Clinton's future. He also serves as a co-chair for Olde Glory Days, Clinton's largest annual event, a multi-day carnival celebration event complete with vendors, bands, races and contests.

To say Craig is an asset to our community doesn't begin to scratch the surface. He is highly motivated, driven, and doesn't know the meaning of the phrase "drop the ball"- because he simply won't let it happen. Craig Thompson is not the type of leader who has simply funneled to the front of the crowd, he is the face of the Clinton community and the citizens of this town would not have it any other way.

Craig is the type of leader who is forward-thinking, active, and the life of any event. He is the first call if an event needs an emcee, and many times his name graces the cover of a program, and after his time on stage you will likely find him moving chairs and tables or picking up loose napkins in the parking lot. He is the volunteer you are happy to see arrive, because his presence is reassuring that the job will be done right.

In early 2014 the residents of Clinton, Missouri, along with the Greater Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce, took to heart all of Craig's contributions and recognized him with the J.C. Smith Great People Award, a prestigious honor named after one of the greatest volunteers Clinton has ever known. It is given only on occasion to those who deserve special recognition, and Craig Thompson fits the bill. It gives me great pride to work alongside Craig, and to be inspired by someone so passionate about the growth and well-being of the community in which he has chosen to raise his family.