

inspiration

SPRING 2024



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ABILITIES

Creating Opportunities.
Changing Lives.

THE PEOPLE POWERING OUR PROGRESS

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Cover: Group Home Manager Shelley Nordeen and Kathy Kindle enjoy a night of dancing and celebration at the Residential Center.

OUR MISSION

As a premier service provider, we passionately advocate on behalf of individuals with disabilities by creating opportunities for them to succeed, to achieve, to grow, and to be happy.



Jason Gesling shakes the hand of Katy Decker while trying to drum up votes.



He's Got My Vote!

If you're like me, the last thing you want to think about is election season. The TV commercials, cable talking heads, and incessant social media posts that never sway anyone's opinion, and yet, I've become excited about one presidential candidate.

Before you lose your mind wondering whether I'm endorsing "your guy" or the "other guy", I promise you this is one candidate you are going to want to read more about!

Jason is a very charismatic and ambitious young man, he is bright, well versed in

current events, commands a microphone like no other, and is passionate about making sure funding for disability services continues. Sounds almost too good to be true, right? Oh, and one more thing, he happens to have Downs Syndrome. You see, Jason is a participant at Empowering Abilities, and he will tell you he is running for the most powerful job in the world - President of the United States! His nickname is Moose, and his campaign slogan is: **LET THE MOOSE LOOSE.**

Jason has already selected his running mate, our very own Chief Administration Officer, Carol Foster has been named as his Vice-Presidential nominee. He has designated other positions for his cabinet, cherry picking some of the best Empowering Abilities personnel staff, including his own Secret Service detail. He is putting together a comprehensive and compassionate team!

Even though he is a very gifted politician, Jason receives a variety of services through Empowering Abilities. He attends day services in our Daily Discovery program several days each week, where he participates in a variety of activities. He is especially fond of outdoor and sports activities, which makes sense because he is a huge supporter of everything related to Iowa Hawkeye athletics. Jason also has just started participating in our prevocational program where he is learning how to apply for and work in community-based jobs. He very much desires to be an active and contributing member of society.

When I asked him why he was running for President of the United States, his response was enlightening and insightful. "I believe that people with Downs Syndrome are very capable of doing many things and can help America move forward. This is very important to me, and I want our community to understand."

If only our prospective elected leaders could view the world through Jason's eyes. They might find a hope they never knew they could realize and understand that making our country great is possible if we just could learn to be more like him. Jason may never make it to the White House, but he absolutely makes a difference in the lives of every person he meets.

For me, the choice is simple - it's time to let loose the moose.

Jeff Ashcraft

Empowering Abilities President/CEO





A Quarterly Snapshot: The Residential Center and Group Homes



After a day of activities at Daily Discovery East, Linda Craig unwinds with Amy Feldpausch at the Residential Center.

Some exciting things are happening to enrich the lives of folks at the Residential Center and Group Homes.

The courtyard at the heart of the Residential Center is undergoing a transformation, promising a vibrant and inclusive space for all. Scheduled for a revamp, the courtyard will soon boast new tile and turf flooring, enhancing both aesthetic appeal and functionality. But that's not all - the redesign includes two covered eating areas equipped with wheelchair-accessible tables, catering to the diverse needs of the residents.

In addition, new sensory stations are being introduced to the courtyard, providing interactive experiences for individuals of all abilities. A storage shed will also be installed to house outdoor activities, ensuring easy access and organization for recreational activities.

The motivation behind these upgrades is simple: to create a functional environment out of currently unusable space where participants can hang out and enjoy the outdoors.

The Residential Center has also begun providing Daily Discovery services in their own building for some of their residents. Rather than going to Daily Discover East, this new set up allows residents to sleep in a bit later, enjoy a more leisurely pace, and avoid harsh weather elements in the winter and summer.

Left: Support Staff Thelma Kiwala helps Miki Bulington prepare dinner for her housemates at the group home.

They are still provided with a selection of meaningful, engaging, and skill-building activities, but they just get to enjoy them from the comfort of their own home.

This year, the Residential Center and Group Home folks enjoyed their very own Night to Shine event. An unforgettable experience was created as the Residential Center was transformed into a dazzling prom-style venue for an in-house party.

Tiaras and boutonnieres adorned participants as they walked the red carpet, posing for professional photographs. The atmosphere was electric, with food and drinks flowing as participants danced the night away amidst enchanting decorations.

With a renewed emphasis on community activities at the Residential Center and Group Homes, participants can be a part of socialization, recreation, and enrichment, which is appreciated by all. From shared dinners with friends to lively games of bingo, library trips, mall walking, shopping excursions, and movie nights, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

These activities promote engagement within the community and help residents live their best life.

Performance objectives for the Residential Center (RC) and group homes (GH) during the period January 1 to March 31, 2024:

Total number of persons served: **GH (22), RC (57)**

Rated on a 4-point scale, performance objectives were achieved at the following levels:

Individuals were offered access to community activities -

GH (3.7), RC (3.6)

Individuals increased their independence - **GH (4), RC (3.7)**

Individuals were made aware of options for other services -

GH (4), RC (4)

Individuals were offered choices - **GH (3.5), RC (4)**

Individuals were overall satisfied with their amount of access to community activities - **GH (3.2), RC (3.1)**

Individuals were satisfied with overall services -

GH (3.5), RC (4)

HANDS Auxiliary Golf Outing

Monday, June 3, 2024

Crow Valley Golf Club | Davenport, IA
18 Hole Scramble | Shotgun Start at 12 p.m.
Lunch and registration from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

To register, donate, or provide a sponsorship, go to:
<https://p2p.onecause.com/handsgolf24>.

Cost is \$225 per golfer or \$900 per foursome and includes:

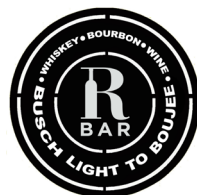
- Green fees, cart, and golfer gift
- Crow Valley Lunch
- On-Course beverages
- Pin event
- Scoring prizes
- After party with great food

Contact Lexi Keppy at 563-391-4834 or lexikeppy@empoweringabilities.org with questions or for more information.

Thank You to Our Early Sponsors



The Prior Family



Annie Stopulos is ready to chip it on the green while teammate Kyle West looks on.



Bill and Chris Gallin

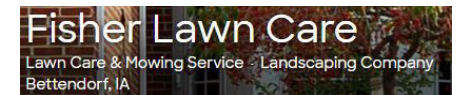


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Angie Keller



We Are Family

They live together and they work together. That's a lot of "togetherness", more than even most families, but somehow Maggie Oberhaus, Cindy Graham, and Gail Geiger manage to pull it off.

All three ladies have been involved in the Endeavor Living program for many years. They have had other roommates and lived at other locations, but their current situation seems to suit them the best. With the help of Endeavor Living staff, they reside in a rented house, each with their own bedroom. They are responsible to pay rent, keep their apartment clean, do their laundry, buy groceries, and do some cooking—all with the help of staff to the extent that help is needed. Sharing those responsibilities is an essential part of making the roommate thing work, and they seem to have figured that out. Maggie explains, "We each have an area of the house that we clean. And we all do our own laundry and clean our own bedrooms." Gail chimes in, "Our staff mostly help us with budgeting and banking, grocery shopping and how to operate our phones."



Gail Geiger works on a job in Enterprise for Little Trees Car Freshener.

Each workday morning, they all get up, fix their own breakfast and go to work at Enterprise. They are among the 31 associates working in Enterprise. Cindy often operates an auto bagger, sealing parts in a polybag, but she also does many other packaging jobs. Maggie and Gail work for a different supervisor doing a wide variety of assembly or packaging jobs. They all report satisfaction from their work and from earning a paycheck that they use to pay their rent, go shopping, and buy dog supplies for their furry friend, Max.

During their time off, sometimes they go their separate ways, sometimes not. Maggie and Cindy like to go to the mall. Gail likes hanging out at her friend's house. Maggie and Gail participate in Special Olympics. Cindy does not.

Not surprisingly, spending so much time together occasionally leads to disagreements. "We sometimes don't get along, but we always make up. We're like sisters," says Maggie. "Yeah, we're like family," Gail and Cindy agree.



From left to right, Maggie, Gail, Max (the dog), and Cindy hang out in front of their home.

Birdies For Charity



John Deere Classic July 1st through 7th

The Empowering Abilities Boosters are participating in the Birdies for Charity (BFC) program, presented in cooperation with the John

Deere Classic. When donations are made through BFC using "Bird Number" 127, Empowering Abilities receives 100% of the donations pledged, plus a bonus from the BFC Charity Bonus Fund, which is a guaranteed 5% match and could be more.

For those who make BFC pledges, there are also opportunities to win prizes by guessing the number of birdies scored in the tournament.

Funds raised support Empowering Abilities Booster-sponsored recreational activities for the participants, special projects throughout the programs, and staff appreciation events.

Clip the form here and send all pledge forms to Birdies For Charity, 15623 Coal Town Road, East Moline, IL 61244.

Forms will not be mailed out separately, so please use the form provided here.

Tia Bullock and JJ Nunnally enjoy a delicious lunch provided by the Boosters.



Empowering Abilities

CHARITY SOLICITED FOR

127

BIRD NUMBER

I PLEDGE TO DONATE:

\$ _____ to the charity noted above.
(one time, flat donation amount)

BIRDIES FOR CHARITY BONUS FUND

Yes, I would like to make an additional donation to the Birdies for Charity Bonus Fund in the amount of \$ _____, to help provide the minimum 5% match to all participating charities.

GUESS THE BIRDIES TO WIN A TWO YEAR LEASE ON A 2023 LEXUS!

I guess that _____ birdies will be made.

Only one grand prize will be awarded. Void where prohibited by law. Guesses due by June 26.

BIRDIES SCORED BY YEAR

1,990 (2015)	2,355 (2018)	1,905 (2021)
1,982 (2016)	2,091 (2019)	2,041 (2022)
1,918 (2017)	N/A (2020)	1,929 (2023)

PLEDGE & DONOR INFORMATION (please print)

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

PHONE AND/OR EMAIL

Please include payment & make checks payable to:
BIRDIES FOR CHARITY

Our Thanks Goes To



Just in time to avoid being beamed up, BJ Fifer enters the UFO-themed classroom.

Thanks to the Knights of Columbus Council 14131, TJX Foundation, Regional Development Authority, Scott County Regional Authority, and many individual donors for their contributions towards the Daily Discovery Reimagined project. With these funds, a much more functional and visually appealing atmosphere will be provided for the participants to enjoy every day. This large project is still a work in progress, but many rooms are finished and being used.



The Residential Center courtyard is rarely used due to its uneven surface and inaccessibility. However, ICF/ID Vice President Tiffany Sprague manages to help Kevin Young and Deb Lindbom enjoy the sunshine on a beautiful Spring day before the courtyard gets a facelift.

Thank you to the North Scott Rotary Club, Catholic Service Board, Bettendorf Rotary Club, HANDS Auxiliary, Boosters, and many generous individual donors for their contributions to the Residential Center Courtyard project. With these funds, residents will soon be able to utilize a functional, safe, and cozy courtyard space. Additionally, everyone will be able to enter and exit the space freely and safely.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR IN KIND DONATION

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Donations listed were received from January 1, 2024 to March 31, 2024. Every attempt is made to accurately recognize all gifts; however, if you spot an error or omission, please contact the development office at 563-391-4834. Thank you for your generosity.





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SCAVENGER HUNT

Saturday, August 24th

Empowering Abilities, 3402 Hickory Grove Road,
Davenport, IA

Doors open at 2 PM | Hunt runs 3-7 PM

\$30 per person

May have up to 6 people per team

Registration begins in June and prizes will be awarded
to early registrants.

Registration includes Hunt shirt, prizes for top
finishers and dinner following the hunt.

Save the date. More information will be
coming soon.

Empowering Abilities



Thank You to Our
Early Sponsors

