

THE

Independent

A Publication of Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living, Inc.

FEBRUARY 2023

FYI

Giving Hearts Day Open Houses

Join Us on Thursday, February 9!

Fargo: 9 - 11:00 AM

Fergus Falls: 9 - 11:00 AM

Jamestown: 8:00 - 10:00 AM

Wahpeton: 11:00 AM - 1:30 PM

Freedom In Action

JAMESTOWN

All events held at James River Senior Center

419 5th St NE, Jamestown

Register to Ashley - 701.252.4693

Friendship Soup

February 23rd - 1:30 - 3:30 PM

Register by February 17th

Disaster Preparedness

March 23rd - 1:30 - 3:30 PM

Register by March 17th

Spring Craft

April 27th - 1:30 - 3:30 PM

Register by April 21st

YOUNG ADULT GATHERINGS

Spring - Jamestown FRC Office

300 2nd Ave NE, Suite 207

March 7 - 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Register by March 3rd

Spring - The Vault, Valley City

223 Central Ave N

March 9 - 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Register by March 3rd

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“Nothing About Us Without Us” - Judi Chamberlin

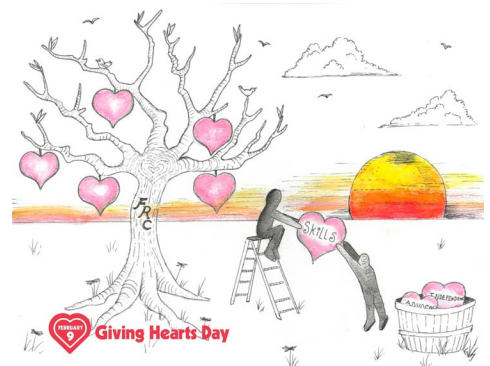
Freedom Resource Center empowers people with disabilities by teaching them skills and fostering growth to promote independence. We envision communities where people with disabilities can live full lives and have access to affordable housing, meaningful work, satisfying relationships, and good health. We partner with individuals, families, and communities to shape creative solutions to life’s challenges and together, do what it takes to help the people we serve to achieve success.

Giving Hearts Day is just days away. This year, we are focusing on the many ways Freedom Resource Center supports people to achieve greater independence.

Below are a couple examples of advocacy and independent living skills training that our staff have provided to individuals over the past year.

Merri Christlieb, Independent Living Advocate in the Fargo office started working with a student from West Fargo Transition Academy on preparing for his permit. The student was living in an apartment with his cousin while balancing both school and his job. Despite having failed the permit test multiple times previously, he was determined to pass. He met with Merri weekly on Zoom to study and complete the practice tests. Through his hard work, persistence, and dedication in working with Merri, he was able to pass the permit test on his first try, helping restore his confidence and achieving his goal!

Beth Dewald, Independent



Living Advocate in the Jamestown office began working with a consumer who was dealing with the excessive cost of his diabetic medications. His monthly out of pocket cost was almost \$800. He is on SSDI and has a fixed income. He was limiting his insulin and stretching it out because he could not afford the medication. With Beth’s help, he applied for the prescription assistance program and switched to a more appropriate Medicare Part D plan. In their work, they also discovered his Social Security information was not accurate, counting against him with his housing assistance and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefit. Together, they were able to solve this issue with his Social Security information, and

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INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS CLASSES

Jamestown - Decluttering and Organizing

FRC Office - 300 2nd Ave NE, Suite 207

Tuesdays, Mar. 21 - Apr. 25

3:30 - 5:00 PM

Register by March 17th

Fargo - Living Well 103

Tuesdays, Feb. 7 - Mar. 28

9:30 - 11:00 AM

For more information and to register, contact Merri - 701.478.0459

ALL OFFICES

Virtual Book Club

The Ultimate Gift by Jim Stovall

Tuesdays, Feb. 21 - March 14

2:00 - 3:15 PM

Register with Merri - 701.478.0459

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his benefits increased. His diabetic A 1 C is back in line, and he has now expressed interest in becoming a Peer Mentor with Freedom Resource Center!

By partnering with Freedom Resource Center, YOU help us to continue serving people with disabilities, providing skills and tools to achieve greater independence. Our goal for 2023 is to raise **\$51,000**, and YOU can help us reach that goal. Proceeds will be used to enhance services in our region for individuals with any disability, any age, free of charge.

February 9, 2023, is Giving Hearts Day. Change a life by donating to Freedom Resource Center. Your donation will make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities in our communities.

Changes at Freedom Resource Center



Joyce Wolter, Independent Living Advocate, who began her career with Freedom Resource Center over 17 years ago, and most recently has been working in our Wahpeton office, has returned to Fergus Falls. Currently, Joyce is splitting her time between the Wahpeton and Fergus Falls offices. The position of Independent Living Advocate for our Wahpeton office will remain open until filled.



Irina Schanilec will be Freedom's newest Transition Coordinator. Irina has been employed with Freedom for over six years as our Resource Specialist. In the upcoming month Irina will be starting her role as Independent Living Advocate and Transition Coordinator. She is looking forward to working primarily in transitioning consumers from nursing facilities back into the community, with the Money Follows the Person Program.

Legislative Sessions Information

MN: Minnesota's 93rd Legislative Session convened on Tuesday, January 3rd, 2023. The session lasts 120 legislative days, and currently there is no adjournment date scheduled. For more information on the legislative session visit their website. There you can see what bills are being brought to the floor, search bills, or create a personalized account and track the bills that are most important to you. Minnesota Index offices can also help you locate a bill by phone rather than through a computer: Call House Index at 651-296-6646 or Senate Index at 651-296-2887. To receive a copy of the bill once you locate it, call the Chief Clerk's Office in the House at 651-296-2314 or Senate Information at 651-296-0504.

For those interested in legislation regarding disabilities, follow Minnesota Council on Disability's (MCD) updates on their website below.

ND: North Dakota's 68th Legislative Assembly convened on Tuesday, January 3rd, 2023. It lasts 80 legislative days and will end tentatively on April 28th, 2023. For more information on the Legislative Session visit their website. North Dakota State Legislature also has an online bill tracking system for public users to access using a profile ID. The portal can be found below. North Dakota Legislative Council can also be reached by phone at 701-328-2916.

The ND Protection and Advocacy Project tracks the legislation related to individuals with disabilities and their families throughout the session. The group maintains a comprehensive list of all the bills relating to issues such as federal funding for transportation and regulations in treatment facilitates, among many more areas. For those interested in contacting their legislator, the list includes the date(s) of the hearing as well as the committee involved.

<http://www.leg.mn.gov/>

<https://www.disability.state.mn.us/about-our-public-policy/legislative-updates/>

<https://www.ndlegis.gov/>

<https://japps.ndlegis.gov/lcn/council/billtracking/login.htm>

<https://www.ndpanda.org/sites/www/files/documents/2023legislativegrid.pdf>

Meet Our New Board Member



Matt Solin lives in Fergus Falls, MN, with his cat Squeaky. Matt has been employed at McDonalds for 14 years. He also cleans apartments with his mother, Donna. He shovels sidewalks and mows lawns for various customers in Fergus Falls.

Matt is also involved with his church and in his free time he enjoys working on crossword puzzles. Matt is also an Assistant Coach for Special Olympics' Community Team, Area 4. He has gone on trips to the Minnesota State Capital and Minnesota Twins games with Freedom Resource Center. Matt is on a first name basis with the legislators in his area. Welcome, Matt!

People's Choice Awards: Nominate Someone!

Do you know a group or someone in the community that is making an impact for people living with a disability that deserves to be recognized for their efforts? At our next awards event date, we will be honoring volunteers, people who stand up for disability rights, and employers who are supporters of employing individuals with disabilities.

We want **YOUR** help in recognizing those deserving people across the region.

There are seven award categories:

Accessibility Award

Advocate of the Year Award

Larry Chial Leadership Award

Distinguished Service Award

Employer of the Year Award

Youth Advocate of the Year Award

Volunteer of the Year Award

Email freedom@freedomrc.org for the descriptions of each award and to fill out the nomination forms.

Tips for Setting Goals and Healthier Habits

The New Year is here! Motivation is high and we are ready to create new goals and healthy habits that stick. First, be sure to consider realistic goals that you can achieve. Decide what is most important for you and your health. Make sure your goals and habits motivate you to achieve them. Here are some tips to stay committed to our goals and habits, even when it's not happening as quickly as we had hoped!

- ✓ Set realistic goals right away. Goals that you know, with hard work, you can achieve. Write down the big overall goal, then break it down from there into smaller more tangible goals you can achieve. This will help build excitement and self-confidence, keeping you committed. Keep this list in a place you can read it daily.
- ✓ Focus on several different metrics. Depending on what goal or habit you are trying to create, use a few different ways to track it. Let's take exercise for instance. If you want to start walking more, track it in an app or on paper. Write down how you feel, energy level, sleep patterns, distance, how many times each week, did your pace improve, is your digestion better, etc.
- ✓ Remember that success is not a perfect line. There will be ups and downs. Don't let the setbacks like a missed walk, forgetting about your goals on weekend, or effects of high stress affect your overall progress. The biggest thing is, never quit! Embrace what is going on and then continue moving forward.
- ✓ Stay consistent, even when you think it's not working, or you don't have the best day or week. Be patient and keep showing up. Small habits and daily consistency add up to big results over time.

Disclaimer

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*"The premier leader of disability rights
in the region for more than 30 years."*

Go to www.freedomrc.org
& click



“
NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US.
—”
-Judi Chamberlin-

We empower people with disabilities by teaching skills
and fostering growth to promote independence.

When you need an advocate or don't know where to
find answers, call
Freedom Resource Center.

DONATE
TODAY!



Change a life by donating to us on
Giving Hearts Day, February 9, 2023.



To donate go to www.givingheartsday.org
or scan the QR code.