

THE

Independent

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

NOVEMBER 2023

Diane Hipple: A Successful Transition Can Help You Be Secure and Free

In the heart of Fargo, Diane, a resilient member of her church, started on a remarkable journey that showcased the power of her faith, determination, and community support. Diane's story is a testament to her unwavering spirit and the transformative impact Freedom Resource Center's Transition program can have. The program is funded through the ND Money Follows the Person (MFP) grant.

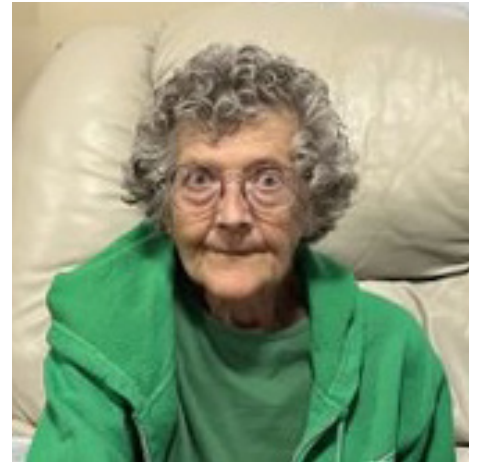
Last winter, Diane found herself in the Moorhead Rehab Nursing Home, unsure of what the future held. She faced a severe health crisis, battling debilitating

pneumonia and a complex digestive disorder that left her hospitalized and severely weakened both physically and mentally. In addition, Diane was dealing with a spinal condition compounding her challenges that lead to a higher level of care for a time.

Through this struggle, an advocate introduced Diane to the Money Follows the Person program, offering her a lifeline to independence. Initially hesitant, Diane eventually embraced the opportunity. With the support of a dedicated team, including a Freedom Resource Center transition coordinator, a housing facilitator, and a home and community services social worker, Diane took charge of her transition and discharge plan.

The transition process showed true collaboration and empowerment. They all worked together to find suitable housing, securing housing assistance, and arranging home care services. With her newfound freedom, Diane joyously exclaimed, "It's just your joy of being that independent again; able to make my own decisions about my everyday life. Security and freedom need to go together! I have the things I need to feel safe. I get up every day and make my own decisions about my life, where I go and what I do, we got to have our freedom."

Now residing in her quiet apartment near her cherished church, Diane has transformed her living space



into a haven of faith and community engagement. Her dedication to her church shines through as she volunteers three days a week, extending a helping hand to others in need. Diane's dream of hosting private Bible study groups in her home is becoming a reality, symbolizing her commitment to both her faith and her community.

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FYI

Save the Date

Giving Hearts Day

Thursday, February 8, 2024

Spring Luncheon - Awards Event

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Freedom In Action

FERGUS FALLS

All Fergus Falls events at FRC Office -

125 West Lincoln #1, Fergus Falls

Contact Joyce or Leigh - 218.998.1799

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FYI

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Game Day

1st Wednesday of the month

Starting November 1 - January 3

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Diamond Painting

Tuesday, Nov. 21 - 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Limited Spots! Register early, no later than November 14th

Holiday Food, Festivities and Fun

Thursday, Dec. 7 - 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

MUST Register by November 29th -
No registrations taken after that date!

FARGO

Cookie Jar and Thank You Cards

Tuesday, Nov. 14 - 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Register by November 8th

FRC Office - 2701 9th Ave. S. Suite H

Contact Katelyn - 701.478.0459

Holiday Meal

Thursday, Dec. 7 - 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Register by November 30th

Dakota Medical Foundation

4141 28th Ave. S, Fargo

JAMESTOWN

Gratitude Jars

Tuesday, Nov. 21 - 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

James River Senior Center -

419 5th St. NE, Jamestown

Register by Friday, November 17th with

Ashley - 701.252.4693

Holiday Craft

Thursday, Dec. 21 - 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

James River Senior Center -

419 5th St. NE, Jamestown

Register by Friday, December 15th

WAHPETON

Fall Themed Crafts

Monday, Nov. 20 - 1:30 PM

Optimist Building - 85 R.J. Hughes Dr.

Contact Eric - 701.672.1648

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Reflecting on her journey, Diane passionately advocates for the Money Follows the Person program, encouraging others in similar situations to explore this life-changing opportunity. She believes in the importance of sharing information about available resources, ensuring that everyone knows their rights and options.

Diane's story is a beacon of hope, illustrating the profound impact of faith, resilience, and community support. As she continues to enrich her own life and the lives of those around her, Diane stands as a testament to the transformative power of belief, independence, and the unwavering support of a caring community.

If you know someone who may need assistance transitioning back into the community, please contact Freedom Resource Center.

SAVE THE DATE!

We are thrilled to invite you to our highly anticipated annual "People's Choice Awards" event, taking place on **May 16th, 2024, at 12:00 PM**. This celebration will be held at the Avalon Event Center in Fargo. Join us as we honor exceptional volunteers, individuals who are champions of disability rights, and employers who go above and beyond in supporting people with disabilities. It will be an exciting afternoon, highlighting the incredible contributions of these outstanding individuals and organizations.

To make this event even more impactful, we invite you to consider becoming a valued donor or partner. Your generous support will enable us to continue our vital work, fostering inclusivity and empowering those with disabilities. Together, let's create a world where everyone is celebrated and embraced for their unique contributions.

Winter Weather: How to Stay Safe

Winter storms create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion.

Preparation recommendations include gathering supplies, including medication, in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Do not forget the needs of pets and have extra batteries for radios and flashlights.

Frostbite causes loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes. **Signs:** Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, and firm or waxy skin. **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad. Hypothermia is an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency. **Signs:** Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, and drowsiness. **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.

(Credit to FEMA)

Meet Our New Staff

Kristine is Freedom Resource Center's newest Independent Living Advocate, MFP, & ADRL Transition Coordinator in Lisbon, ND. Kristine previously spent six years working for The Hope Unit, which was a mental health/substance abuse outpatient clinic. Kristine lives with her fiancé Jon and together they currently have four mini cows, forty chickens, seven cats, and are looking forward to adding more animals soon. Together they have four grown children, four grandsons, and a new granddaughter coming in January. Kristine is currently in school pursuing her Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. In her spare time, she enjoys the outdoors and spending time with her family, friends, and being out at their farm.

October - National Disability Employment Awareness Month

In the pursuit of gainful employment, two remarkable individuals shared their journeys with the help of Freedom Resource Center.

For one individual, the vision of working held a deeper significance, one that extended far beyond the notion of a paycheck. It was about finding a sense of pride and purpose that elevated their self-esteem to new heights. The journey began with Freedom Resource Center's support in job searching, helping them discover the perfect fit, getting connected with the appropriate resources, and setting realistic expectations.

"Freedom did nothing but encourage me to be all that I can be. I'm a big advocate of what Freedom does, but you have to want to do it. Working gives you a sense of pride in yourself that can't be measured and working gives you a sense of purpose that helps your self-esteem. Volunteering is working, and if you're volunteering, you're working. It's not all about the paycheck; you're helping someone, and there are so many organizations that could use you, even if it's over the phone."

The journey towards gainful employment wasn't without its challenges for another individual, but their Freedom advocate stood by their side throughout the process. They were guided through job hunting, interview preparation, and even transportation assistance. They stated, **"I didn't think I was able to work ever again! The process was hard at first, and there were a lot of rejections, but I was able to get back into the work world."**

In the end, these success stories are a testament of determination, resilience, and adaptability. The individuals found jobs that perfectly accommodated their needs and allowed them to ease back into the working world.

If you or someone you know is a person with disabilities seeking to explore gainful employment, Freedom Resource Center is here to guide you on your journey.

U.S. Department of Labor to review Section 14(c) Program

Excerpts from an article in Disability Scoop dated October 3, 2023

Facing rising pressure to stop allowing people with disabilities to work for less than minimum wage, federal officials say they plan to undertake a "comprehensive review" of the employment model.

The U.S. Department of Labor said it will take a broad look at what's known as the Section 14(c) program. Under a law dating back to the 1930s, the program allows employers to receive special 14(c) certificates from the department permitting them to pay workers with disabilities less than the federal minimum of \$7.25 per hour.

"We are launching a comprehensive review of the Section 14(c) program to re-examine its use and future viability," Taryn M. Williams, assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy, wrote in a blog post about the new effort which was first announced during a White House forum last week to mark the 50th anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act.

"With training, support and time-tested strategies like customized employment, people with disabilities can competently engage in competitive, integrated employment without the need for Section 14(c) certificates."

Freedom Resource Center conducts Career Counseling Information and Referral services in Minnesota with individuals who work at centers that have a 14(c) certificate and who currently earn less than minimum wage. The process involves meeting individually with people within six months if they are new to the center they work at and on an annual basis with others to facilitate independent decision making and facilitate informed choice regarding the individual's employment options.

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



What's Wrong with This Image?

VIRTUAL RESOURCE FAIR
Thursday, February 23rd

9:30am - 3:30pm

**Live Chat from 9:30am - 11:30pm &
1:30pm - 3:30pm**

Register to learn about local organizations that can assist you with career development services, food/housing assistance, transportation, education, financial literacy, digital literacy, health services, and much more!

This event is 100% virtual, you can join from anywhere using a computer, tablet, iPhone or Android device.

To join go to:

This poster advertises a resource fair addressing many valuable services to meet important needs; however, the contrast between the text and the background is very low in the section summarizing the range of services. It would be easy for persons with low vision, learning disabilities and other types of disabilities to choose not to attend the event as the advertisement may not spark an interest if the viewer can't readily see the list, particularly if the poster is installed in a high traffic area or posted on a website where many events are highlighted at once. Additionally, the equal opportunity statement doesn't identify a specific person or contact number/email for those who don't use the Relay Center or TDD numbers to submit requests for reasonable accommodations. It's always advisable to identify a date by which attendees are encouraged to submit accommodation requests to increase the likelihood that any accommodations requiring advance planning can be processed before the event. Some event planners may be unsure about their expertise in providing certain types of accommodations; however, the person requesting the accommodation is often an excellent partner in identifying reasonable options that will meet their needs.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/PROGRAM

Capital Region is an equal opportunity program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TDD: VA Relay Center: 711 or 800.828.1120. Business Services are fully funded by a \$4.04 million Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act award provided by the US Department of Labor.