

THE

Independent

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

SEPTEMBER 2021

FYI

Virtual People's Choice Awards
12pm Thursday, October 28
Tickets on sale now

FARGO

Pumpkin Painting
Tuesday, October 26, 2-3:30pm

Holiday Ornaments
Tuesday, November 16, 2-3:30pm
To register call Travis

Holiday Meal
Friday, December 10
Register by December 3-call Merri

Living Well 102 IL skills class
Fridays-December 3-February 18

Living Well 103
Fridays-February 25-April 29
Call Merri for additional information
on the classes

FOR ALL FARGO EVENTS CALL
701-478-0459

LISBON

FIA Pumpkin Painting
Tuesday, October 19th, 2:00 – 3:30pm

Holiday Ornaments
Tuesday, November 16th, 2:00 – 4:00pm

Holiday Meal
Tuesday, December 14th
To register call Pam by December 10th

FOR ALL LISBON EVENTS CALL
PAM 701-683-6850

What's Inside

- » **Fun Facts**
- » **Section 504**
- » **Core Service Spotlight**
- » **Board of Directors New Members**
- » **People's Choice Awards**

IL Skills: A Valuable Resource for Any Stage of Life



As a core service, Independent Living (IL) Skills Trainings, offered by Freedom Resource Center provide consumers with a significant disability the opportunity to learn and develop independent living skills. Consumers work on increasing and developing their skills in small groups or working one on one with an Independent Living Ad-

vocate. During the pandemic, our Center adjusted our service delivery. Classes in 2020 and into 2021 were held virtually; as we head into fall of 2021, we are offering hybrid classes with a small groups of people coming into our offices, and others participating on Zoom.

Freedom Resource Center Independent Living Advocates facilitate classes called Living Well, which focus on independence, self-sufficiency, and vocation. Money Smart, developed by the FDIC, is another class offered at our Center. The Money Smart curriculum helps people enhance their financial skills. High school students learn about being "Job Smart" with a curriculum focused on teaching basic job-related social skills such as getting along with co-workers and communicating with your boss.

Youth develop IL skills to help them prepare for adulthood. Our Let's Get Real class helps them learn about soft skills, communication skills, explore what living independently may look like, and the responsibility that comes with it. Our Independent Living Advocates partner with schools, and state vocational rehabilitation programs to help local youth learn more about independence.

Adults and youth work on practicing for the permit to help them prepare for their respective state's permit test. Our staff review the rules for driving, learning vocabulary words, and use practice tests to help them be ready to take the official permit test. Access to transportation is an integral part of independent living whether it is learning the skills and information to pass the state testing requirements, or learning how to use public transportation.

Merri Christlieb, Independent Living Advocate in the Fargo office, shared these

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thoughts about facilitating IL skills classes, “I have had the pleasure to facilitate a variety of Independent Living Skills classes both individually and in group settings. It is an amazing feeling to provide consumers with educational information on independence, self-sufficiency, vocation, decluttering, budgeting, and permit preparing. To have the opportunity to plant a seed, and over the next weeks watch the consumer grow and change, is very satisfying...for both of us.”

Many people find life is busy and that we have a lot of things cluttering up our lives. Organizing and Decluttering Your Life from the Inside Out is another opportunity for people to learn about organizing the space around us. Past

attendees have sorted through drawers, boxes, closets, and rooms as they learned the skills from the class. A Decluttering class attendee commented that, “Freedom Resource Center has been a blessing in my life since becoming disabled. The staff is amazing and I’m so thankful for the events to keep me connected with others.”

A past attendee commented “Independence looks different to me now than when I took classes eight years ago - I feel alive again.” We all grow, change and are in different places in our lives from year to year. If you would like more information about the IL skills classes offered at Freedom Resource Center, please call your local office for more information.



THE FREEDOM RESOURCE CENTER TEAM HAS A COMBINED TOTAL OF WORKING AT THE CENTER FOR OVER 95 YEARS.

What is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by the Federal Government. Under this act lies section 504.

Section 504 states “no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity that receives Federal funding.” Section 504 applies to places of employment, some medical facilities, and schools. Some measures that were made possible by Section 504 are, reasonable accommodations

for people with disabilities at work; alternative communication methods for people with hearing or vision loss in any federal programs; and modified textbooks, class work, and schedules, as well as access to all learning environments within schools, for students with disabilities.

Each agency is responsible for enforcing its own regulations. Section 504 may also be enforced through private lawsuits. Complaints can be filed with the US Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division in Washington DC.

CORE SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

Independent Living Skills Services

Q: *What are independent living skills?*

A: In the context of independent living, they are skills necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities. Freedom can help people with disabilities develop these skills through direct one on one or group instruction.

Q: *Can you list some examples of independent living skills?*

A: Our consumers can get help developing skills in areas such as budgeting, cooking, organization, communication, sexuality, social skills, and many more.

Some specific examples of classes offered are: the Living Well series, Decluttering, Preparing for the Permit Training, and Youth Transition classes.

Q: *How can I get started or get more information?*

A: Upon request, we can provide you with a class list, as well as a complete list of areas covered by independent living skills. If you are interested, we can schedule you an appointment with an advocate who will help you decide which skill classes are right for you.

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Alternate formats available upon request.

FREEDOM BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Meet Our New Members



Tom Cassidy

Tom Cassidy lives in Fargo with his wife Sam and their two children, Penelope and Grayson. Tom is the Regional Sales Manager for Aflac in eastern North Dakota managing over 30 agents and over 2000 businesses. Tom has worked with Freedom Resource Center over the last 8 years providing benefits and service to its employees. Tom is new to the board at Freedom Resource Center and is looking forward to helping Freedom Resource Center in a new capacity.



Abbey Krogstad

Abbey Krogstad lives in Fargo, ND. She currently works for Wanzek Construction, as a Staff Recruiter. Abbey worked for Freedom Resource Center from 2016 to 2018 as an Independent Living Advocate at our Fargo, ND location. Prior to working at Freedom, she worked in vocational settings for people with disabilities for 11 years. This is Abbey's first year on the Freedom Board and she is excited to get back to the team! Abbey stated: "Freedom Resource Center is a hidden gem, we have so much to offer people with disabilities. We all have one goal, to help and support people."



Milton Ota

My name is Milton Ota and I was originally born and raised in Hawaii and moved to Fargo in 2012. I retired as a braille proofreader with the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in 2009. I'm married to Charlene who has just completed serving on the Freedom's Board. By the time you read this, we will have been married for 22 years. We have no children, but we have a cat named Mr. B.



Richard Ovind

Richard Ovind lives in Jamestown, ND where he has lived since 1968. Richard and his mom and brother moved to Jamestown so he and his brother could attend what was then called The Crippled Children's School now known as The Anne Carlsen Center. Upon graduating high school in 1979 he began his employment with Western Gear

in Jamestown, now known as Collins Aerospace where he worked for a total of 35 years. Richard retired in July 2020.

In his younger years Richard enjoyed playing wheelchair basketball and participating in wheelchair track and road races.

He was selected to serve on the State Independent Living Council and in 2000 won the Disabled North Dakotan of the year.

He's really looking forward to working with Freedom to help make a difference and a more unified environment for ALL people.



Tanya Stoll

Tanya Stoll lives in Pelican Rapids with her husband, Zach, and her 4 children. She completed her Bachelor of Arts degree at Minnesota State University and has additional education and training in areas of disability rehabilitation, assistive technology, and mental health. Tanya served as an Independent Living Advocate for Freedom Resource Center for 9 years and is currently working for Vocational Rehabilitation Services with the State of Minnesota. With over 15 years of experience working with the disability community, she continues to advocate for inclusion of people with disabilities, and is excited to be part of the awesome work Freedom Resource Center provides to the community and the people they serve. This is her first term on the Board.



Draisie Wilson

Draisie Wilson has lived in Breckenridge, MN for the past 10 years. She was born in Watertown, SD. She has also lived in 5 states and in Germany, because her Dad was in the Army.

For the past 6 years she has worked at Twin Town Villa in Breckenridge as the Community Life Coordinator Assistant. Her primary responsibility is to provide stimulation activities for the Memory Care residents.

Prior to that she earned her Associates Degree in Liberal Arts at M State, in Fergus Falls, MN. After high school Draisie moved to the Twin Cities where she worked in various health care roles.

Draisie enjoys spending time with her family and friends and doing multiple types of crafts. She looks forward to advocating for people with disabilities as a new board member.



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in the region for more than 30 years."*

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& click



Freedom Resource Center Presents

People's Choice Awards

Featuring Mark Lindquist, "Passion! 8 Steps to Reignite Yours"

Thursday, October 28, 2021

Virtual Awards Ceremony

12:00 PM Central Time

Virtual Silent Auction & 50/50 Raffle

Call 800-450-0459 to reserve a ticket or head to our website
www.freedomrc.org to purchase tickets through Eventbrite!

\$25 Tickets

