

VODEC partners with Local Schools to teach Life Skills



(Above) Back row L to R- Nolan Springer Day Services Coordinator for ATP, Chado Carrillo Day services Supervisor for ATP, Mike Points, Day Services Assistant. Front row L to R Rachel Olmstead, Day Services Assistants, and Felisha Neighbors, Day Services Assistants

“The Adult Transition Program (ATP) helps students develop a sense of pride when the goals they have set for themselves are reached and they feel equal to their peers,” said Steve Smith. Smith is a Special Education Teacher with Council Bluffs Community Schools. The goal of the ATP is to prepare students for life after the classroom. All those who attend ATP have completed the academic requirements to graduate but still need guidance and support to be able to live as independently as possible. While in the program, students learn many daily living skills that will prepare them to move into the community. They work on cooking skills, understanding how to do laundry, and housekeeping, prepare a budget to be able to pay rent, utilities, and have spending money, and work on valuable social skills that will transition into an employment setting. “Most of the students are capable of becoming dependable employees and the ATP program gives them the opportunity to succeed and understand that they can live independently.” Continued Smith.

In order to be eligible for the ATP program, students have had to be a part of special education within a local community school system. During

annual meetings parents can ask about not only the progress of their child, but also what plans are to be developed and implemented for the future. “Usually a parent can ask me if their child can reach a particular goal,” said Smith. “If my answer is yes then we discuss what needs to be done to reach that goal and it usually involves the ATP program.” All plans that include the ATP program is based on the needs of the student and what help they need to meet the goals they have set for themselves and the goals that their parents would like them to reach. “It is really gratifying to see my students succeed with completing the ATP program. They hold their heads high and have a great sense of accomplishment.”

In addition to the ATP program, VODEC along with local schools also offer the SEAC program. This program offers students help within the classroom. VODEC Supported Employment Specialists come into the classroom on a weekly basis and help students create a resume, search and apply for jobs, prepare for the interview by practicing questions, and once they are offered a position our staff assist the student in keeping employment through extended on the job training. The SEAC program offers an additional avenue for students who have goals of entering the



(Above L to R) Alena Sorlien, Supported Employment Assistant, Danielle Nordby, Supported Employment Supervisor, and Rex Reason, Supported Employment Specialist.

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*This list reflects donations received between
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From the Desk of CEO Steve Hodapp



VODEC and schools go well together. Like tea and honey. Bread and butter. You get the idea. We have a symbiotic relationship which means there's mutual benefit. In this case the recipients of the benefit include students taking advantage of the VODEC/schools relationship.

These students get benefits from being in the Adult Transition Program which teaches life skills with community integration and more, the SEAC program which provides in-school pre-employment training and helps find jobs, Job Club which provides in-school presentations about job searches and employment, and transitional programs which integrate students into employment services. Each of these provides a unique approach to their students so after graduation they can have greater success at living and working in the community.

The other advantage these students have is they are aware of adult services through VODEC which may be of continued value to them after graduation. Unfortunately some students and their families who would have a need for adult services are not aware of either availability or accessibility until graduation is either imminent or has happened. Then it could be too late to make a smooth transition from school to adult services. There could be a waiting list with a long wait.

The thing to do is to act well before graduation. Individual Education Plan meetings should include talk about what happens after graduation years before that event. VODEC has the ability to help with that planning or at least provide some input to the planning. So if you know of a family with a youngster with special needs please direct them to someone who can help prepare for life after school. A person to start with is Daryn Richardson. Daryn can be reached at 712-328-2638.

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CARES Program at Memorial Stadium

With football season underway, we would like to share a couple of photos of the CARES program tour of Memorial Stadium in Lincoln and its surrounding buildings, practice field, sand volleyball and weight room.

VODEC consumers saw the trophy's at the Nancy and Tom Osborn building and got to go through the tunnel the Huskers go through on game day. It was a day enjoyed but all the consumers and staff and they would like to thank the University of Lincoln for the tour and warm welcome.



(Left)-Consumer David Steinhoff enjoys time on the Husker field. (Below)- National Championship Trophies



(Above)- Consumer John Heinlein looks at the Husker Blackshirts mural by the weight room. (Right)- Consumer Kyle Autry is all smiles in the Husker endzone.



Vocational Development Center, Inc.

VODEC

612 South Main Street
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

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The mission of VODEC is to provide services to persons with disabilities in order that those persons may live, work and participate in the community in the least restrictive environment to achieve their full potential.

The purpose of VODEC is to support and advocate for persons with disabilities so those persons have opportunities to develop to their fullest potential, to interact with society, to experience a sense of belonging, and to contribute something of themselves at their own levels of ability.

Vocational Development Center is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Donations may be tax deductible. Vocational Development Center is an equal opportunity employer. Applicants for services or employment are considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability.
We are a certified provider of day and residential services by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.
We are approved by the Iowa Department of Human Services to provide waiver services to individuals with intellectual disabilities, brain injuries and we are an approved habilitation service provider.
We have accreditation from CARF for Community Employment Services, Organizational Employment Services and Community Integration.



VODEC is a proud member of:

612 S MAIN ST
COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA 51503
PH: 712-328-2638
hodapp@vodec.org



1. Be at least 16 years old for any vocational program
2. Have behavioral needs within VODEC's scope of service
3. Have medical needs within VODEC's scope of service
4. Have transportation needs within VODEC's capability to provide
5. Have adequate funding in place (including service hours' authorization or private payment in place) for services being requested
6. If applying for an in-home service, the applicant's home must meet basic health and safety requirements

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be considered eligible for any VODEC service:

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For more information on VODEC services please contact Darryl Richardson or Michelle Nelson at 712-328-2638 or by email at dtrichardson@vodec.org