

# The VOICE

A VODEC Publication—Reach Full Potential with VODEC today!

## Masquerade-themed Prom held at VODEC

Nebraska residential consumers participated in the annual summer prom, a masquerade ball on June 22. Held at the 72<sup>nd</sup> street development center attendees enjoyed a catered dinner, a portrait booth, and dancing. “Our consumers look forward to this every year,” states Sarah Wysocki, Services Operations Director.



*Left photo, left to right: Stephanie Fitch, RSS, helped Amanda Molli in the serving line while Lucious Booker, RSA, dished out the food. Above left photo, left to right: Melissa Mann, RSS, danced with Ricky Eppenbaugh. Above right photo, left to right: masked consumer with her dance partner. Right photo, left to right: Cheryl Lux and David Elafros posed for their prom portrait.*



## VODEC behind the Scenes: Moving Day

Moving into your first home is a major step to becoming part of the larger community. Many of us remember the first time we moved out of our parent's home. We had feelings of excitement, fear, pride, and satisfaction. According to Mark Stromer, VODEC's Services Operations Director for Iowa, consumers at VODEC experience those same feelings on moving day.

Moving day is the culmination of many hours of hard work and planning. VODEC consumers and staff members start by working together to create a budget plan that leads to an affordable home they find desirable. If a consumer is eligible staff members assist in applying for programs such as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, Food Assistance, and other types of low-income assistance to help stretch

their budgets. Consumers research potential homes and plan for rent and utility deposits as required with staff on hand to answer their questions.

“It is essential that the home meets the consumers needs. This could include affordability, wheelchair accessibility, and city bus route availability,” states Stromer. Staff use community resources such as thrift stores, garage sales, and discount stores to help the consumers find the appliances, cookware, and furniture they need at a reasonable price. In some cases VODEC has asked for household donations on their behalf.

On moving day consumers, their families, and VODEC staff collaborate on the moving van rental, packing the consumer’s property, loading and unloading the van, as well as getting settled into the new home. Even after all this, there is still

work to be done.

Some consumers will live with a roommate or two. VODEC consumers decide on living arrangements and work with staff to develop roommate agreements which include house rules on visitors, chores, meals, and other issues. “It is a lot of work both physically and mentally to make moving day possible,” states Stromer. “However, any time staff see a consumer move out of their parent's or nursing home there is a sense of liberation for everyone involved.”





Steve Hodapp, CEO

## From the CEO's Desk:

Everybody at VODEC is in a helping industry. It is just the nature of it. Our business is helping others learn skills for life and work.

But it is hard to be helpful all the time. I know. Yet many of us come back every day to be helpful to someone.

As one in leadership it is incumbent on me to try to set the tone.

One way I try is very personal to me.

My dad had a great attitude about work. It had to be fun. I had the opportunity to watch my dad at work as I grew up. He was a cattleman at the Sioux City Stock Yards for 41 years. It was typical for the guys at the Yards to bring their kids to work on the weekends, in the summer, and any other time possible. That is how I got to know my dad. When I was strong enough to push a scraper and work the hay hook I was there.

So I got to see his attitude in practice. I got to see how he related to his customers and the cattle buyers he traded with. It was serious business but always done with a laugh. It was a really great experience. But it wasn't driven home for me until his funeral.

I was talking with my dad's former business partner at the funeral. I wondered about how my dad was able to do what he did everyday with the positive and fun attitude in which he did it. The guy laughed and said it was no secret, my dad would start every workday by asking, "Who can I help today?"

Wow! How can you not have a great attitude if you look at your days like that? I thought I had a pretty good attitude but I knew I needed to take it up a notch. So I started to begin my days asking that same question. After a while I could tell my attitude was better and I felt more affirmed to be in this helping industry, even after 28 years.

So for the example of how to set a tone in the workplace, I thank you, Dad. I can't make it stick but I can be the example.



Check out our website at  
[www.vodec.org](http://www.vodec.org)

Our **News & Events** tab includes a calendar of our community outings for each program. Keep in the loop of where we are going and what we are doing within our community.

## VODEC

### Entrance Criteria

1. Be at least 16 years old for any employment training 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.

For more information or to apply contact Daryn Richardson at [daryn@vodec.org](mailto:daryn@vodec.org)

## Thank You....

to all of our valued supporters

(This list reflects donations received 5/9/15 to 5/27/15)

Jamie Brown  
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# Elm Participates in Munroe-Meyer Institute's Leisure Explorer's Club

The Leisure Explorer's Club is a collaborative program combining the efforts of the Recreational Therapy Department at the Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), with those of VODEC's Elm Day Services. This program's mission is to provide additional daytime opportunities for leisure, recreational, and social activities for individuals who participate in the Elm Day services through community outings and swimming in MMI's therapy pool. These activities are led by recreational therapists, adaptive therapy specialists, and technicians from MMI who work alongside VODEC staff to ensure all needs of participants are met. The program takes place either at our facilities, at MMI, or in the Omaha community. Transportation for visits to MMI and for other outings are provided to and from Elm by MMI staff.

"MMI and the Leisure Explorer's Club are valuable to our consumers", stated Beth-Ann Townsend, VODEC's Nebraska Day Services Supervisor. "It is amazing to witness the excitement and to feel their joy when they are participating in the various community activities."



Top photo: Gary Crouse at a local park watching some geese.  
Bottom photo: Divesh Bastola enjoying a swim at the MMI pool.



Pictured from left: Staff Beth Peters, Erin Gantz, Consumer Mark, Staff April Leibert and Joanne Hiller



Consumer Adam



Consumer Meryle



Consumer Kyle



Consumer Cheryl and staff Kristen

## VODEC Consumers thank OmahaGives24 donors for \$2,820 raised

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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.*

## Iowa Residential Consumers Visit Henry Doorly Zoo

One of the highlights of living in the Omaha area is our "world-class" Henry Doorly Zoo. The zoo is a favorite destination for many, including VODEC's consumers. The most recent visit to the zoo was on June 12 when ten consumers visited the zoo with their friends. The consumers ate lunch at the Red Barn Cafe before forming into small groups to explore the zoo. "The Henry Doorly Zoo is a favorite destination for the consumers," stated Micky Burbach, Iowa Residential Services Manager. "They had a great day with their friends and everyone enjoyed the exercise." While at the zoo consumers visited the Dessert Dome, Hubbard Gorilla Valley, Red Barn Park, and the Simmons Aviary.



*Top left photo, left to right: Norman Jones & Norman Knott. Bottom left photo, back row, left to right: Helena Cosner, La Donna Bolden, Kevin Willms and front row, left to right: Amanda Chapin, Sandy White, Heather Haas. Top right photo, left to right: Lauren Strosahl, Nicole Wright, Andrew Eppert, and Norma Hammers. Bottom right photo, left to right: David Jensen and Gayle Mass.*