

Adult Transition Program Graduates Six Students



(Above)-Front row-(L to R) Alfredo Gutierrez, Allison Wilson, Ian Heiman, Stacey Meehan, and ATP Coordinator Nole Springer. (Back Row)-(L to R) Mike Points, ATP assistant and Brandon Johnson.

“It taught me about budgeting and helped me prepare to be on my own more,” said Adult Transition (ATP) Student Allison Wilson about her time in the ATP Program. Allison along with her five fellow graduates spoke about the program and what it has helped them accomplish. “It has taught me life skills, community involvement, better control, and how to handle being in the community more,” said Brandon Johnson.

ATP is a Council Bluffs Public Schools and Lewis Central Schools program that is facilitated by VODEC. Students from the ages of 18-21 who have completed their academic requirements but still need assistance are enrolled into this program to gain the daily living and social skills they still need to complete the “Transition” to adulthood. While in the VODEC-facilitated program students work on skills such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, vehicle maintenance, and budgeting. They also work on interview skills and resume writing as well as job training by working at the VODEC Development Center or at a community partner. Students also experience community

integration with outings including shopping, museums, entertainment venues, just to name a few. “I get to do a lot of fun things in the ATP program and also learn what I need to live on my own and work as part of a team,” said Ian Heiman.

Once students have completed the requirements of the ATP program, Council Bluffs Public Schools or Lewis Central Schools agree that it is time for the student to “graduate” from the program and become a member of the community at large. Many of the students have dreams and goals for the future and this program has brought them one step closer to reaching those goals. “I want to get a community job after graduation and I have already passed my entrance exam for the Marines,” said Johnson. Other goals include getting a drivers license, working at VODEC or participating in the Cares program and for one it includes the dream of going to college. “I want to go to college and study art and animation. It is all I want to do and a big part of my life. I love it,” said Alfredo Gutierrez.

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When asked what they would say if they had the opportunity to speak with a student who was thinking about the program, they all said to definitely do it because it will help you out a lot and "I wouldn't have had the interviews I had without the program."

Students and staff will celebrate this graduation on May 29th with a ceremony at VODEC for the graduates and their families. VODEC CEO Steve Hodapp will be hand to pass out medals to each of them and it will be followed by a small lunch and reception for the graduates. The following day on May 30th, the entire ATP class along with VODEC's Iowa Cares program will have an after party at one of Council Bluffs' local parks with lunch, games, and fun.

Thank You
FOR YOUR HELP

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*This list reflects donations received between
3/18/2014 and 4/10/2014*

From the Desk of CEO Steve Hodapp

Around this time of year I used to hear parents of graduating high school seniors with disabilities say, "Oh my gosh, now what?" Most of today's parents are more informed about what's after high school. They know to start the process of accessing adult services years before graduation. They learned who to contact and when and where and how. Most of today's parents of graduates are set. Unfortunately some are not. Some 'didn't get the memo' and are struggling to get adult services lined up.

If you have a high school student with a disability on track to graduate in a few years it is not too early to start the process to access adult services for him or her. Most typical graduates are looking at some sort of employment training or community employment service, and there may be a residential service. Whatever it is, now is the time to make your contacts to have things in place. If you need to know the who, what and how then call 712-328-2638 and ask for Daryn Richardson or Michelle Nelson. Either can get you started.

Some parents first learned about VODEC's adult services from their sons or daughters who were fortunate to have been in a Job Club session by Mr. Richardson in several local high schools. If your school doesn't make this free opportunity available

have someone there call Mr. Richardson.

Some parents learned about VODEC's adult services through their students' participation in VODEC's other in-school programs. Presently these are available only through Council Bluffs Community Schools' high schools. One of the programs is SEAC which enables students to learn about conducting a job search, preparing for interviews, and getting hired. Another of the programs is Adult Transition Program, or ATP, in which students learn valuable life skills lessons and experience a variety of community integration activities. If you believe your high school could benefit from a SEAC or an ATP program, have someone reach out to Mr. Richardson.

All of this circles back to preparing the access to adult services for a high school-age student with a disability. To know to prepare, one must first know. That's what this article is helping you or someone like you do. If you believe this is targeted at you then it's time to take action. Today.



VODEC Consumers participate in Special Olympics

Running long jump, standing long jump, 50m and 100m walk and dashes, shot put, softball throw, 30m wheelchair race, bowling, boccie, 100m walk and runs are just a few of the events in which VODEC consumers received awards this month. Special Olympics give persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate in team and individual sports that they may not have otherwise. It not only teaches them about teamwork and encourages them to stay in shape, it also provides them with social interactions. "Iowa Special Olympics is an amazing program where every athlete is given the opportunity to compete and reach their full potential. Special Olympics has given VODEC's athletes a chance to meet friends from all around South Western Iowa and develop relationships with peers and coaches. Athletes look forward to Special Olympics every year!" said Iowa Residential Manager Jamie Brown.



(Above)- Consumer Heather Haas competes in the long jump. (Top Right)- Consumer Paula Ross shows off her ribbon. (Bottom Right)- VODEC consumer Sandy White makes a great landing. (Bottom Left)- Consumer David Jensen wins another ribbon.



Quality Improvement Committee Submits Quarterly Results

VODEC's Quality Improvement Committee meets on a quarterly basis to discuss quality within the organization and what steps can be taken to increase quality and/or decrease incidents on a yearly basis. During a recent meeting, the committee reviewed the fourth quarter of 2013 and its results. The committee looks at many different indicators and determines any errors incurred, VODEC's goals to work towards, and a plan of action to reach those goals. Indicators that the committee looked at included: Health and Safety; Outcomes including Health, Census, Satisfaction; Workforce; and Incident Data. The committee set goals for each of the Indicators and put in place plans to reach those goals each quarter. A quarterly report is available to any interested parties at the VODEC Council Bluffs main office.

VODEC's Elm Program is Always Busy

"VODEC's Elm program is always doing something. Whether it is getting ready to go on an outing, working on a craft item, or spending time in one of four sensory rooms," said VODEC CEO Steve Hodapp. Elm consumers have a full day each and every day they spend at the 72nd street location. In the last month they have gone to the to Maplewood Lanes for bowling, Barnes and Noble to pick out a favorite new book, and to local parks to enjoy the weather. Consumers also keep busy while in the program with craft items including butterflies, easter baskets, and using paint and straws to create works of art. While not working on art, consumers can spend time in one of the senso-

ry rooms that offer music, computer skills, fitness, and problem solving with puzzles and games.

If you know of anyone interested in the Elm program please contact Daryn Richardson at 712-328-2638 or via email at daryn@vodec.org.



(Above)- Butterflies. (Right)- Consumer Patrick Shields at Cabela's. (Below)- VODEC staff member Megan Davidson helps consumer David Christians with his bowling.



(Top)- VODEC staff member Megan Davidson works with consumer Sarah Thrall at Maplewood Lanes. (Above)- Consumer Megan Riley shows off her butterfly. (Below)- Consumer Micah Weeks works on her latest work of art.



VODEC to Participate in Omaha Gives!

For the second year in a row, VODEC will participate in Omaha Gives!. This 24 hour charitable challenge encourages the Omaha/Council Bluffs community to open their hearts and pocketbooks and give to local charities. This year's date is May 21st from midnight to midnight. Not only do members of the community donate throughout the day but Omaha Gives! will also hold drawings each and every hour for additional money to be awarded. There is also the opportunity for matching funds for the non profit that receives the most donations and the most money.

VODEC participated in this event last year and to celebrate the day VODEC hosted a buddy baseball

game with consumers and members of the community. For this years 24 hour challenge, VODEC will be working with Ron Dickinson and Dickinson-Clark CPA to host an outside event. Check out the VODEC website at www.vodec.org and VODEC's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/vodecinc for more details about the event as it becomes available.

Ron and his son Matt will also be leaving in May for their "Ride for Full Potential" bike ride across America. The Omaha Gives! event will also be a send off for them. Check out their progress at www.vodec.org/ride-full-potential/ or at www.rondickinson.org.



(Above Left)- Consumer Donald Lily at last years Omaha Gives! event. (Above Right)- (L to R) Matt Dickinson and his dad Ron preparing for the Ride for Full Potential.

VODEC Cares Programs



(Above Left)- Consumer Lisa Snipes participates in the Cares Talent Show. (Above Middle)- Consumer Norman Menrad works on his Tie Die shirt project. (Above Right)- Consumer Dan Reid and VODEC staff member Rachel Olmstead make funnel cakes for Carnival Days.

Vocational Development Center, Inc.

VODEC

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version of the VODEC *Voice*
instead of the print version

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.



VODEC is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Donations may be tax deductible. VODEC 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 Medicaid Enterprise to provide waiver services to individuals with intellectual disabilities, brain injuries and we are an approved habilitation service provider. We are a provider of Host Home services in Iowa and Extended Family Homes in Nebraska. We have accreditation from CARF for Community Employment Services, Organizational Employment services and Community Integration.



VODEC is a proud member of:

dtrichardson@vodec.org

For more information on VODEC services please contact Daryn Richardson or Michelle Nelson at 712-328-2638 or by email at

GoodSearch is a Yahoo! search engine that pays charities you select a penny per search! Go to www.goodsearch.com and add GoodSearch to your browser. Then select Vocational Development Center as your designated charity! And pass the news on to your friends and family! Over 15,000 searches have benefited VODEC so far! It's easy and it works!



VODEC IS ON GoodSearch!

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

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



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