



The VODEC VOICE

Since 1968

February 2013

Local Companies GROW with the Help of VODEC



(Left) Consumer Samantha LeBlanc and VODEC Staff member Cari DeBord work on boxes for Luck Bucket.

“One of my favorite things is helping the companies in Omaha with their jobs.” Samantha LeBlanc said recently when asked about her job at VODEC’s Millard location. Samantha works on many different jobs while at VODEC for numerous companies in the Omaha metro. Her daily tasks can include putting cables together, marking the boxes with price tags for retail sale and putting goodies into bags for retail and parties. Numerous companies use VODEC to help with seasonal rushes, special orders, and important jobs that need to be done quickly and accurately.

Jobs like the ones Samantha performs at VODEC help not only the clients VODEC serves but also the local companies.

These types of jobs are usually on short notice and need to be done quickly. By using VODEC clients local companies can take on extra jobs without the worry of being over extended. They save on labor costs while increasing their workflows.

Samantha really likes her job at VODEC and the extra money has allowed her to buy what she wants for the things she like to do. “My VODEC money was used to by Christmas presents for my family. I really liked to be able to give gifts that I had bought on my own.” she said. With the money Samantha earns doing jobs for local businesses she has been able to have some extra freedom and independence in her daily life which in turn has made her a more outgoing person. “Samantha is a very patient person and works very well with the others on her team. She can always be counted on to help others who are having trouble and make sure the jobs get done on time.” says Bridget Greco a vocational services supervisor at the Millard location.

VODEC Voice to transition to digital publication

In an ever changing technological world, VODEC strives to keep in step with new technology and ways of conveying information to our consumers and partners. After careful consideration the VODEC Voice has decided to transition into a digital publication that will be emailed to recipients on a monthly basis.

By transitioning to a digital format the money saved from printing costs and postage fees can now be funneled in to consumer programs and services. By readers moving to the digital version they are helping create new ways of helping those we serve.

To transition to the digital version of the VODEC Voice please send an email message to mnelson@vodec.org to put your name on our list. Those who do not send an email will continue to receive a paper version of the Voice.



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A Message from the CEO **Steve Hodapp**

We take work seriously because we believe in the strong mid-west work ethic. We teach it and model it in our vocational services. To be able to do that we need work. How do we get work?

VODEC has two full time Business Development Directors. So? This emphasizes our commitment to vocational services. Some organizations don't have any one totally focused on developing this part of the business. Without work there's really no way active vocational service can occur because there's nothing upon which to build employability training. And employability training is inherent in vocational service. So the circle goes back to business development.

An objective of business development includes reaching local, regional and national companies who perform some sort of task or set of tasks which our vocational service consumers can learn and complete. To meet this objective the Business Development Directors use networking, cold calls, lead procurement, referrals, etc. to get in front of the right persons at those companies.

After the right contact has been reached the presentation is made. And because VODEC takes work seriously we can back our presentation statements. Vocational service employees and consumers are proud of their capabilities to meet deadlines and quality requirements. And this circles back to business development. Without successful completion of customers' expectations there's no product to present.

If you know a business you think should be contacted by our Business Development team please call either Jack Wickes at 402-597-0533 or Jim Hoing at 402-455-4648. Thanks for your support.



Thank You to our Donors

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This list reflects donations received between 12/12/2012 and 12/31/2012

Work Center handles large contract for a Metro Hardware Company

The VODEC work centers are continuing to provide their services to local companies. A Council Bluffs based company contracts with VODEC to create boxes and put screws into them in preparation for retail sale at local hardware stores. Consumers are developing the needed skills to put the boxes together, glue the sides to make sure they are secure and then fill the boxes with the required number of screws for that particular box. Many of the consumers commented on how much they enjoy the job and really like the money they earn from it. Our consumers are able to package over a ton of screws per week.

(Left)-Consumer Joyce Donahoo puts screws into a box at the Council Bluffs work center.

Nebraska ELM Program visits Mulhall's

(Right) Clockwise from left—Consumers Sarah Thrall, Crystal Newton, and Jonathan Hancock enjoy a tour through the lighted Christmas tree display at Mulhall's Nursery.

(Below)— Consumer Tiffany Peters enjoys her time spent with the live reindeer Mulhall's brought in for the holidays.



*(Above) Front Row L-R: Kate Klemmensen; Dawn Alley; Kristy Cherry
Back Row L-R: Crystal Newton, Anna Strandberg (DSA); Jonathon Hancock; Sarah Thrall; Jessica Lee; Tiffany Peters; David Christian; Matthew Assadi (DSA)*



VODEC's ELM day program consumers visited Mulhall's Nursery in December, taking in all the holiday decorations it had to offer. Consumers walked through the gift and floral areas getting ideas for Christmas gifts and home decorations while they worked on their motor skills. They toured the lighted Christmas trees display and even got to see two live reindeer that Mulhall's brought in for the holiday season. It was a wonderful outing for the consumers and helped them get into the holiday spirit.

The Importance of Programs Like VODEC's Adult transition Program after Graduation

By: Daryn D. Richardson

When parents of children that have recently graduated a school based program come to tour our agency I am sometimes apprehensive. I worry about the level of preparation that the family has received as they enter the world of adult services. Recently, I conducted a tour for a family at VODEC. After the tour, we filed into the conference room.

I began by asking the usual questions, "Do you have a service coordinator?" "Yes" the parent stated. "Do you know what services your son needs?" "Yes, he is looking for residential supports in addition to Job Development and Job Coaching services" replied the parent. She continued "As a matter of fact, our son has had several work experiences in his transition program."

I was amazed. This parent knew what her son needed and had already taken the steps needed to make the transition from the school transition program to adult services easy for her son. I was also relieved. Not that many years ago I remember a mother of a child that toured our program and wanted services.

Her son had graduated a few years earlier, and she desperately needed services to help meet her son's needs. She had no knowledge of adult services, service coordination or what services could do for her son. She was in tears. All I could do was to give her some phone numbers of agencies that may be able to help. Thankfully the days of parents being unprepared for the post-graduation world are becoming a thing of the past.

VODEC'S transition program, The Adult transition Program or (ATP) is one of many funded by local school districts that are designed to prepare kids and their families for post-graduation life. At least monthly, I get to see firsthand how our ATP staff prepare children, and work with families to make sure that the most appropriate connections are made. In addition, our staff work with a variety of agencies that will continue to serve the family post-graduation. Parents that I see coming to our agency are much better prepared than they were a few years ago. What the teachers and our staff are doing is working much to my joy and relief. It is critical that these programs continue to receive our support.

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

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



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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 to provide vocational services by the Nebraska Department of Education.
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.



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.

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

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