



612 South Main Street  
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503

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## ATP Teaches Young Adults Valuable Life Skills

(continued from cover)

In her job, she buses tables, interacts with customers and does clean-up in the lobby of the restaurant.

“Ashlie is very personable and everyone who meets her loves her. She takes her job very seriously,” said Supported Employment Specialist and ATP Employment Teacher Katey Williams. She along with Regina Greco and Katie Nilsson have worked together to make the program creative and successful over the years.

Vodec’s ATP is designed to meet the needs of students with mild or moderate intellectual disabilities between the ages of 18 and 21. It pinpoints the essential skills they will need to become fully included in community life.

In addition to learning how to get and keep a job, adult

learners develop the skills necessary for daily living, community and leisure activities. job readiness, nutritious meal preparation, grocery shopping within a budget and money management.

“I love my job at Dairy Queen ... ATP has really been great for me in many different ways.”

— Becca, ATP participant

“I’ve seen so much growth in confidence and understanding from both Becca and Ashlie in their job preparation and appreciation, and they’ve also learned valuable life skills,” Williams

said. “They are just two of our program participants who are enjoying success.”

If you have a high school student with a developmental disability graduating in a few years, contact Services Development Director Daryn Richardson at 712-328-2638 for information about how ATP or other Vodec programs can help the student prepare for life.

Join us on Social Media!



Help us “Go Green” and sign up for The Voice online at [www.vodec.org](http://www.vodec.org) or by emailing Mike at [mwatkins@vodec.org](mailto:mwatkins@vodec.org).



# THE Voice

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## ATP Prepares Young Adults for the Future

On her first day of work at Dairy Queen earlier this year, Becca was ready. She knew everything she needed to be successful because of the training and guidance she received through Vodec’s Adult Transition Program (ATP).

A recent graduate of Abraham Lincoln High School, Becca joined ATP during the school year and has two more years in the program before she graduates.

But in the short amount of time she’s been involved with the program, she said she’s learned how to dress correctly and interview professionally for a job so she can be successful now and in any future jobs she might have.

“I love my job at Dairy Queen as a lobby attendant,” she said. “I pick up trays, pick up trash, clean tables, and help people in the lobby.

“Before this, I volunteered at Goodwill and worked at the YMCA and Planet Fitness, but I really love what I’m doing now. ATP has really been great for me in many different ways.”



Becca (left) and Ashlie both graduated high school and found steady, fulfilling employment with Dairy Queen and the Henry Doorly Zoo, respectively, through Vodec’s Adult Transition Program (ATP). The program helps young adults with mild or moderate intellectual disabilities learn essential skills they will need to become fully included in community life.

A recent ATP graduate, Ashlie secured her position at Treetops restaurant at Henry Doorly Zoo after learning job-related skills through the program.

(continued on back cover)

## Consumers Go to Class for Council Bluffs Community Schools

During the school year, students in the Council Bluffs Community Schools District use their Chromebooks every day for classwork and homework.

Over those many days, weeks and months, they get dirty as they are used — but who cleans them?

Thanks to a partnership between Vodec and Council Bluffs Schools, a team of Vodec consumers were hired to meticulously clean each of the 2,000-plus computers to be returned to students this fall.

“They did a phenomenal job — a much better and faster job than we could have done ourselves,” said John Stile, Supervisor of Network



Vodec consumers (l-r) James Neeson, Norman Jones and Eve Honeyman meticulously clean Council Bluffs Community Schools’ Chromebooks.

& User Support with Council Bluffs Community Schools.

“They completed the project in a few weeks, and it would have taken us much longer to do it. They saved us huge man hours, and we’re very grateful and proud of their work.”

Using glass cleaner, shop towels and disinfecting wipes, a group of 10 consumers went from school to school over the course of a few weeks to complete the project.

Both Vodec and Council Bluffs Schools hope this partnership will continue because of the great work done and relationship that continues to grow between the two organizations.

“We value our partnership with Vodec and the opportunity to work together to provide meaningful, real-life work experiences for individuals,” Council Bluffs Community School District Superintendent Dr. Vickie Murillo said.



# Vodec Celebrates Fun, Productive Summer



**Top left:** Council Bluffs Residential consumers excelled at the Special Olympics Iowa Summer Games May 17-19 in Ames. **Top right:** In June, Vodec's Urbandale office was honored by the local Chamber of Commerce with a ribbon-cutting. **Middle right:** During the Celebrate CB Parade May 19, Daryn Richardson, a.k.a. The Candy Man, handed out Vodec candy bags to children. **Bottom right:** Vodec consumers (from left) Ashley Jennings and Sarah Arnold play an exciting game of giant Jenga while Josh Pope watches during the Iowa Residential Picnic in June. **Bottom left:** Nebraska Residential consumers got dressed up and enjoyed some food and fun at the annual Prom in June.

## Vodec Entrance Criteria:

- ▶ Be at least 16 years old for any employment training 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
  - ▶ For in-home service, an applicant's home must meet basic health and safety requirements
- For more information, or to apply for Vodec services, contact Daryn Richardson at drichardson@vodec.org or call (712) 328-2638.

Vodec is certified by:

- Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services
- Iowa Department of Human Services
- Nebraska Department of Education
- Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Services



Vodec is affiliated with the following organizations:

- Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce (IA)
- Human Services Advisory Council (HSAC)
- Iowa Association of Community Providers (IACP)
- Iowa Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)
- Nebraska Association of Service Providers (NASP)
- Nonprofit Association of the Midlands (NAM)
- Omaha Chamber of Commerce (NE)
- Sarpy County Chamber of Commerce (NE)
- Urbandale Chamber of Commerce (IA)

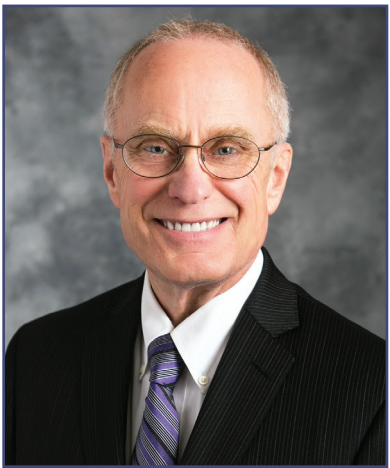
Vodec is an authorized provider in the following:

Iowa HealthLink networks:

- Amerigroup
- United Healthcare



# From the CEO's Desk:



**Steve Hodapp**  
Chief Executive Officer

Life at Vodec is like Midwest summer weather. It's constantly subject to change.

This summer is a prime example as we experience several changes.

In Nebraska, our Omaha Elm program is getting a 'refresh' in its 15th year. There is investment being made in creating a revitalized environment to make consumers' Elm experience more meaningful and enjoyable.

Through all of their senses, those consumers and, by extension, their stakeholders, should feel a refreshed Elm at the end of this project.

The project has phases which have begun already. Some of the outcomes will be subtle, others very evident.

We've been disappointed and it has been disappointing this summer to not continue as a Project Search service provider.

We have been involved in two Omaha, Neb., Project Search locations for several years. The Nebraska funding base for service provision changed and became inadequate right before consumers were to start a new session in July.

We tried to arrange funding for Council Bluffs, Iowa, consumers to participate, but we ran into a similar funding road block. We'll have to

be comforted in knowing dozens of consumers had positive experiences in Project Search and found community employment after their sessions.

On a more positive note, we're experiencing growing interest in what Vodec offers through our Urbandale, Iowa, operation.

Our reputation there for providing good services by supportive staff members has us doing discovery for increasing our footprint beyond Urbandale and into counties surrounding it.

The growth activity being experienced there supports our plan to provide good services and foster a responsive culture while not forcing ourselves into areas. If we do well,


then we'll be noticed and invited.

Also positive is that we added a first mini-bus — which is wheelchair-accessible — to our Council Bluffs fleet. This will enable more consumers with mobility issues to have access to more frequent community inclusion opportunities.

Consumers with mobility challenges have been afforded community access using our wheelchair-accessible minivans, but the mini-bus positively expands that access.

So, as you can see, life at Vodec is indeed like Midwest summer weather.

As always, thank you all for your support, understanding and patience.

Thank you,  
  
Steve Hodapp  
Vodec CEO

**P.S.** I want to take a moment to thank everyone who supported us during Omaha Gives! and Pottawattamie Gives! May 23. Thanks to you, we raised more than \$3,500 to help fund our programs. Next year's day of giving happens May 22. Thank you!

## Thank you! To all of our Valued Supporters\*

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\*Mid-May to Mid-July 2018  
\*\* Omaha Gives! or Pottawattamie Gives! Donation