



Transition Focus Program Opens

On September 12, 2022, a new program opened at the Vodec Development Center in Urbandale, IA. This new program is called Transition Focus. The program serves Iowa Medicaid waiver members as well as high school and transition-aged youth. The focus of this program is to develop specific daily living skills with community integration and transferable work skills through volunteer experiences. "This program is designed specifically to meet the needs of consumers whose priorities are living as independently as possible," said Daryn Richardson, Services Development Director.

Richardson and Sheila Gathercole, Services Development Coordinator, met with Kylene Simpson in 2019. Simpson is a special education teacher from Des Moines Public Schools district (DMPS) and teaches in the Secondary Transition Employment Program (STEP).



Above left to right: Day Services Coordinator Holly Adams, Jazzmin, and Leon making kabobs from fresh ingredients they bought locally from Hill Top Farms.



Above left to right: Special Education Teacher, Kylene Simpson, Jazzmin, Day Services Coordinator Holly Adams, and Leon.

Simpson saw a need for the type of specific skill development for consumers who have a goal of greater independence. "There is a need for this type of program everywhere, after graduation from high school the option for post-secondary services of this type is very slim to none," said Simpson.

Simpson approached Vodec with her vision. Richardson, Gathercole, and Simpson began planning with Tina Hardy, Services Operations Director; and Holly Adams, Day Services Coordinator, to develop the program. "We are creating an opportunity at Transition Focus to give consumers the opportunity to learn daily living skills with community integration and volunteer experience," said Simpson. "I've been wanting a program like this for 23 years."



Above left to right: Traister, Jazzmin and Leon exploring the trails at Walker Johnson Park in Urbandale, IA.

Left: Jazzmin and Leon enjoying shopping for farm fresh produce at Hill Top Farms located near Dallas Center, IA.



Steve Hodapp, CEO

Let Me Tell You What's Been Going On

It's been exciting around here during the changes of seasons from hot dry summer to hopefully cooler and wetter fall. What's been going on? Well, let me tell you.

As summer wound down the group at our Omaha development center had a week-long Vodec Days celebration. This has become an annual celebration. Great activities provided great fun for consumers, employees and any visitors lucky enough to be present.

Schools started the 2022-23 year in August, and so did our student services. Student services include transition and work experiences both off-site in community settings and on-site for high school students with developmental disabilities.

During the week of September 12, we joined a national effort to recognize direct support professionals (DSPs). DSPs are the front-line of service delivery. Locally, Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts signed a state

proclamation honoring DSPs. And we provided Vodec t-shirts and supplied special treats to employees to mark the meaning of the week. And, after an initial stall caused by COVID-19, in September we rolled out a new Transition Focus day habilitation program in Urbandale, IA. This is a hybrid in that it serves both adults and high-school-age students with developmental disabilities.

I share this to let you know we are not standing still. We are rejuvenated and ready to embrace all the things happening that we know about and bracing for the things coming down the road.

While we do this as an organization, I'll piggyback on the DSP recognition. The services we provide, and the high quality of those services, is only possible through the efforts of our wonderful caring employees. Each gets a high-five for all they do to care for the family members of many of you. If you'd care to offer a shout-out to any individual or group whom you feel is doing a great job, please share it with me.

How You Can Help with Employee Recruiting

Should you know of a friend or relative who may have an interest in our mission to serve persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, please have them contact our human resources department or visit our website www.vodec.org to explore our open positions.

Your ongoing interest and commitment to Vodec's mission in serving others is appreciated.

Molina Healthcare Announced as Iowa's Newest MCO

The Iowa Dept. of Health and Human Services announced in September the selection of a new managed care organization (MCO). Molina Healthcare will join Amerigroup and Iowa Total Care as contractors for the delivery of services for Iowa's Medicaid members. Most of Vodec's adult consumers are Medicaid members.

Molina Healthcare will go 'live' on July 1, 2023. This will mean some shuffling of Iowa consumers between MCOs before June 30, 2023. This change will impact Iowa consumers only.



Steve Hodapp, CEO

Hodapp Celebrates 25 Years with Vodec

Congratulations go to Steve Hodapp, Vodec CEO for 25 years at Vodec. Because of Steve's work at Vodec for the last 25 years, the agency has helped hundreds of consumers find jobs, homes, and a sense of purpose and belonging. During his tenure at Vodec, Steve has led the effort to grow the organization from one service for one target group in one specific area to multiple service lines for a diverse group of service participants in multiple geographic areas in Iowa and Nebraska.

Vodec has offices in Omaha, NE, Council Bluffs, IA, and Urbandale, IA. "We've had success across the board. We have diversified and increased in size, and remain resilient in the face of pandemics, recessions, and other adversity," states Daryn Richardson, Services Development Director. "Steve has taught us that when we put the consumer first, everything else will follow."

Adult Transition Program (ATP) Students Return to a Larger, and Brighter Classroom

Vodec increased the ATP classroom size this year to include three new learning stations: a dining room station, a bedroom station, and a living room station. "The stations give us the ability to teach daily living skills and household cleaning by demonstration. After each demonstration, the students practice as often



Left: Day Services Supervisor, Regina Greco demonstrates how to set a table with Darnell.

Below: Workers install windows to the new ATP Classroom in Vodec Council Bluffs, IA.



as needed in each learning station," said Regina Greco Day Service Supervisor "We've nearly doubled the size of the classroom, and purchased new desks and lockers."

In addition to the learning stations, four new exterior windows brighten the space, and by the end of 2022, LED lights will replace the room's current fixtures. Colorful new tables, chairs, lockers, and desks were added. "I'm proud of the work that was done over the summer," said Daryn Richardson. "For months we have consulted with experts in education who have made similar changes to their learning environment. They have all noticed an improvement in student learning." The changes to the classroom are funded in part by the Southwest Iowa Mental Health and Disabilities Service Region Impact Grant.

The Adult Transition Program (ATP) located at the Vodec Development Center 612 South Main Street in Council Bluffs, IA helps bridge the gap from school to adulthood by teaching Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and provides work experiences to special education students from across Southwest Iowa.

We are thankful for these generous donors.

Donna Bush
Costco -West Des Moines, IA
Jeremy Dunkirk
Jacque Evans

Miles and Crystal Havekost
Steve Hodapp
Kelli Langfitt
Maria Mabe

Molly and Mary Lou McGinn
Tim McMahan
Sams Club -Des Moines, IA
Andrea Smith

Vodec is certified by:

- The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)
- Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services
- Iowa Department of Human Services
- Nebraska Department of Education



Vodec is affiliated with the following organizations:

- Council Bluffs, Iowa Chamber of Commerce
- 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)
- Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce

Vodec is an authorized provider in the following Iowa HealthLink networks:

- Amerigroup
- Iowa Total Care

Vodec is a contracted Community Rehabilitation Program with the Iowa Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.



Vodec Entrance Criteria:

- Be at least 16 years of age for employment services
- Have behavior that is not dangerous to self or others
- Have medical needs within Vodec's scope of service
- Have transportation needs within Vodec's capability to provide
- Have funding in place prior to service provision

For more information or to apply for Vodec services, contact Daryn Richardson at drichardson@vodec.org or call (712) 328-2638.



612 S. Main Street
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Our mission 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 an equal opportunity employer. There is equal opportunity for services and for employment, retention and advancement without regard to race, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability and veteran status or any other classifications protected by state or federal law.

Vodec is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Donations may be tax-deductible.

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