



The Vodec Voice

Realizing **Potential**

December 2022

A Full Fall of Fun for Consumers

Vodec consumers participated in a variety of events this fall. Employees and consumers enjoyed Halloween parties, multiple pumpkin patches, a “trunk or treat”, and there were Halloween Dances at the Council Bluffs, and Omaha development centers. “The festivities are all an immense amount of fun, but are not frivolous,” explained Daryn Richardson Services Development Director. “These parties, dances, and trips serve the development of consumers in a way that is central to our mission. First, because the consumers are involved in the planning of the events, they are learning skills such as self-advocacy and compromise. Secondly, the community integration and social interaction of these events improve the mental health of the consumers and develop their self-confidence.” added Richardson.

In Omaha, Nebraska, Vodec employees provided a “trunk or treat” event in which staff members provided treats for consumers. Consumers also visited multiple pumpkin patch venues surrounding the Omaha area. The consumers explored many attractions within the venues including corn mazes and haunted houses.

In Urbandale, Iowa, consumers participated in a costume party. The party was attended by Cares and Transition Focus consumers. Cares employees provided treats and games. Consumers also visited Howell’s Greenhouse and Pumpkin Patch. The consumers had a wonderful time selecting pumpkins and interacting with farm animals.

Cares consumers in Council Bluffs visited pumpkin patches as well. Additionally, consumers were ecstatic when they discovered that there would be a Halloween Dance.



Above: Torie is making some barnyard friends at Howell's Greenhouse and Pumpkin Patch in Cumming, Iowa.



Above: Drake is "trunk or treating" with a little help from Day Services assistant Anthony Haynes.



Above: Lisa and Derek in Harry Potter costume at the Halloween Dance in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Consumers in day programs and student services receive a monthly calendar of events for which they plan their participation. If you’re participating in these programs and are not receiving a calendar, contact your local Vodec office. Contact information is available on page 4.



Continual training is the Foundation of the Best Possible Service

Steve Hodapp, CEO

December marks the last month for employees to finish their annual required training. We use a third-party system called Relias as a host for most of our required training. Relias also has a ton of other pieces of training which are elective options. I tell you this because training is an active and important piece of what Vodec provides its employees.

Additional to Relias required and optional training for supervisors, managers and directors is our monthly Vodec University sessions. For most of these we bring in outside subject matter experts on a variety of topics to support how we do our business. We also work on our financial literacy with open book discussions about financial reports. Our belief is that if employees know more about the financial status, then there will be better fiscal decisions made. We want to squeeze every drop of value from every penny we receive.

Trainings through Relias and trainings through other resources are ways Vodec continues to ensure the integrity of service provision and program administration.



Above: Vodec employees attending a documentation webinar in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Funding for the new employee room was provided by The Southwest Iowa Mental Health and Disability Region impact grant.

There are specific trainings targeted to employees in specific positions, from front-line direct support professionals to the CEO. A key takeaway is that training is a focus here.

We want our employees to have the best tools at their disposal to be able to provide the best services possible to our consumers. Continual training is the foundation to accomplish that. We can never know enough, and that includes me.

The "Shoe Box Angel" Returns to Vodec in December

Consumers of the Cares program in Council Bluffs, Ia. will receive gifts from Shoe Box Angels created by Mischa Martens, a charity organization from Council Bluffs, Iowa.

In 2020, Vodec Day Services Supervisor, Daniella Finnegan, contacted Martens to see if the Vodec Cares program would qualify for the gifts. "I discovered that some of our consumers aren't as fortunate as others at Christmas. I wanted to see if she (Martens) could help us," explained Finnegan. Martens agreed and delivered gifts to the Cares program. "The "Shoebbox Angel" gifts contain all kinds of items and a message of hope and caring," states Finnegan.



Above: Martens arriving with the gifts for Council Bluffs Cares consumers in December 2021.

Martens started the "Shoe Box Angel" program years ago to make a difference in the lives of less fortunate children and adults. "I had many years of feeling depressed at the holidays, wishing I could do something more to help... ", states Martens on her Facebook page.

Remember Vodec in your Holiday Giving

As you get ready to close out 2022 and perhaps look to make year-end donations, please remember Vodec in your planning. Vodec is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. This means your donation to Vodec at any time of the year may be tax-deductible for you.

Your donation will help support programs for consumers we serve in Iowa and Nebraska.

Donations may be dropped off at or mailed to 612 South Main Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51503. If your employer has a gift-matching program, please be sure to take advantage of this, also. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Thank you to the following donors:

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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.

Our Offices & Locations:

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