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## Urbandale Day Program Expanding in 2024

Vodec's Central Iowa regional offices (located at 114th St., Urbandale, IA) will undergo a significant expansion. This expansion directly results from the escalating demand for Vodec's services from the surrounding area.

This marks the second expansion of the location within the last 12 months. Last summer, Vodec leased additional space next door to the current location in response to consumer demand. That demand has continued to the point that applicants are waiting to enroll. Tina Hardy, Services Operations Director, reveals that they have received numerous referrals. "Those applicants waiting to begin the program will undoubtedly welcome this news," states Hardy.

The Urbandale site is the home to three types of day services: the Cares Day Program, the Transition Focus Program, and the New Adult Transition Program.

Over the past seven years, Vodec created each program at the request of case managers, teachers, primary caregivers, and parents. As a result, each program is designed for a specific group of consumers with similar goals. These goals range from obtaining school credits to developing successful life skills or community exploration and inclusion.

The Cares program supports consumer integration with opportunities for community inclusion, social and recreational activities, and exploration of their abilities and communities.



Above: Transition students enrolled in Vodec's Day Programs in Urbandale.

Top Row: Charles, Cameron, Katrina, Rachel  
Bottom row: Cael, Kyleigh, Alexis

The Transition Focus Program offers skill-building in daily living areas, including household cleaning, financial literacy, volunteerism, health, and wellness. Residential employees also have offices there.



Above: Workers are adding the finishing touches to last summer's day program expansion in Urbandale.

Our newest program is the Adult Transition Program (ATP). This program was created at the request of several school districts. The ATP is designed for special education students who have passed 12th grade in high school yet remain in school up to age 21 to allow for additional support as they develop into successful adults. School districts that have a Master Agreement with

*Continued on next page*



Vodec can enroll individual students into the ATP, where they receive guidance and support as they learn to navigate their community and build the skills they will need to succeed.

## Nebraska Cares Consumers to Perform on Stage in *The Little Prince*

Circle Theater is partnering with Vodec consumers to bring the production of *The Little Prince* to Omaha. This captivating play is set to be hosted at the Jewish Community Center in Omaha, with shows scheduled for Saturday, April 6th at 7 pm and Sunday, April 7th at 2 pm.

Preparations are underway. Throughout January, February, and March, Vodec's Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) transport consumers to Circle Theater for rehearsals twice weekly and provide support during the rehearsal. Kellie Katelman, Vodec Day Services Manager, affirmed, "Consumers love this experience and are excited to perform alongside the professional actors onstage."

The consumers rehearse separately at first, then unite with the complete cast during "Tech Week" to amalgamate all the pieces. "Tech Week" is scheduled from April 1 to April 4.

Courtney Cairncross, Circle Theater's Co-Artistic Director, leads the consumers during rehearsals. Courtney has a background in theater, dance, and music. She has expertise in supporting and directing individuals with disabilities: "I've witnessed how well music and movement can stimulate the brain and support creative growth," says Cairncross.

Cairncross sees this stimulation and growth in Vodec's consumers. "I'm excited that our recent workshops have been highly productive; we've made substantial progress

According to Hardy, "We aim to eliminate waiting times for individuals seeking an opportunity to engage, socialize, develop skills, and realize life's full potential." The additional facilities are anticipated to open by April 1, 2024.



Above, left to right: Justin, Lauren, Justin, Day Service Assistant Krystyon Harper, Denzel, Amber, Keith, Day Services Assistant Makala Thompson, AJ rehearsing at Circle Theater in Omaha.

in building set pieces and creating props, including figuring out how to simulate volcanic eruptions on stage!" reports Cairncross.

Circle Theatre's mission is to involve individuals of all abilities in creative opportunities on and off the stage. Which is why they have developed an unique technique that supports consumers with difficulty remembering their lines to perform on stage before a live audience. Circle Theatre's professional actors speak the character lines with the consumers in a process called "shadowing," a theatrical device that utilizes the individual strengths of several actors and consumers to play one role. Consumers who cannot use the technique will still perform by creating a fluid movement ensemble throughout the play.

This upcoming production will commemorate Circle Theatre's 40th anniversary under the guidance of Fran Sillau, the Executive Artistic Director.





## Elm Consumers Visit Dinosaurs

Recently, consumers of Vodec's Elm program visited Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha, NE, in search of dinosaurs, and they were not disappointed. The visitors had the opportunity to explore "BRICKLIVE: Brickosaurs, an Adventure of Jurassic Scale," which showcased some of the most impressive Lego creations to date. Attendees could experience what it might have been like to stand face-to-face with a group of incredible reptiles while discovering prehistoric plant species from the garden's collection.

Consumers had the chance to view a collection of more than 30 iconic dinosaur sculptures, including a towering T-Rex, the majestic Stegosaurus, and the formidable



Above, left to right: Kate, David and Day Service Assistant' Sara Kalmbach

Triceratops. All are constructed from over 1.5 million bricks.

According to Elm Supervisor Kayode Akomolafe, "Lauritzen Gardens is a favorite destination among consumers due to its beautiful plants and the opportunity it provides for exercise."

## Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2023



### Introduction

Another fiscal year wrapped up on June 30, 2023. Vodec's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. FY23 was exciting with diversification, expansion, and a change in focus. There was also continued recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We remain a strong and viable organization.

### Diversification Continued in FY23.

Diversification was driven by meeting needs expressed by consumers and stakeholders and reacting to changes in the industry.

Right: Micky Jackson, Services Operations Director (right) presenting the Nebraska Association of Service Providers (NASP) DSP Recognition award to Makaela Clemons, Cares Day Services Coordinator



### ***Childcare Services***

In Iowa, we began offering childcare for youth, ages 13 to 19, with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD). We added a childcare Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver to our waiver array and were certified to provide service under the Iowa Childcare Act. The latter enables income-eligible families to access financial support for service fees. This was initially rolled out in western Iowa, in our Council Bluffs location.



Right, Left to Right. Elijah and Auston preparing the chili using Vodec's Adult Transition Kitchen in the Council Bluffs Development Center.

We were approved by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to be part of an “early adopter” team of the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model of CIE. This opportunity was made possible through the Advancing State Policy Integration for Recovery and Employment (ASPIRE) project through the US Department of Labor, Office of Disability

Right: Sarah Meyer, Day Services Assistant, plays “Prize Drop” with Brittany during the Iowa Fair Day in Urbandale.

Employment Policy (ODEP). Other team partners include the Southwest Iowa Mental Health and Disability Services Region, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Heartland Family Services. Our services are available to eligible participants in the Iowa counties of Pottawattamie, Harrison, Mills, Cass, and Monona. Target group is individuals with mental health challenges, who are experiencing homelessness, or with addiction challenges.

### ***New location, additional space***

We opened a satellite location in Indianola, Iowa, to offer day habilitation as a Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) program.

We also expanded the footprint in Urbandale, Iowa, to accommodate the growing number of individuals in our Cares and Transition Focus programs (see Service expansion, page 5) and to accommodate increased interest in the Transition Day Program, like what we offer in Council Bluffs.





### ***New Services***

In Urbandale, Iowa, we added a new day habilitation program, Transition Focus, as part of our day habilitation HCBS waiver programs. Transition Focus provides enhanced support for participants to achieve successful independent living.



Above: Transition Focus consumers move in to the expanded area of the Urbandale Development Center.

In Council Bluffs, Iowa, we added an on-site work experience program (WEP) component to ATP. Students have an opportunity to learn employability skills while working on real work. An off-site WEP remains part of ATP. The new services led to the new expansion.



Above: The 2023 ATP Graduating Class

Top Row Left to Right: Day Services Coordinator Kristen Joslin, Gavin, Ryan, and Christian

Bottom Row Left to Right: Students Lilly and Rachel, Day Service Assistant Amanda Franks, Ryan, Day Service Assistant, Tana Lidgett



Left: ATP student Jacianna, enjoys a visit from a furry friend from a local animal shelter

In the areas surrounding Council Bluffs and Urbandale, there is a growing number of school districts partnering with Vodec for Vodec's ATP, WEP, and Transition Focus programs.

### **Residential Services Transitioned.**

Going into the pandemic we offered 24/7 HCBS waiver homes and host home (HH) settings (in Iowa) and shared living provider (SLP) settings in Nebraska. Workforce challenges hit us particularly hard in our 24/7 waiver homes. It was increasingly difficult to attract and retain qualified employees to work in the homes. So, we decided to transition more on growing the HH and SLP settings which are contracted providers, not employees.



Above: Amber Millard, Day Services Assistant, helping Paul get ready for lunch at Howell's Greenhouse and Pumpkin Patch.

We worked cooperatively with each consumer and their interdisciplinary team members to assure a smooth transition to an alternative residential setting. Many of our former residential employees who enjoyed working with our individuals transitioned into being HHs or SLPs with Vodec.



## Pandemic Recovery

### *Medicaid Continuation*

The public health emergency (PHE) declared by CMS in 2020 was allowed to expire in May 2023. States had to have transition plans in place to address the loss of some of the flexibilities which were allowed under the PHE for Medicaid members. All the individuals Vodec serves in its Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) programs are Medicaid members.

With the PHE expiration, members were also required to renew their eligibility for Medicaid. This was waived during the PHE. We worked closely with our consumers who were Medicaid members to have their coverage continue uninterrupted so they didn't lose funding for our HCBS services and, more importantly, so they didn't lose continuous medical healthcare coverage.

Many of the flexibilities that were available during the PHE enabled Medicaid members to access certain services, medical services for example, remotely rather than in person.

### *Day Programs' Attendance Grew*

The pandemic really hit daily attendance hard. Some consumers stayed home rather than attend day programs. But, as COVID-19 cases became fewer and intensity of those cases seemed to be lessening, many of those consumers who stayed home decided to return to day programs. We also appreciated that new people found our programs. Our daily attendance grew to nearly pre-pandemic numbers through FY23.

### **ARPA Grants Helped Support Recovery**

In FY23 we received grants from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These grants supported initiatives to help sustain and grow our workforce and supported improvements in our infrastructure.

#### **Employee Recruitment and Retention Grants**

\$ 31,376.00 Iowa ARPA third-round grant for Iowa SE employees  
 \$ 94,128.00 Iowa ARPA fourth-round grant for admin employees  
 \$ 327,440.86 Nebraska stabilization grant  
 \$ 140,740.36 Iowa ARPA employee training and scholarship grant

#### **Infrastructure Grants**

\$ 145,444.39 Iowa ARPA health, IT and infrastructure grant to replace our phone and payroll systems, and beef up cyber security protection.  
 \$ 120,000.00 SWIA space MHDS region grant for transitioning the Council Bluffs location for larger and improve cares and ATP spaces.

**\$ 859,129.61 Total**



Above, Left to Right: Greg, Collette, James, Annabel, Ryan and Kennedy on a hay rack ride at Skinny Bones Pumpkin Patch Blair, NE.

### **Service Rates Increased . . . For Now**

In FY23, we received increases to service rates which helped us meet increasing expenses to provide services. Increases to service rates need to continue because expenses also continue to increase.

HCBS services' rates in Nebraska jumped up 17 percent through two increases. There was also a nine percent increase, the first of a temporary three-year round of increases, scheduled to be six percent in FY24 and five percent in FY25, and then zeroing out. Nebraska's ARPA funds are being used to support those increases. At the time this report is being written, Nebraska is adding State money to extend the nine percent increase through June 2025.



In Iowa, HCBS service rates increased by 4.25 percent using one-time ARPA funds. Governor Kim Reynolds has addressed the rate increases utilizing the one-time ARPA funds by creating and recommending that the state provide the funds necessary to sustain these rates. Her commitment is reflected in her FY25 budget, which allocated \$16.5 million of state revenue to HCBS services.

### FY23 Ended in Good Fiscal Health

Vodec is a non-profit organization with a 501c3 designation from the Internal Revenue Service. This designation makes us eligible for certain grants and creates an opportunity for donations of cash or goods to Vodec to be tax-deductible (consult your tax preparer for specific information about this).

There is a misperception that a non-profit organization is precluded from having a positive net income. In reality, a non-profit organization really must retain some earnings for the proverbial rainy day.

Vodec practices a strong financial management approach to be responsible for the revenue received, regardless of source. The outcome is a strong organization to support consumers.

### ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT- FY23

#### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (SUMMARY)

JUNE 30, 2023 AND 2022

	ASSETS		
	FY23	FY22	Variance
<b>Assets</b>			
Total Current Assets	12,705,052	11,964,387	740,665
<b>Property &amp; Equipment</b>			
Total Property & Eqpt	5,914,717	5,855,664	
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(3,542,154)	(3,343,274)	
	2,372,563	2,512,390	(139,827)
<b>Other Assets</b>			
Security Deposit	10,393	10,393	
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>15,088,008</b>	<b>14,487,170</b>	<b>600,838</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Current Liabilities	1,891,797	1,848,714	
Long Term Liabilities			
Total Liabilities, net of current	1,891,797	1,848,714	43,083
<b>Net Assets</b>			
Unrestricted	13,196,211	12,638,456	557,755
Temporarily Restricted			
Total Net Assets	13,196,211	12,638,456	557,755
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>15,088,008</b>	<b>14,487,170</b>	<b>600,838</b>

#### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES (SUMMARY)

JUNE 30, 2023 AND 2022

	FY23	FY22	Variance
<b>Unrestricted Net Assets</b>			
Program, Grant & Contribution Revenue	17,193,747	16,112,440	1,081,307
Workshop Fees, net	397,509	349,804	47,705
Other	220,588	647,095	(426,507)
Net Assets Released from Restriction	-	-	
Total Support & Revenue	17,811,844	17,109,339	702,505
<b>Expense</b>			
Program Services	14,240,280	12,686,166	1,554,114
Supporting Services	3,013,809	2,836,725	177,084
Total Expenses	17,254,089	15,522,891	1,731,198
<b>Change in Unrestricted Net Assets</b>			
Net Assets	557,755	1,586,448	(1,028,693)
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets,			
Net Assets Released from Restriction			-
Change in Net Assets	557,755	1,586,448	(1,028,693)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	12,638,456	11,052,008	1,586,448
Net Assets, End of Year	13,196,211	12,638,456	557,755



Above: Left to Right: Corey McCormick, Transportation Supervisor; Tresa Smith, Employment Training Supervisor; April Krause, Production Director; Amy Titus, Residential Supervisor; Micky Jackson, Services Operations Director; Kellie Katelman, Day Services Manager; Summer Covey, Residential Supervisor; Kay Akomolafe, Elm Supervisor; and Collin Hames, Cares Supervisor in costume for Halloween





612 S. Main Street

[www.vodec.org](http://www.vodec.org) 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 (consult your tax preparer for specific information about this).

**Like our page today and help us make a difference!**

[www.facebook.com/vodec,inc/](http://www.facebook.com/vodec,inc/)



We are committed to creating a supportive and inclusive community that empowers individuals to achieve their full potential. By liking our Facebook page, you'll stay up-to-date on our latest news, events, and initiatives. You'll also be joining a community of people who share our vision of a more inclusive world. So what are you waiting for?

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**We are thankful for these generous donors.**

Donna Bush  
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Steve Hodapp

Knights of Columbus  
Maria Mabe  
Robert Mathena  
Kim and Paul Moore (in memory of Mike Stielow)  
Andrea Smith

*thank  
you*

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**Vodec is accredited by:**

- The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)

**Vodec is certified by:**

- 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
- Molina Healthcare

**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 additional information about Vodec, please get in touch with  
Daryn Richardson at [drichardson@vodec.org](mailto:drichardson@vodec.org) or call (712) 328-2638.**

