

Challenger

DAKOTA

Dakota Center for Independent Living • www.dakotacil.org "Serving people with disabilities since 1980"

Longtime DCIL advocate Temchack retires in Jan.

DCIL held a retirement party for longtime Independent Living Advocate Kathy Temchack on Wednesday, January 29th. Kathy has worked as an advocate at Dakota Center for Independent Living in Bismarck for 12 years.

There was an incredible turnout for Kathy's party, with many of her consumers attending, some accompanied by their in-home health care attendants. Staff and board members also attended and visited with consumers while enjoy-

ing refreshments.

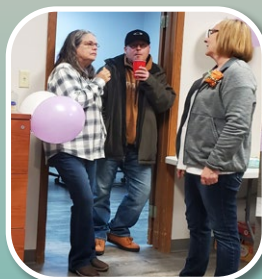
Kathy delivered heart-touching words after receiving a retirement gift basket as a thank you.

Royce Schultze, DCIL executive director said, "Thank you for all your years of hard work and dedication. You have left a lasting impression on our consumers, and we are deeply grateful for your time here. Enjoy your retirement!"

We're sure going to miss you around here, Kathy!



Right: Kathy sharing her fond memories to those in attendance at her DCIL retirement party.



Cloverdale's Angel Tree gifts appreciated by consumers

Cloverdale's Angel Tree project for Christmas 2024 put smiles on the faces of many DCIL consumers.

Gifts of blankets, sheets, pillows, gloves, hats, scarves, clothing, dishes, and more were organized into gift bags/boxes and delivered to DCIL right before Christmas.

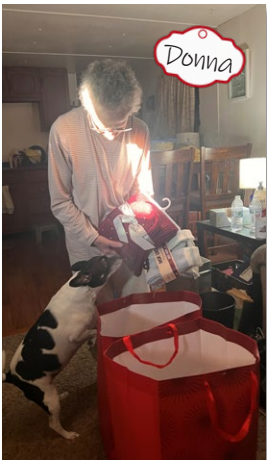
Former DCIL advocate Kathy Temchack said, "Thank you staff for giving names for the angel tree. This was a big

success! Cloverdale was so excited and generous; I never dreamed they would give so much. Hopefully these gifts will make their Christmas a cheerful one, and know that they are thought of this very special time of year."

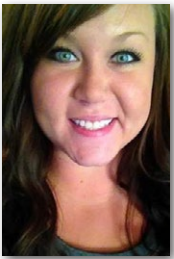
A big THANK YOU to Cloverdale for their generosity! We were able to capture the moment with a few consumers as they received their angel tree gifts (see below).



Top left: a delivery driver & Cloverdale Project Manager Lexi dropping off Angel Tree gifts. Top right: DCIL staff She'Maine, McCallie, Kathy (kneeling), Cody, Miah, & Stephanie getting ready to distribute the gifts. Below: several happy consumers enjoying their gifts.



Roecker promoted to Ind. Living Program Director



Roecker

Kianna Roecker, who was previously an Independent Living Specialist at DCIL, was promoted to Independent Living Program Director on January 16th.

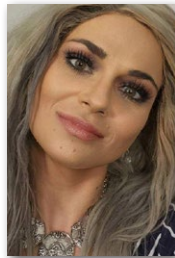
Roecker's attention to detail and passion for the work that Dakota Center does daily make her a perfect fit for the role.

In this new position, Roecker will focus on overseeing the Independent Living Advocates and directing the central program and core services of DCIL.

Congratulations Kianna!

Kraft joins as Ind. Living Specialist on Feb. 24th

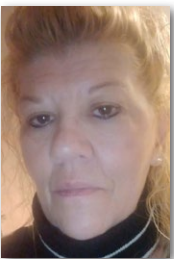
Hi everyone! My name is Mandy Kraft, and I'm excited to join the Dakota Center for Independent Living as a Transitions Coordinator. With over a decade of experience in case management, client advocacy, and behavioral health support, I'm passionate about empowering individuals through trauma-informed care and community engagement. My background includes working with those experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and substance use disorders, as well as leading outreach initiatives and crisis interventions.



Kraft

Outside of work, I'm happily married and am the proud mother of two amazing daughters. In my free time, I enjoy songwriting, spending time in nature, and caring for animals. I am so excited to be here and look forward to making a positive impact!

Bird hired to assist where needed at DCIL through SCSEP program in March



Bird

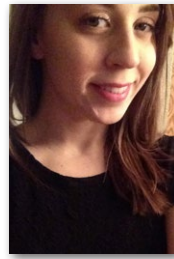
Hi, I'm Diane Bird. I moved from Dickinson to Bismarck in May of 2024 and have lived here all my life.

I am a Mom of one son who is married and lives in MN. I am also a mom to my kitty, Sammi, who I adopted this past Oct. I previously worked for Hallmark and started at DCIL in March.

I enjoy gardening, diamond painting, raising houseplants, taking walks, and love animals. I look forward to being a part of DCIL and learning new things.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a work placement program for adults 55+.

New chapter begins for Wester as IL Specialist



Wester

I am excited to join the Dakota Center for Independent Living team as of February 24th. Over the past decade, I have worked with the geriatric population in various basic care and skilled nursing facilities, gaining invaluable experience and a deep understanding of compassion.

My healthcare background has taught me the importance of clear communication, documentation, problem-solving skills, and teamwork. I am dedicated to the wellbeing of others, and upholding a high level of integrity.

Seeking a new challenge aligned with my values, I found it here at Dakota Center for Independent Living. Despite my short time here, I have been warmly welcomed by a team that genuinely cares about my presence. I am grateful to everyone for making me feel like I belong and for their patience and support as I embark on this exciting journey.

Dakota Center hires new IL Advocate Newgard



Newgard

I'm Erica Newgard and I started as an IL Advocate at DCIL in Mid-March 2025. I have a Bachelors degree in Criminal Justice Administration. I have worked with individuals with disabilities and behavioral health programs for more than 10 years with a focus on addiction and mental health. I have assisted individuals with overcoming barriers, reaching their goals, and gaining independence

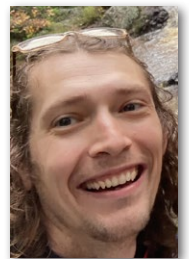
through the Free Through Recovery, Community Connect, and 1915i programs.

I have learned from many people and gained many skills from my mentors. I think highly of others who serve those in need and choose to work in a field where I can do the same. In my free time, I enjoy spending time family and traveling.

IL Advocate Hager comes onboard March 17th

My name is Andrew Hager. I am very excited to join the team at DCIL. I have degrees in Health Science, Biology, and Chemistry from Valley City State University and have experience working with drug addiction and 10+ years providing direct services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

Outside of work I enjoy hiking, running, reading, camping, and live music. I look forward to using my experiences and background to serve our community and region.



Hager

DCIL in the Community

DHHS watching HB1012 closely as it moves to Senate

Nancy Nikolas Maier, Director for the Adult and Aging Services Section of North Dakota Dept. of Health and Human Services presented budget details and testimony to the ND Legislature in January regarding HB1012.

This bill (HB1012) will secure future funding for many ND Dept. of Health

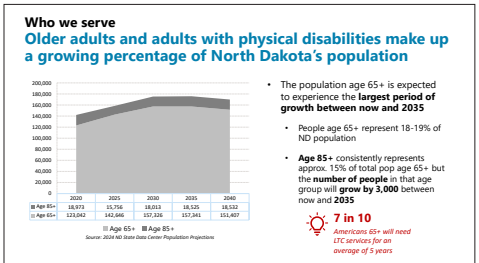
and Human Services necessities and services, which includes funding for programs DCIL facilitates such as the North Dakota Transition and Diversion Pilot Program.

DCIL staff members also attended to provide support for HB1012, which passed the House with full funding

and is now at the Senate.

Senate heard Nancy Nikolas Maier's presentation of the budget details and testimony in mid March, during which time public comments were also heard.

The ND 69th Legislative Assembly wraps up on May 9th.



Disability Awareness Day was a day to honor inclusion



DCIL hosted a booth at the state capitol during Disability Awareness Day Jan. 29th. DCIL staff members Miah, Stephanie, and Lisa (IL Advocates- Bismarck), & Mary Beth (Coordinator- Dickinson branch) were on-site to inform on DCIL services.

Book donations appreciated



Stephanie and Miah, DCIL IL Advocates, visited the Dakota Children's Advocacy Center to donate several children's books in February.

Dakota Children's Advocacy Center said, "Thank you! We know they will find good homes with the kids and families we serve soon!"

Meet DCIL's spring intern!

"My name is Philomena and I am a social work student studying at University of Mary. Being able to intern here at DCIL has been such a rich experience! The staff members are amazing and everyone has such a passion for helping others! I've learned so much from this experience and I look forward to utilizing the tools I've learned here in future social work jobs! Thank you DCIL!"



Her instructor reported back to us that "she has talked so highly about your agency, staff, and clients in class. She loves being there and it has opened her eyes to more parts of social work that she is not familiar with as well. I think this has been such a wonderful fit for her and glad it was for you too!"

DCIL has really enjoyed having Philomena during her internship. She will finish her internship here in April.

Thank you, Mena!



DCIL in the Community

DCIL consumers join brain injury panel at capitol

March is "Brain Injury Awareness Month." On Wed., March 19th, North Dakota Brain Injury Network hosted a panel of individuals with brain injuries at the state capitol to help

raise awareness in hopes of continued funding. DCIL and their consumers were invited to join the panel and share their experiences after experiencing a brain injury.

Right: DCIL consumers and Executive Director Royce Schultze joined the brain injury panel discussion. Below left: Dickinson DCIL consumers Mychal Reanne Cook & Brenda Klein plus DCIL Branch Office Coordinator Mary Beth Hoffman & DCIL IL Program Director Kianna Roecker. Below right: DCIL Bismarck staff: Royce Schultze (exec. dir.), Miah Rauhauser (advocate), Andrew Hager (advocate), Erica Newgard (advocate), McCallie Willows (advocate), Mary Beth Hoffman (Dickinson Branch Office Coordinator), Stephanie Scott (advocate), & Kianna Roecker (IL Program Director).



DCIL offers driver's permit classes in 18 ND counties

IL Advocate Stephanie Scott is currently teaching DCIL's driver's permit classes at Bismarck High School, Century High School, Legacy High School, Mandan High School Renew Ed, South Central, and Standing Rock Reservation.

DCIL also has a satellite office in

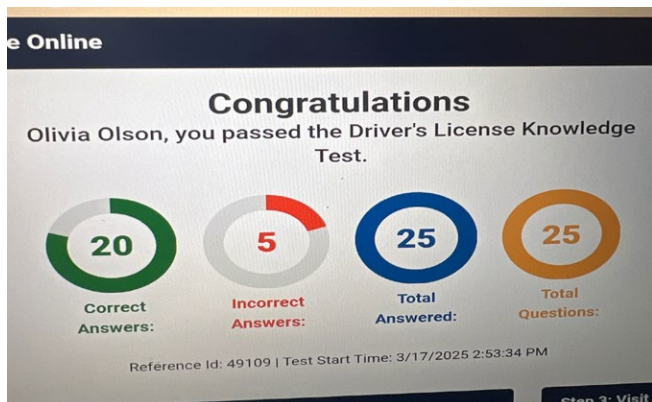
Dickinson, where Branch Office Coordinator Mary Beth Hoffman also teaches driver's permit classes.

"It's truly amazing watching these students engage and build confidence studying for their driver's permit. Most days it feels like the kids are teaching me

more than I am teaching them. They are so creative and make it fun!" says Stephanie Scott, advocate of DCIL in Bismarck.

Driver's permit classes are also available one-on-one for ages 14 and older.

For more info, call Stephanie Scott at 701-222-3636.



Above left: driver's permit student Olivia shares her joy after passing her permit test. Above, top center: Garrett is overjoyed at NDDOT after successfully acquiring his driver's permit following DCIL driver's permit classes. Above, bottom center: Zach taking permit test at NDDOT. Above right: driver's permit students Poe, Parker, & Zach trying on goggles that are used during class to mimic impaired driving.

James and his dog are now in a safe environment

by McCallie Willows, DCIL

James Heinle contacted DCIL after his cousin and his cousin's daughter started making threats to James and his dog. James was living with his cousin and her daughter, and it was a very toxic environment. His cousin was a severe alcoholic and tended to get violent when she was drunk. His cousin's daughter has mental health behaviors of her own and would make false accusations about James and threaten to harm or take his life. James no longer felt safe and needed help getting out. I worked with APS to get James and his dog into a hotel while we looked for an apartment.

The biggest challenge with finding James an apartment was working around his criminal past. He had spent his younger adult life in and out of the correction system. He is now remorseful and takes full responsibility of his actions and mistakes. He was able to move into a camper that was provided by a friend for a short time, but he needed a more stable home for the winter. His aunt offered him a place to stay while staff continued to try and find him a new home. Unfortunately, his aunt became very hostile towards him and started making false accusations that he was abusing her. She threatened him on multiple occasions

and had her daughter give him an eviction notice. Fortunately, staff were finally able to get James into an apartment after almost a year of trying to work out his past debts, getting on a housing voucher, and trying to find a place that met his needs. Staff were able to also get James all the furniture and household necessities that he needed for his fresh start. He is now living in his own, safe environment with his dog and will also be able to start having his daughter over for visits. James says that he feels like TDPP helped give him a new lease on life and is grateful for all the hard work and help that his team has provided for him.

Consumer shares her gratitude to IL Advocate Scott

Stephanie Scott, DCIL Independent Living Advocate, has been working with Melanie who is dealing with a lot of barriers and anxiety in her life.

Stephanie has been helping her get her life back on track. Melanie sent in a nice note to thank Stephanie for her help:

"I just wanted to thank you for everything that you've done for me and I hope you have a very good valentine's and I thank you, and Christie and everybody for helping me out with everything even when I'm overthinking. So on behalf of me, thank you. You are all angels!"



Bailly delivers Angel Tree gifts to excited consumers

by Kevin Bailly, DCIL

Jerome Moszer was so surprised about the Angel Tree gift he received and stated, "You guys have taken such good care of me. I just don't know what to say. I am speechless. Your agency really does know how to get a

person right in the heart and the tummy. I'll start on the sausage tomorrow. Thank you so much for all you, Girard and all the rest of the team have done for me."

Winna Shaeffer was also very surprised about her Angel Tree gift. She loved the

items and was really partial to the blanket and clothing. She stated, "Wow, Wow, Wow!!! This is a surprise. This is a very nice Christmas gift."

Tia Mittleider also said thank you for the presents from the Angel Tree project.

Worth the wait: bathroom remodel finally completed

by McCallie Willows, DCIL

My consumer's bathroom remodel has officially been completed! He needed assistance with funding a bathroom remodel in order to stay in his current home. He had a jet tub/shower combo that was constructed on top of a platform. The walls of the tub were very high and made it dangerous to him to step in and out safely. He needed a walk in shower with a shower bench, grab rails, and shower head and hose.

I contacted ABC Seamless to do an estimate of the project. ABC Seamless is the only company that will do home modifications to trailer homes that are older than

1999. The original estimate came back at 17K which was way too high. ABC's project manager Mark and I were able to redo the estimate by getting rid of some of the unnecessary things that were added to the shower. The estimate came back in the low 12K. I submitted a RAP Grant application to cover 5K of the build and was accepted.

The consumer also needed a ramp for the outside of his trailer. The original estimate for a ramp to be built was 12K. I did not go with the custom-built ramp and found a portable ramp that can be attached to his existing deck for \$1,344. The total build estimate for everything went from

30k to 9k which was approved by admin. The bathroom remodel took a while due to materials needed being destroyed by the Canadian wildfires and then winter came. Crews had to wait for warmer weather to do any work outside. Mark updated me that the build would begin at the beginning of the week and followed up that the build was completed three days later.

The consumer is very happy that everything went well and that it was worth the wait. He and his wife will now be able to safely use their shower. He and his wife will now be able to live safely in their home for potentially the rest of their lives.

Sober, thriving, and clean with a roof over her head

by Kate, DCIL

I transitioned someone recently that had been living in her car for 2 years.

She didn't have a bed, couch, chairs, food, clothing, etc. She had been homeless and eating when she could and what

she could. She doesn't have any natural supports and had been struggling with staying sober throughout the last years while dealing with a terminal cancer diagnosis.

She is now living in her own apart-

ment with clothes, food, a bed, and a comfortable couch. She has everything she needs in her apartment and can make her own meals. She is happy to have a shower and clean clothes to wear. She is now sober and thriving!

Consumer finally getting dream of walk-in shower

by Kevin Bailly, DCIL

I have been working with Judy Brunmeier since her referral came to DCIL on 7/15/2024. Judy had recently underwent amputation of her leg below the knee due to complications with her diagnosis of diabetes. Judy transitioned from Knife River Care Center in Beulah and returned to her home in Hazen, ND. Judy had requested help with obtaining assistance with a home remodel for her bathroom as she wanted a walk in shower.

Today I spoke with Crag Goettle from Your Home Improvement Company located in Bismarck, ND. Craig stated he had met with Judy and her husband last week to look at their bathroom as they

have requested assistance with putting in a walk in shower. Craig stated he had done a lot of work with Judy in the past for this request. Craig stated Judy informed him that DCIL staff was working with her in assisting her and her husband with completing Veterans Administration home modification request for funding assistance, RAP grant funding assistance and obtaining all the necessary documentation needed to obtain the adequate funding to pay for their remodel. Craig spoke to me informing them of a program called Bath for the Brave. Craig stated with all the hard work that DCIL staff has done to assist with this remodel the Home Improvement Company will be completing the

bathroom remodel at no charge for Judy and her spouse. Judy and her spouse have not been notified of this as her children are keeping this as a secret and a well deserved surprise for them.

I also spoke with Craig about coming to DCIL to meet with the staff at DCIL to talk to us about programs they use to assist other persons in the community with remodels for bathrooms and other home remodels to promote independence for our consumers and increase our assisting with diversionary assistance to keep persons in their home. Plan will be to have Craig come upon his return to North Dakota as he is currently out of state working with another territory.

Juliet was given another chance to live life her way

by McCallie Willows, DCIL

Juliet Barr was a Cil-to-Cil transfer from the Minot area. Juliet was looking to move to the Bismarck area because she wanted to be closer to her son. Juliet was in a very tough position in Minot. She was in a domestic abuse situation, and she has struggled with substance use. Juliet had a hard time getting to Bismarck from Minot because every time she was about to move, she would end up in the hospital. Juliet developed double pneumonia that was very hard to treat and is now on oxygen 24/7.

She was finally able to move to Bismarck and was staying with her son Carter and his wife. Juliet's goal was to get into her own apartment that was clean, safe, and fit her needs. Looking

for an apartment was challenging due to Juliet needing an accessible unit and a unit that was in budget. I was able to find her a unit at Library Square in Mandan that fit all her medical and physical needs and was \$200 under budget. This apartment also includes different group activities that she will be able to be apart of. This will help her meet new people in her building. Juliet had to start over when it came to furniture and household items.

She explained that she left everything behind in Minot with her ex because it was easier and safer. I was able to also get her a brand-new adjustable bed to help lift her head at night so she can breathe easier, new Living room furniture, and all the smaller household

items that she would need to continue to live independently. She is also very excited that she was able to bring her cat Misha with her to keep her company. Juliet and her son stated that without TDPP she would have had a much more difficult time getting into a new apartment and an even harder time being able to furnish it.

They are very grateful for the work that Bill Schafer from Housing and I have accomplished for her. She feels like this opportunity has given her another chance at being able to live her life the way she has always wanted to live it. Her son has provided her excellent support and we believe that she is finally in a place that she will be comfortable, happy, and safe!





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* DCIL has a satellite office in Dickinson, ND.
They can be reached at: 701-483-4363.

* DCIL offices are fragrance free.

What can we help you with?

DCIL Core Services:

- Information & Referral
- Peer Support
- Advocacy
- Independent Living Skills Training
- Transitional Services



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Mission Statement

The Dakota Center for Independent Living believes in empowering people with disabilities by minimizing barriers, advocating for inclusion and promoting consumer choice.

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