

# Challenger

DAKOTA

Dakota Center for Independent Living • [www.dakotacil.org](http://www.dakotacil.org) "Serving people with disabilities since 1980"

## Dine to Donate a good time at Laughing Sun

DCIL partnered with Laughing Sun Brewery for a "Dine to Donate" fundraiser on Sept. 16th. The fundraising event also included a silent auction and free live music from local musicians Sonda Sauers, Kit Pines, and Danny Savage.

The turnout was phenomenal, and DCIL is so grateful to everyone who ordered food and drinks, and to all those who bid on the silent auction. Funds from the event go towards DCIL programs. The silent auction proceeds were \$575.

And a HUGE thanks to our wonderful sponsors of silent auction items! We couldn't have done it without your generosity: Bank of ND, Butcher Block Meats, Cash Wise Foods South, Cloverdale, Coca-Cola, Costco, Crumbl Cookies, Dakota Printing & Embroidery, Family Fair North, First International Bank & Trust, Gate City Bank, Laughing Sun Brewery, Scheels, and Townsquare Media.



Silent Auction fun!



So many good items!



DCIL staff Josie, McCallie, & Caitlin by the brewery area



Place your bids!



DCIL staff McCallie, Kevin, Caitlin, Josie, Kianna, Royce, Andrew, & Cody.



DCIL Advocate Andrew introducing musician Sonda Sauers



Kit Pines



Danny Savage



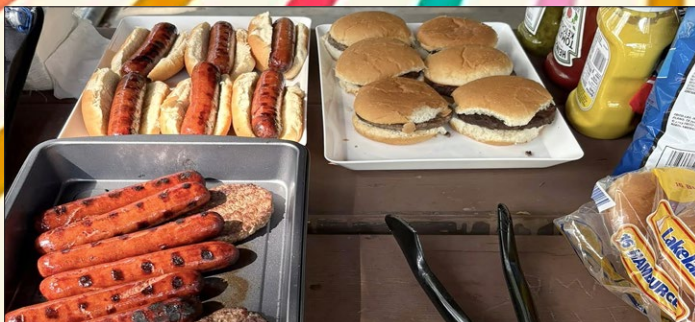
We highly recommend visiting Laughing Sun for food & fun!



DCIL staff Kianna, Kevin, Caitlin, McCallie, Paige (MFP Housing Program), & Josie.

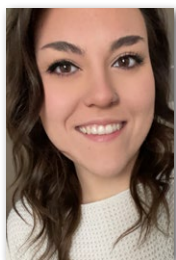


# DCIL celebrates 35th anniversary of ADA with consumer picnic at Sertoma Park in July





## New IL Specialist Widmer started in August



Widmer

Hello! My name is Nicole Widmer. I am originally from Jamestown, ND. I moved to Bismarck in July of 2024. I now live with my fiancé Chris in McKenzie, ND. We have two cats and one dog. The dog and cats do not get along so our house is always a circus. I am quite shy until I get acclimated to my environment but once I do, I can be pretty fun. I look forward to my new adventure here at DCIL!

## David comes onboard as IL Specialist in Sept.



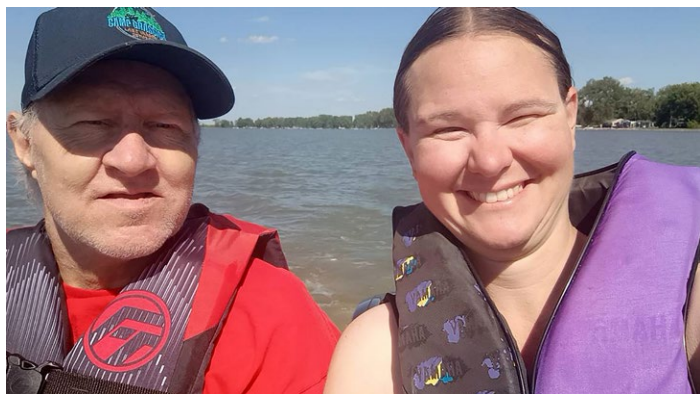
David

Greetings, I'm Jeanne, I started my role as an MFP Independent Living Specialist beginning of September. My interest in this role is related to personal experience. I was my mother's primary, and only local natural support person while she navigated her senior years with several disabilities related to cancer. She valued her autonomy and independence. Living in the privacy of her own home with the companionship of her beloved dog was of significant importance to her. Money Follows the Person program is one key program(s) that helped make it possible for her to do just that.

My gratitude has never faded for the agencies, programs and individuals that assisted her to live the best quality of life that she could.

## Camp Grassick: an annual summer favorite

DCIL consumer Danny and part time DCIL employee Randee once again enjoyed their time in August at Elks Camp Grassick and shared photos. Looks like lots of fun!



## DCIL's recent fundraiser, 'Dine to Donate' featured on KX News' local business spotlight show Studio 701

DCIL Program Director Kianna Roecker and Advocate Andrew Hager were guests on Studio 701 the day of the DCIL "Dine to Donate" fundraiser at Laughing Sun Brewery.

Studio 701 spotlights area businesses and events on weekdays and is broadcast by KX News.

Kianna and Andrew spoke on the upcoming fundraiser, DCIL services, and the importance of disability etiquette.

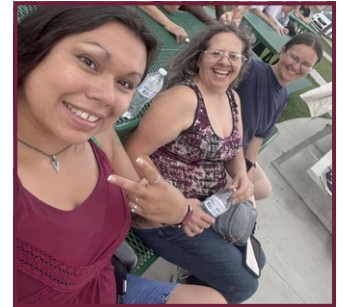
Thanks KX News and Studio 701 for having us!



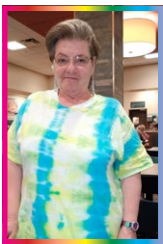
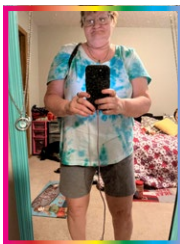




Painting rocks in July to hide in town that will bring smiles to people. **Kindness Rocks!**



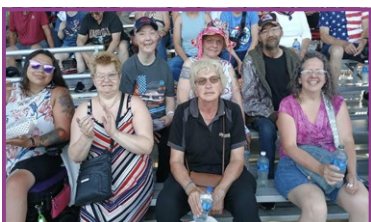
**Avantide** was a hit with our consumers on July 25<sup>th</sup> at Dykshoorn Park in Mandan during Mandan's Summer Bandshell Concert series.



**We had Tie Dye fun in August at DCIL.**

**Glad to see so many people coming out for this event!**

**Everyone's shirts turned out AHHH-MAZING!**



Consumers enjoyed their Fourth of July by celebrating Patriot Night at the **PRCA Pro Rodeo** in Mandan on July 3rd.



## Dr. Rudolph presents to BI Support group in July

Dr. Rudolph of Dynamic Health Solutions/BrainCore Bismarck presented to the DCIL Brain Injury Support Group in July.

Dr. Rudolph delivered valuable information on brain injuries and how he works with individuals who suffer from these injuries.



## DCIL in the Community



### AT booths help make life easier

DCIL advocates frequently visit locations in our service area to host assistive technology booths to show people what devices can be purchased to make life a little easier for those with disabilities. Left: Miah in Underwood in July. Right: Miah, Kianna, Andrew, & Kaitlin stop outside of Max where they had an AT booth (far right).



## Family Day Riverwalk offers fun and support

The day started out a little chilly, but families still flocked to Sertoma Park on Wednesday, July 16th for the annual Family Day Riverwalk. The event combined outdoor fun with community support.

The Riverwalk featured games, food vendors, live entertainment and activities for all ages along the scenic river. It also served as a fundraiser for Bismarck Parks and

Recreation, helping support park programs and improvements.

DCIL served 647 people at the event, offering information on DCIL services, games, and free swag to take home.

Staff were also at other events this summer: Be Aware Vision Open House at the Ramada in June, Disability Pride Day at the Capitol in July, and Veteran Stand Down at the AmVets in August.



Left: Kianna & Miah starting off the day at the Riverwalk.  
Above: families stopping at the DCIL booth to play games.  
Below: McCallie & Stephanie showing off DCIL swag.



## DCIL on-site for Project Service Connect event

DCIL joined area vendors for Project Service Connect September 17th at the Dream Center. This free annual event is headed by the Missouri Valley Coalition for Homeless People (MVCHP) to serve individuals who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. Over 25 local organizations and agencies were on-site to connect individuals and families with essential resources and supportive services/information. This event included free donations of clothing and supplies, haircuts, children's book readings, and free access to a community art event. Thank you to MVCHP for inviting DCIL to this important community event!

*McCallie, Andrew, Josie, Kianna, & Cody at Project Service Connect.*





## DCIL Dickinson in the Community

### Dickinson office apart of 'Burgers & Brats' in Regent

Mary Beth and Jared of the Dickinson DCIL office participated in a "Burgers and Brats" social at the Regent Slab on July 16th. DCIL information on our services was shared at the event.

*Right: Jared enjoys a local manually animated tourist favorite "Wirly Gigs" while in Regent.*



### Community resources spotlight at Beach Lunch & Learn in Aug.

Bismarck DCIL Program Director Kianna joined Dickinson DCIL staffers Mary Beth and Jared at the Beach Community Center August 12th for a special "Lunch & Learn" about valuable resources available in the community.

Lunch was sponsored by NDAD, DCIL, and CHI. Cookies were provided by Home on the Range.

*Left: Mary Beth and Jared standing by and ready to answer questions about DCIL services.*

### Diamond art home craft fun in Aug. for Dickinson consumers

Consumers enjoyed home crafting fun in August at the Dickinson DCIL office. The project that month was diamond art ornaments. Many were animal themed, which the consumers thoroughly enjoyed.

*Right: Dickinson consumers diligently working at their diamond art projects.*



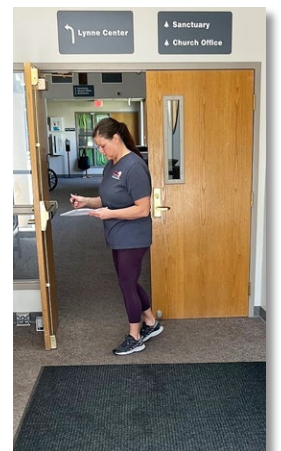
## DCIL will do accessibility assessments at no charge

Dakota Center for Independent Living (DCIL) will do an accessibility assessment of your business or polling site. We'll give you ideas on how to make your location more accessible for people with disabilities, and it's free of charge across the 18 counties we serve.

Recently, assessments were done in western counties of our service area in the state. Photos to the right show some of the areas that are measured during assessment.



If you'd like an assessment done at your location, please contact Program Director Kianna Roecker at DCIL: 701-222-3636.





# Suzanne now has access to community services

by Kevin Bailly, IL Specialist

Suzanne Shook began working with Dakota Center for Independent Living on 06/05/2025 after a referral was received.

Suzanne had made a request for an accessible ramp to be built onto her existing deck on her home located in Menoken, ND due to Suzanne's paralysis diagnosis. Suzanne was unable to leave her home and access community services since her deck was not accessible.

Through the combined efforts of DCIL, The Rehabilitation Access Program and A Long Products, Suzanne was able to obtain a 25 ft aluminum ramp. With Suzanne obtaining this beautiful ramp she will now have greater ease of accessing community support and services such as medical

appointments, family outings, and community entertainment.

Suzanne expressed how important it is that she has access to her community and obtaining this new accessible ramp has now helped her achieve this goal. She expressed how impressed she was that DCIL was able to get the work done so quickly and with such exem-

plary craftsmanship. Suzanne wants to thank everyone involved with this project.



# Kitten finds forever home through DCIL/consumer teamwork

by McCallie Willows, IL Specialist

Advocate Caitlin received a phone call from her consumer Dawn, who needed some help with a kitten.

Dawn was at the Dream Center where she found a kitten that had been put into a backpack. The owner of the backpack did not say where the kitten had come from and gave it to Dawn. Dawn unfortunately could not take the kitten home because she does not live in a pet friendly apartment. She contacted her DCIL advocate Caitlin to see if she would be willing to take the kitten for the evening. Caitlin could not take the kitten due to a slight cat allergy and having a young puppy. Caitlin contacted McCallie to see if she would be willing to take the kitten. McCallie agreed and took the kitten to her house.

Dawn stated to Caitlin that

she knew of a staff member at the Senior Center, Penni, that had lost her cat a few months ago and was on the fence about getting a new one.

McCallie and Caitlin met Dawn at the Senior Center with the kitten to ask Penni if she would be willing to take on a new kitten. It was love at first sight! Penni immediately said yes and has named the kitten Chloe. She said that she was not expecting to get a kitten, but she was very excited to have her.

Thank you, Dawn, for rescuing the kitten from the backpack and contacting DCIL staff for assistance. DCIL is NOT an animal rescue, but we are always willing to help in any way that we can. Congratulations to Penni and Chloe for finding each other, we hope you have a wonderful life together!

Good work DCIL Team!!



Left: Chloe the kitten happy to have a forever home.  
Right: Penni and Dawn with content kitten Chloe.



## Advocate Caitlin proud of Dawn's progress

Dawn came in with many goals she wanted to obtain. Dawn has been very good at advocating for herself. She has gotten an apartment on her own and continues to schedule appointments for herself to do the work required to meet her goals. She's showing great strides towards being independent and being in charge of her life. Since starting at DCIL, Dawn's anxiety is improving and she's finding happiness. Advocate Caitlin and Dawn have a peer support appointment set up soon to combat anxiety by coloring. Great work Dawn!



**Dakota Center for Independent Living**  
3111 E. Broadway Ave., Suite #1  
Bismarck, ND 58501

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**Dakota Center for Independent Living**  
3111 E. Broadway Ave., Suite #1  
Bismarck, ND 58501

Phone: 701-222-3636  
Toll Free: 1-800-489-5013  
Fax: 701-222-0511  
Web: [www.dakotacil.org](http://www.dakotacil.org)

\* 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



Scan the QR code above  
to be taken to our website, or find  
Dakota Center for Independent Living  
on Facebook, Instagram, & YouTube!



### Mission Statement

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

*The contents of this newsletter were developed under a grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of HHSC or ACL, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. This newsletter is available in an alternative format - upon request.*

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