

THE Independent

A Publication of Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living, Inc.

JUNE 2025

FYI

SAVE THE DATE:

- **Fargo Office ADA Open House**
Wednesday, July 23 - 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
- **FRC Resource Fair**
Tuesday, September 23 - 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM
Call 701.478.0459 for more information

Please request reasonable accommodations two weeks prior of event to your local office.

FARGO

To register for Fargo events, call Katelyn or Sarah at 701.478.0459.

FREEDOM IN ACTION

Redhawks Baseball Game

Thursday, July 17 - 12:15 PM - 3:30 PM
Event costs \$5 to attend. Fee covers tickets only. Register by Thursday, July 10.

YOUNG ADULT GATHERINGS (AGES 16-25)

Independence Trivia

Tuesday, July 15 - 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Event is free to attend. Register with Sarah by Tuesday, July 8.

Creative Mindfulness

Tuesday, August 12 - 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Event is free to attend. Register with Katelyn or Sarah by Tuesday, August 5.

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Appreciation Luncheon 2025

Celebrating Impact, Honoring Champions, and Looking Ahead

On May 8th, a room full of advocates, community leaders, and supporters came together for something truly special—our annual Appreciation Luncheon. It was more than just a meal. It was a celebration of progress, purpose, and the people who help make independence possible every day.

From powerful stories to meaningful connections and well-deserved recognition, the event reflected everything Freedom Resource Center stands for: community, inclusion, and the belief that one person or one organization can make a lasting difference.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us. Your presence made the day even more memorable and affirmed the strength of our shared mission: increasing independence for people with disabilities.

At the heart of the luncheon was the opportunity to shine a light on individuals and organizations doing exceptional work. These award recipients go above and beyond to create a more inclusive and accessible world, and we were honored to recognize their impact:

- **Volunteer of the Year:**
Kenny Heimdahl & Tommy Lee
- **Advocate of the Year:**
Jennifer Restemayer
- **Distinguished Service Award:**
Mr. All Move

- **Employer of the Year:**
Five Below
- **Accessibility Award:**
Torrey Hovland
- **Larry Chial Award:**
Hannah Papenfuss

We also took a moment to recognize the dedication of our staff and board members, whose leadership and commitment continue to move our mission forward:

- **6 Years:**
Sherry Bjornson, Board Member
- **15 Years:**
Cindy Gabbert, Program Director
- **20 Years:**
Joyce Wolter, IL Advocate

Thank you again for being part of our journey. We couldn't do it without you.

Sincerely,
Freedom Resource Center Team

What's Inside

- » Award Recipients
- » 2026 Award Nominations
- » Celebrate the ADA
- » Thanks to our Donors, Partners, and Contributors
- » Meet our New Staff

FERGUS FALLS

To register for Fergus Falls events, call Joyce or Leigh at 218.998.1799.

FREEDOM IN ACTION

Join us for the Fair

Thursday, July 17 - 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Free to attend (extras at your own expense.) Register by Thursday, July 10.

JAMESTOWN

To register for Jamestown events, call Ashley at 701.252.4693.

FREEDOM IN ACTION

Rock Painting

Tuesday, July 15 - 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM
Event is free to attend. Register by Friday, July 11.

YOUNG ADULT GATHERING (AGES 16-25)

Tuesday, July 1 - 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM
Register by Friday, June 27.

VALLEY CITY

YOUNG ADULT GATHERING (AGES 16-25)

The Vault
Tuesday, July 1 - 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM
Event is free to attend. Register by Friday, June 27.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



KENNY HEIMDAHL & TOMMY LEE, PRESENTED BY KATELYN

ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR



JENNIFER RESTEMAYER, PRESENTED BY SARAH

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



ISAAC, MR. ALL MOVE, PRESENTED BY KEETA

EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR



ABARI ELUZAI, ND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION, ACCEPTED ON BEHALF OF FIVE BELOW

ACCESSIBILITY AWARD



TORREY HOVLAND, PRESENTED BY JEN

LARRY CHIAL AWARD



HANNAH PAPERFUSS, PRESENTED BY CATHI



CELEBRATING 6 YEARS: SHERRY BJORNSON, BOARD MEMBER



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS: CINDY GABBERT, PROGRAM DIRECTOR



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS: JOYCE WOLTER, IL ADVOCATE

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NOMINATE ALL YEAR ROUND!

Do you know someone or a group in the community that is making an impact for people living with a disability who deserves to be recognized for their efforts? Our event is dedicated to recognizing outstanding volunteers, champions of disability rights, and employers who actively support people with disabilities. It's about honoring those who are making a greater impact in our community for people with disabilities.

Go to www.freedomrc.org and submit your nomination. Our next appreciation luncheon will be held May 7, 2026.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS, PARTNERS, AND CONTRIBUTORS!

Partners

- Mutual of America
- Marco

Contributors

- Kerstin Kealy: Emcee
- Dixie Duncan: Sign Language Interpreter
- Tanya Stoll, Jen Erickson, & Tricia McNamee: Photography
- Crown Trophy: Awards
- Short Printer: Programs
- Nominee Judges
- Staff & Board Event Team
- Avalon Event Center Staff

Silent Auction Donors

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- Cook Chiropractic
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- Delta Hotels
- Drekker Brewing Company
- Elena K Photography
- Endure Thermal Spa
- Evan Bond Portraits
- Fargo Dome
- Firehouse Pub
- Fry'n Pan
- Hanger Clinic
- JWW Cards
- Loves
- Lucky Beauty Salon
- Lux Barber Shop
- Mainstay Breads
- Merry Maids
- MN Timberwolves
- MN Twins
- Olson's Furniture
- Paradox Comics-N-Cards
- Red Hawks
- Rough Cut Social
- Sherry Bjornson
- Service Food Market
- Shirts From Fargo
- Shooting Park
- Skate City
- Skillcutz
- Sky Zone
- SNAP Fitness
- Starbucks
- State Farm
- Victor Lundeen
- Viking Cafe
- Vocational Training Center
- West Acres
- West Acres Bowl
- The Wilkin Restaurant

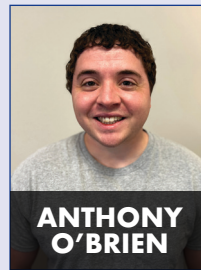
CELEBRATE THE ADA

Freedom Resource Center (FRC) is proud to support the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 35th Anniversary. On July 26th we celebrate this important civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

Credit to: adaanniversary.org

Help us celebrate this milestone at our open house on Wednesday, July 23, 2025 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm. Play a round or more of Bingo and Trivia with prizes while enjoying a special treat and get your name entered for the door prize.

Meet Our New Staff



ANTHONY O'BRIEN

Anthony O'Brien lives in Fargo, ND and has worked closely with individuals with disabilities in working toward personal goals. Anthony grew up in the Fargo-Moorhead area his entire life and graduated from MSUM in 2020 with a degree in Social Work. In his free time, Anthony enjoys hanging out with friends and family, playing darts, softball, being outdoors, and watching movies!



SKYLER ECK

Skyler Eck was born in Sisseton, SD but is now living in North Fargo with his fiancé alongside his dog, Arizona, and cat Miso-Soup. Skyler worked at Churches United for the Homeless for 5+ years and has a background in ABA therapy as well as time spent as a Direct Service Provider. He attended Minnesota State University Moorhead and graduated from Fargo South High. Skyler is a world-renowned Chess player (Self-Proclaimed) and an avid camper. He also reads books. Skyler is very pleased to be working at Freedom Resource Center!



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2701 9th Ave. S, Suite H
Fargo, ND 58103

Upcoming Events

Open House & ADA Celebration

Join us for Bingo & Trivia
Enter to win a door prize!
Wednesday, July 23
1:00pm - 3:00pm
Freedom Resource Center
2701 9th Ave S, Ste H || Fargo, ND



FRC Resource Fair

First ever FRC Resource Fair
Tuesday, September 23
11:30am - 2:00pm
Veterans Memorial Arena



Contact

For questions or more information, please call 701-478-0459 or 800-450-0459 and ask for Machaela.