

THE Independent

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

OCTOBER 2024

FYI

All Freedom offices will be closed October 28 for staff development, as well as November 28 and 29 in observance of Thanksgiving

Save the Date

- Giving Hearts Day - February 13, 2025
- Spring Luncheon - May 8, 2025

FARGO

Freedom In Action

Thank You Thursday

Thursday, Nov. 21 - 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Register by Thursday, Nov. 14
Contact Sarah or Katelyn at 701-478-0459 to register

Soup, Snacks, and Holiday Activities

Thursday, Dec. 12 - 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Register by Thursday, Dec. 5
Contact Sarah or Katelyn at 701-478-0459 to register

Young Adult Gathering

Play games and learn how to budget

Tuesday, Nov. 19 - 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Register by Tuesday, Nov. 12
Contact Katelyn at 701-478-0459 to register

Ornament Making

Tuesday, Dec. 17 - 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

No cost to attend
Register by Tuesday, Dec. 10
Contact or Katelyn at 701-478-0459 to register

continued on page 2

Celebrating Resilience and Empowerment Through Employment

This October, as we observe National Disability Employment Awareness Month, we celebrate the resilience, determination, and successes of individuals who, with the right support, have found meaningful employment and more independent lives. At Freedom Resource Center, we believe that empowering people with disabilities extends far beyond daily living support—it's also about helping individuals discover jobs where they can thrive.

Take Don Lee's story, for example. About eleven years ago, Don found himself homeless, living day-to-day with only temporary work to get by. He didn't have a stable place to call home until someone referred him to Freedom Resource Center. With our assistance, Don was able to secure housing. "I had very limited income and not much for rental history. Don't know if I would have gotten that apartment on my own!" he recalls. Over time, Don became a regular volunteer, and the sense of community and support transformed his life.

In fact, Don's dedication to giving back didn't go unnoticed—he was honored with the Volunteer Award at Freedom, a moment that he treasures deeply. "This is the only time in my life that I've been recognized for just being me!" Don says, still in awe of the acknowledgment. "The smiles I see while volunteering—it's what keeps me coming back."

But Don isn't the only one whose journey to independence involved finding the right job. Daniel, another Freedom Resource Center consumer, had a different path. After spending



DON LEE



DANIEL REBSOM

four years at The Meadows on University recovering from a major surgery, Daniel longed for independence. Through the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program, he transitioned from The Meadows into his own apartment, where he now thrives. "I walk to get my groceries, pick up medication, and even call bingo in my building," he says proudly. For Daniel, having his own home is more than just a roof over his head—it's the freedom to live on his terms.

In both Don and Daniel's stories, employment and community involvement are key ingredients in fostering independence. But they aren't the only ones who benefit from this shared vision. Businesses like Paradiso, where teamwork

continued on page 2

What's Inside

- » Meet our New Staff
- » Independent Living Skills
- » Award Nominations
- » 35th Anniversary Celebration

FYI

continued from page 1

FERGUS FALLS

Freedom In Action

Spooky Bingo

Tuesday, Oct. 29 - 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Dress up in your favorite costume to be placed in a drawing for a prize! Pre-registration is appreciated but not necessary

Glensheen the Cabaret Theatre Production

Saturday, Nov. 9

We will be leaving for the Center for the Arts from the FRC office at 7:10 PM. Plan on arriving before that time. Register early; limited tickets are available

Christmas with Mandy Harvey

Friday, Dec. 13

We will be leaving for the Center for the Arts from the FRC office at 7:10 PM. Plan on arriving before that time. Register early; limited tickets are available

Happy New Year Meal

Monday, Jan. 13 - At the FRC Office

Social starts at 11:30 AM

Meal served at 12:00 PM

Must pre-register by Jan. 3rd before 12:00 PM
No late registrations! Call Joyce or Leigh at 218-998-1799 to register

JAMESTOWN

Freedom In Action

All events are held at the Freedom Office
300 2nd Ave. NE Suite 207, Jamestown

Gratitude Jars

Tuesday, Nov. 26 - 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Holiday Cards

Tuesday, Dec. 17 - 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Hot Cocoa in a Jar

Tuesday, Jan. 21 - 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Young Adult Gatherings

Tuesday, Nov. 12 - 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Tuesday, Dec. 3 - 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Tuesday, Jan. 7 - 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

IL Skills Class

Decluttering

Tuesdays, Jan. 7 - Feb. 25

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

VALLEY CITY

Young Adult Gatherings

The Vault - 223 Central Ave., Valley City

Tuesday, Nov. 12 - 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

Tuesday, Dec. 3 - 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

Tuesday, Jan. 7 - 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

IL Skills Class

Decluttering

Thursdays, Jan. 9 - Feb. 27

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

***Reasonable accommodation requests for IL Skills Classes can be requested up to two weeks prior to the events. Accommodations can be requested for all other events up to one week prior to events.**

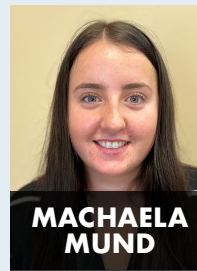
continued from page 1

is a cornerstone, have embraced inclusive hiring practices. Paradiso, honored with our Employer of the Year Award, values the contributions of employees from all backgrounds and abilities. "We use the buddy system in training and stress that no job is less important than another," a representative from Paradiso shared. "Freedom Resource Center has been invaluable in connecting us with individuals who are eager and willing to contribute."

Each of these stories highlights how employment is more than just a paycheck—it's a gateway to confidence, community, and purpose. As we reflect on National Disability Employment Awareness Month, we're reminded of the power that meaningful work has to change lives. It's not just about helping people find jobs; it's about giving them the tools and support they need to thrive in those jobs—and in life.

At Freedom Resource Center, we're proud to be part of that journey. Every story of resilience and empowerment reinforces why we continue to champion employment as a key part of living independently.

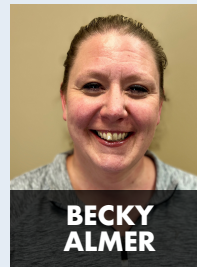
Meet Our New Staff



MACHAELA MUND

Machaela Mund is Freedom Resource Center's new Resource Specialist in Fargo. Machaela recently graduated from Valley City State University with a

bachelor's degree in psychology and human services. Machaela previously worked for Minot State as a Housing Facilitator, she also worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant at The North Dakota Veteran's Home and The Beverly Anne Assisted Living. She grew up on a farm near Milnor, North Dakota. In her spare time, Machaela enjoys reading books, traveling, going for walks, working out, and spending time with friends, family, and her dog, Kona.



BECKY ALMER

Becky Almer is Freedom Resource Center's newest Independent Living Advocate/ Transition Coordinator in Fargo. Becky previously spent 8 years working for

ShareHouse as a Residential Coordinator. Becky lives with her 12-year-old son, Zach and their 10-month-old Pitbull, Star. In her free time, she enjoys watching her son's football games and spending time with friends and family.

Disclaimer

In an attempt to reduce the cost of mailings, please send your email address to freedom@freedomrc.org. If you would like to be removed from our mailing list please call 1-800-450-0459. Freedom Resource Center and/or its Board of Directors do not necessarily endorse or support any of the views expressed within the personal testimonies contained in this newsletter, unless approval is specifically mentioned. Freedom Resource Center receives about 44 percent of its funding from the Federal Government. Approximate cost of this publication is \$.21 per piece, of which 44 percent or \$.09 is Federal funds; and 56 percent or \$.12 is non-Federal funds. Alternate formats available upon request.

Core Service Spotlight: Independent Living Skills Services

What are independent living skills?

In the context of independent living, they are skills necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities. Freedom can help people with disabilities develop these skills through direct one on one or group instruction.

Can you list some examples of independent living skills?

Consumers can get help developing skills in areas such as budgeting, organization, communication, social skills and many more. Some specific examples of classes offered are: the Living Well With a Disability series, Decluttering, Driver's Permit Training, Money Smart and Youth Transition classes.

How can I get started or get more information?

Upon request, we can provide you with a class list, as well as a complete list of areas covered by independent living skills. If you are interested, we can set you up an appointment with an advocate who will help you decide which skills and classes are right for you.

ANNUAL SPRING APPRECIATION LUNCHEON AWARDS EVENT

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?

This special event is dedicated to recognizing outstanding volunteers, champions of disability rights, and employers who actively support individuals with disabilities. It's about honoring those who are making a greater impact in our community for people with disabilities.

This event will be held **May 8, 2025**, at Avalon Event Center in Fargo. It will also include an online silent auction. Donations are appreciated.

Nominate Someone!

- Accessibility Award
- Advocate of the Year Award
- Larry Chial Leadership Award
- Distinguished Service Award
- Employer of the Year Award
- Youth Advocate of the Year Award
- Volunteer of the Year Award

Go to www.freedomrc.org to submit your nomination. Email freedom@freedomrc.org for any questions.

35th Anniversary Celebration

What an incredible celebration! Our 35th anniversary event was a huge success, and we couldn't have done it without YOU. **Here's to the next chapter—because together, we can make even greater strides toward inclusion and independence for all.**

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!





NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
FARGO, ND
PERMIT NO. 1159

The Premiere Leader Of Disability Rights In The Region.

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

DONATE AT GIVINGHEARTSDAY.ORG



The Premiere Leader Of Disability Rights In The Region.
WWW.FREEDOMRC.ORG



Giving Hearts Day
YOU Can Help Someone

THANK YOU

To everyone who joined us, supported us, and helped make our 35th Anniversary Celebration so special, we extend our deepest gratitude. We are honored to serve such great communities and to continue our mission of providing services that increase independence for people with disabilities. Your presence, encouragement, and belief in our work means the world to us.



GIVING HEARTS DAY



GIVING HEARTS DAY

LOCATIONS: ND Fargo • Jamestown • Lisbon • Wahpeton | MN Fergus Falls