



**Friendship Ark**  
HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

**FAITH • FAMILY • FRIENDSHIP**

**Summer 2022**  
**VOLUME 23, ISSUE 2**

## Looking Ahead

This is the time of year that the Friendship Ark Board of Directors, with input from staff, guardians, and other stakeholders, works on our Strategic Plan. A Strategic Plan is the way an organization identifies its goals and the strategies it will use to accomplish those goals. One area of significance that continues to come up each time we go through the process of reviewing or revising our Strategic Plan is how Friendship Ark will continue to work towards addressing the unmet needs in our community that relate to our mission. It's clear with the closing of Glenwood Resource Center and the ever growing waiting lists many Iowa Providers have, that there is still much need for additional community services throughout the State.



Friendship Ark is excited to announce that we plan to begin construction on our 8<sup>th</sup> home in the spring of 2023. Our Board of Directors made the decision to purchase a lot at 801 Dotson Place in November of 2021. As our waiting list for residential support (also referred to as group homes) has grown to over 50 applicants, this new home will allow us to reduce our waiting list by providing a home for 5 more individuals living with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Fundraising to build a home and the workforce shortage are our two biggest barriers. In an effort to allow for growth with less staff, we featured a newsletter article on our 7<sup>th</sup> home where we piloted using technology, Night Owl Support Systems, to provide overnight support while having in-person support available at other times as needed. The use of technology has worked well in this home, offering greater independence for the members living there while still providing a level of safety and support. We anticipate replicating this in our newest home.

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## Recruiting Corner

It is hard to believe spring is gone and summer is upon us. We continue to stay busy. This quarter we joined forces with the Story County Blast Back to School program, which aims to relieve the financial burden that purchasing school supplies can have on families. We not only have a staff serving as a committee member, but are also planning a supply drive to help Story County families. In addition, this partnership has allowed for many volunteer opportunities for our core members. If you have any supplies you would like to donate, please drop them off at our office located at 130 S. Sheldon Avenue, Suite 203 before July 30th.

In March we met with Iowa State to visit about how to best reach college students for employment or volunteer opportunities. In April we attended the Story County Youth Job Fair, at the mall, which led to our summer intern being hired. Please help us in welcoming Ana Fall! In addition, we would like to welcome Elyse Hall and Kelly Lass. Elyse is a new part time DSP (Direct Support Professional) and Kelly is one of our new full time DSP's. We truly have wonderful staff and are so thankful for them. Finally, we would like to recognize some staff who celebrated work anniversaries this past quarter. Congratulations to Nishimwe Trifoza, Candide Mafuta, Ron Foster and Tonya Potter for 1 year of service. Also, congratulations to Kris Hinders for 10 years of service and Jim Erickson for 15 years of service. We truly appreciate all they do!

*By Beth Lucht, Recruiter/Scheduler*

## Friendship Ark Earns Renewed CARF Accreditation

This spring, Friendship Ark earned its third three-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), confirming our continued emphasis on providing the highest quality of services to our core members. CARF is an independent non-profit that recognizes provider services around the world. The audit of our organization measured our performance against 100 quality standards as set by CARF to receive renewed accreditation. CARF accreditation signals a service provider's commitment to continually improving services, encouraging feedback, and serving the community.



From the CARF accreditation decision: "On balance, Friendship Ark, Inc. demonstrated substantial conformance to the standards. The systems and processes implemented by Friendship Ark support its core members in achieving positive outcomes. The leadership and staff members have demonstrated that they build on their strengths and are constantly striving to upgrade all aspects of the organization. The organization demonstrates a strong leadership structure, with the board of directors being proactive in addressing its responsibilities related to the organization oversight. The organization's safety policies and procedures appear to be comprehensive and provide a solid foundation of protocols. Friendship Ark has a well-designed program management system that provides an array of important information for program monitoring and improvement."

## Our Business Partners

Help us to thank our 2022 Business Partners for their generous support of adults living with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our community. If you find yourself interacting with them or visiting their offices, let them know you appreciate their commitment.



Cylosoft, Inc.  
Greater Iowa  
Credit Union

Fareway Meat  
and Grocery  
Knapp Tedesco  
Insurance

First National  
Bank  
Prestige  
Builders

## Community Engagement Events

The core members learned quickly how to create their own foaming hand soap at our event with one of Ames' newest businesses, Life Distilled, this April, and they were oh so eager to pass that knowledge on to the business representatives and community members who joined our event. In addition to the fragrant soap we were able to take home, we also planted spring bulbs in glass containers and were treated to delicious snacks. Thanks, Jen at Life Distilled, for hosting us and showing us the ropes. Contact Natalie at [natalies@friendshipark.org](mailto:natalies@friendshipark.org) or 515-292-9556 if you would like to participate in a future event.



## May Baskets at Beautiful Land Market

Our appearance at the May 1st Beautiful Land Market was a huge success! We offered our adorable May Day baskets for a free will offering at our booth and all of the 70 baskets that core members and staff had created were sold out before the market was over. The wind provided us with a big challenge that day, with someone even commenting "MAY DAY!" as our tent was about to blow away. We would like to thank the Beautiful Land Market for giving back to their community by providing us with this great opportunity! There are several more markets coming up this year and if you haven't attended one yet, you're missing out. You are sure to find a special treat to take home among all of the wonderful vendors.



## Our Summer Wellness Tip

Joel recommends replacing your coffee with a smoothie as the temperatures rise this summer. He remembers hearing that you should limit your caffeine intake on really hot days.



## Looking for Treasures

Keep us in mind if you run across any Halloween costumes or unique clothing items that would make a good costume at your house. (Dance costumes are also very popular.) We are collecting items for our fall Bootique fundraiser. Contact 515-292-9556 for drop-off or pick-up arrangements.



## Looking Ahead, continued

We hope you are as excited as we are to see this newest house being built and to meet the members that will call it home. For updates, or to contribute to the building of the home, please visit our website at [www.friendshipark.org](http://www.friendshipark.org) or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

*By Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director*

## First Groups Attend Restructured Gentle Teaching Sessions

As we continue to regain focus on Gentle Teaching at Friendship Ark, our Gentle Teaching Task Force has been working diligently on starting a more formal training for all employees. This training will occur in three separate phases and be led by members of the task force. So far, phase 1 of the training has been completed by all supervisors and coordinators in the agency. The task force is working to have 1 phase taught each year to all employees, then offer refresher courses after that. Employees who complete the courses will receive a certificate of completion after each phase. At this time, phase 2 of the training series is in the process of being prepared and finalized by the task force.



While all employees are given a brief training on Gentle Teaching when they start orientation at Friendship Ark, phase 1 dives a little deeper into those basics. During the training, employees discuss the four pillars of Gentle Teaching (safe, loving, loved, engaged) and how to effectively use these pillars to serve the core members and each other. They participate in role playing activities and real-life scenarios, as well as self-reflection activities to help understand their personal journey of learning and using Gentle Teaching techniques.

The goal of this training program is to continue to keep Gentle Teaching at the forefront of the services provided at Friendship Ark. We truly believe that it is the foundation of successful core member/employee relationships. Creating an environment where individuals feel safe and loved by those around them can be all they need to live a life full of purpose and success!

*By Anna Luppen, Operations Manager*

## Did You Know?

Have you ever wondered where our social media hashtag #everyoneshouldbehere came from? While it's true that we whole-heartedly believe that everyone (core members, staff, volunteers, and supporters) should really be here (with us), the phrase originates with core member Craig. Craig has been with Friendship Ark since the beginning and was a resident at our very first home. At dinner time, Craig prays with his housemates and staff and always ends that prayer with "everyone should be here".



## Odyssey of the Mind

Four groups of core members, staff and volunteers partnered with ISU Dining to serve lunch to thousands of participants, coaches and parents during Odyssey of the Mind World Finals at Iowa State in May.



## Ames on the Halfshell

We were excited for our first time to be featured as the partner non-profit organization at Ames on the Halfshell in June. Thanks to everyone who came out to see us and to all of those who made a donation to support our mission that evening, as well as the Ames Jaycees for the opportunity. Many of the core members were in attendance and several enjoyed the music so much they got their dance moves on. Watch the event schedule next summer. Maybe we will get to be a part of this event again.



## OHV Club Hosts FA Core Members

What a special opportunity we had when we connected with the Iowa OHV Association for a day of ATV rides for the core members this spring! A core member parent made us aware of this group which regularly provides rides for veterans at the veterans home in Marshalltown. The OHV Association arranged for us to meet them at an OHV park near Ledges State Park.



They had about ten units meet us there and selflessly gave rides to the core members from 10 am to 3 pm. Members of the group came from all over Iowa and donated their time and gas to give many of the core members a brand new experience. Some of the core members were hesitant at first, but once they rode and their adrenaline was pumping, they were back on the unit as many times as they could. 17 of our core members chose to



attend the event and the group is hoping to plan another ride opportunity in the future in order to be able to serve even more members from the Ames area. We are so very grateful for this experience and appreciate the time, effort and expense that was donated by the members of the Iowa OHV Association.

## Employee of the Quarter

Congratulations to Friendship Ark's Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2022, Cindy Wismer. Cindy's nomination recognized her for being dependable, loyal, and always giving 100% of herself to her job. She has been a dependable presence in the lives of the Johanns House core members. Thank you, Cindy, for your faithful commitment to the core members and to Friendship Ark. In recognition of her award, Cindy received a gift of \$100 and will be eligible to be selected for the Employee of the Year award. Nominations for Employee of the Quarter and Employee of the Year awards can be submitted by any staff of Friendship Ark and winners are selected by a diverse committee of staff peers.





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HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

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## Make a Donation

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I/we would like to help Friendship Ark continue to serve persons with intellectual disabilities in a faith-based family home environment! Amount donated: \_\_\_\_\_

Please apply my/our donation to the following:

- General Operations     Endowment Fund     New House
- Core Member Outings     Transportation Fund
- Rose/Lois Johanns Educational Fund (Staff Training and Education)
- I would like to learn more about making a planned gift.
- Friendship Ark is a part of my estate planning.

You may use your credit card to make a one time or recurring monthly gift by going to our website and clicking the "Donate" button.



This newsletter provides limited space for us to share all of the exciting things happening at Friendship Ark. Find more stories, news and pictures on Facebook and Instagram. Don't miss a thing, follow us today!

## Wish List

- New 9x11 Area Rug (Neutral Colors)
- Air Fryer
- Deck Awning
- Uno Card Games
- Cooking Tongs and Spatula
- Small Shop Vac
- Yard Games
- Disc Golf Discs
- Jump-Start Battery Pack/Air Compressor (EverStart 750A—120 PSI) - Two Needed
- Halloween Costumes, Unique Clothing Items, Dance Costumes (for our Halloween Boutique fundraising event)