

**STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
Radisson Inn, Bismarck & Virtual
February 1-2, 2024**

Call to Order: Brittney Hogan called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Angie Bosch, Ali Brown, Scott Burlingame, Shannon Cook, Leon Dietrich, Brittney Hogan, Nancy Lunden, Gillian Plenty-Chief, Robyn Soiseth, Chelsy Sondrol, Joe Yasenchack

Members Absent: Russ Cusack, Jerry Christiansen, Jan Beddes, Emma-Leigh Miller, Hope Wolbert, Pete Yung

Non-Council Members Present: Aimee Volk, Damian Schlinger, Randy Sorensen, Royce Schultze, Jana Johnson, Mistie Bouilly

Approval of the February 2024 Agenda: Shannon Cook made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, Leon Dietrich seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Approval of November 2023 Minutes: Gillian Plenty Chief made a motion to approve the November 2023 SILC minutes as presented, Nancy Lunden seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Correspondence – Brittney Hogan:

The SILC PPR for FFY 2023 was submitted and we are waiting on approval.

Reminder that the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) is due on June 30, 2024. During breakout sessions today subcommittees need to try and finalized their objectives and indicators so the SPIL subcommittee can review and submit for public comment (hopefully in March or the beginning of April).

We will start working on the 3rd Annual SILC Report in the next month or so.

Treasurer’s Report – Shannon Cook: Reviewed the Treasurer’s Report.

Leon Dietrich made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented, Shannon Cook seconded the motion to approve. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Vote on a New Vice-Chair and Secretary – Brittney Hogan:

Discussion and nominations were discussed. Our current Vice-Chair, Gillian Plenty Chief and our secretary Russ Cusack are completing their second terms on 3/31/2024.

Vice-Chair

Nancy Lunden nominated herself for the role of Vice-Chair.

Brittney Hogan made a motion to close voting a to appoint Nancy Lunden as the Vice-Chair of the SILC and Robyn Soiseth seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Secretary

Leon Dietrich was nominated for the role of Secretary. Leon accepted the nomination, **Brittney Hogan made a motion to close voting a to appoint Leon Dietrich as the Secretary of the SILC and Shannon Cook seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.**

AARP – Josh Askvig and Janelle Moos

They talked about what AARP is. They are a non-profit and non-partisan organization to empower individuals over 50 choose how they want to live as they age. They strengthen communities and advocates for what matters most the more than 100 million Americans 50+ and their families; health security, financial stability, and person fulfillment. In North Dakota they have five employees.

2024 priorities and focus are social security, livable communities, fraud prevention, and voter engagement.

Social Security – If congress does not take action there could be a shortfall in ten years (2034). There has been little bi-partisan effort to address the short fall at this time. AARP will always fight to protect your social security (aarp.org/YouEarnedIt)

Livable Communities – They ensure that they are designing communities that work for people of all ages by addressing: transportation, housing, social engagement, and public spaces. By 2034, there will be more people over 65 than under 18 – for the first time ever.

There is the AARP Community Challenge which is a grant program to make communities more livable for people of all ages with tangible improvements that jump-start long-term change.

Voter Engagement and they will show you why, how, and where. They are monitoring three ballot measures statewide.

Legislative Planning Session

Had a group discussion about what and how to advocate for the next legislative session. Discussed transportation, payee services,

Committee Breakout

Friday, February 2, 2024

Call to Order: Brittney Hogan called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. A quorum was present.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Angie Bosch, Ali Brown, Scott Burlingame, Shannon Cook, Leon Dietrich, Brittney Hogan, Nancy Lundon, Gillian Plenty Chief, Robyn Soiseth, Chelsy Sondrol, Joe Yasenchack

Members Absent: Pete Yung, Hope Wolbert, Jerry Chistiansen, Russ Cusack, Emma-Leigh Miller, Jan Beddes

Non-Committee Members: Aimee Volk, Damian Schlinger, Randy Sorensen, Royce Schultze, Mistie Bouilly, Carlotta McCleary, Roxanne Romanick, Jana Johnson, Kirsten Dvorak, Julie Horntvedt

Statewide Panel Discussion – Kirsten Dvorak, Julie Horntvedt, Roxanne Romanick, and Carlotta McCleary

Carlotta with Mental Health America talked about mental health services for children in North Dakota (ND). There are about 18,000 children in ND that have a mental health diagnosis. Children and adult mental health services are underserved throughout the state. Through policy efforts they will work on building up mental health services in ND.

Kirsten is with The Arc of ND, and they are looking at some possible education bills, will keep track of DHHS bills, and working on a department of transportation issue. They are reforming the YESS (Youth Empowering Social Stigma) group and new members will be joining the program. They took over that program from Dakota CIL and possibly looking at this as a statewide peer-to-peer program for youth.

Julie with the ND State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD Council) shared some grant options. They have quarterly meetings to work on advocacy skills and legislative bills. This year they are looking at engaging more members by having meetings throughout the state. On March 14th they will have their quarterly meeting at the Quality Inn in Jamestown from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. For their grants visit their website at <https://www.nd.gov/scdd/>.

Roxanne with Designer Genes she shared information regarding Down Syndrome and how they are working to build relationships to start working with families such as doctors. In North Dakota, 10-14 babies are born with Down Syndrome every year. They follow several bills and advocate for individuals with disabilities.

Quarterly Director's Report:

Angie for Freedom.: See attached.

Royce for Dakota Center for Independent Living: See attached.

Scott for Independence, Inc.: See attached.

Randy for Options: See attached.

Committee Reports:

Governance Committee – Royce Schultze: Russ Cusack and Gillian Plenty Chief will complete their second term on 3-31-2024. Ben Wolf Necklace will take Gillian's place. Angie Bosch and Jerry Christiansen have terms coming up but are eligible to reapply. Brittney Hogan will need to reapply 6-30-2024 and Shannon will be completing her second term on 6-30-2024.

Internal Affairs – Nancy Landon: Worked on the objectives, indicators, and State Plan for Independent Living.

External Affairs – Angie Bosch: Worked on the objectives, indicators, and State Plan for Independent Living.

State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) – Damian Schlinger: The SRC they had updates from three Vocational Rehabilitation regions:

- Minot are on track to meet their goals and serve four schools.
- Grand Forks is well above average to meet their goals.
- Devils Lake is a bit below to meet goals.

They have four subcommittees and they voted to merge the duties of the Employment Subcommittee into the other subcommittees. They reviewed a couple of policies. They also voted to have a representative from DD be a required member of the council.

Traumatic Brain Injury Council – Shannon Cook: They accepted a new member. They reviewed and updated their bylaws.

Committee on Aging – Royce Schultze: They had a meeting on December 8, 2023. In Valley City they started up a Memory Café. The Bismarck Senior Center will be rebranding their name. The Bismarck Senior Center served 160,000 meals in 2023. They will keep the drive-up meal program. The Qualified Service Professional (QSP) portal is up and going. Aging has completed 1.4 million meals in 2023. ADRL had 14,000 calls with 35,000 unique website hits. The average wait time for calls was 1 minute.

Olmstead Commission – Scott Burlingame: The State Olmstead plan is out for public comment. They had an update from Aging Services. Home and Community Based Services are up in the state.

NASILC – Leon Dietrich: N/A

Public Comment: No Comment.

The next SILC meeting will be May 2-3, 2024, in Grand Forks, ND and will have the virtual option.

Scott Burlingame made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Leon Dietrich seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Freedom - ND SILC Director's Report – Feb 2024

MFP/ADRL Updates

The ADRL and MFP programs continue to be incredibly busy! We ended the year 2023 with great numbers and changed a lot of lives! **MFP** program referrals were 96 for the year with **47** people transitioning (Fargo 29, Lisbon 8, Jamestown 8, and Wahpeton 2). The **ADRL** program had 319 referrals with **140** transitions (Fargo had 129, Lisbon 3, Jamestown 7, and Wahpeton 1). The programs combined transitioned **187** people out of some level of higher care and into the community!

The Transition Coordinators are doing amazing work with each transition. There is a lot of collaboration with others in the community from nursing homes to landlords, housing facilitators to Developmental Disability Case Managers to guardians and other community professionals. Purchases are being made at furniture stores, grocery stores and Walmart or Target to fill each apartment with the necessities to assist someone to live more independently which may include anything from durable medical equipment (wheelchairs to lifts to name a couple) to specialized plates and utensils. A lot of time goes into each transition and the Transition Coordinators dedication to the work we do shows in our numbers and success stories.

Fargo

Upcoming Freedom in Action:

- **End of Life Planning presentation**, February 13th, 2024, 1:30pm-3:00pm,
- **St. Patrick's Day Bingo**, Tuesday, March 12th, 2024, 1:30pm-3:00pm

Upcoming Young Adult Gathering:

- **Valentine's Day Games**, Tuesday, February 20th, 2024, 10:00am-11:30am,
- **Let's Laugh Day, Play Games and Tell Jokes**, Tue, Mar 19th, 2024, 10am-11:30am,

Fargo highlights from our IL Advocate/Peer Mentoring Specialist: Katelyn Vilmo

For Cass County, 7 consumers were opened in the past couple of months with goals being set to help with either advocacy or IL skills training. I have been watching some consumers progress in their goals and am watching them become more independent between appointments. I continue to attend the Region V Community of Practice committee meetings and we are starting to have more providers coming back to the meetings. We hope to get more members to start working together to help youth transition.

Attendance for the December Young Adult Gathering was low, but we are switching up the activities to add more creativity. In January we will play fun games along with giving the option for them to write letters and celebrate National Handwriting Day.

A Listening Session was held at the Fargo office on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, people came for pie and coffee and provided feedback to Angie on services and their experiences in their communities.

We currently have an open position, IL Advocate/ADRL Transition Coordinator, at our Fargo location. It is posted on Indeed, our website as well as Facebook & Instagram. If you know anyone who might be a good fit that lives in the FM, send them our way.

Jamestown

Upcoming Freedom in Action:

- **Hot Cocoa Jars** Thursday, Feb 22nd, 2024, 1:30pm-3:00pm
- **Succulent Potted Plants**, Thurs, March 28th, 2024, 1:30pm-3:00pm

Upcoming Independent Living Skills Classes

- **Decluttering Your Life from the Inside Out**, Tuesdays Feb 20th-March 26th, 10am-11am

Jamestown Highlights from our IL Advocates: Ashley Gabehart & Keeta Smith

Keeta has been doing follow-ups with consumers who transitioned and working with those wanting to transition. One of the consumers is anticipating moving into his apartment in mid-February. He has been in a SNF for a few years now. All the durable medical equipment has been ordered and the company that is going to be providing assistance for him with his activities of daily living. We won't be able to start until mid-February. He's so excited for this and cannot wait to be home. He said the thing that he's most looking forward to is being able to cook in his kitchen. There have also been a couple of referrals that didn't result in further involvement because one had too much income and assets and another lady passed away.

We are fielding calls asking for information about the locations of accessible apartments in town, contact information for our accessibility specialist, equipment grant questions for people that are not consumers and others looking for help in navigating the Qualified Service Provider portal. In the past two months there has been an increase in inquiries and walk-ins.

Ashley

The transition class in Valley City completed Living Well 101 before their winter break and we are starting Living Well 102 next week. The Jamestown office has still been busy with walk ins and I&Rs. One of the gentlemen that I had been working with as an I&R has been opened as a consumer. We have been working towards his goal of establishing a budget. Budgeting is an independent living skill that is important to me and one I enjoy helping others build based on their individual priorities and needs. On a community level I participated in a Giving Hearts Day information booth at a recent UJ basketball game. It was fun to be out in the community and interact with new individuals as well as seeing some other professionals and individuals I have worked with out in the community. I have also been involved with the Jamestown Giving Hearts Day Collaborative, a group of individuals that come together to coordinate Giving Hearts Day events in Jamestown. As always building relationships with consumers, walk-ins, other professionals, and the community remains important to me and one of my favorite parts of the job.

Lisbon highlights from our IL Advocate: Kristine Green

The past few months have been exciting and interesting as I am learning so much about the resources not only here in Ransom County, but also the surrounding counties as well. I currently have 16 MFP Consumers and four ADRL Consumers. I have enjoyed getting to know other staff members that work with MFP and ADRL such as HCBS, and Housing Facilitators; along with getting to know social workers from the Nursing Home's in the counties I am assigned. One of my greatest highlights over the past few months are getting to know my consumers and watching them grow as individuals. I had been out sick with COVID and during that time I reached out to all my consumers to check in on them via phone calls and I had four of them call me throughout the following week to check in on me and see how I was doing. I really thought that was neat. Since my time here I have completed a few ADRL Diversions, and it really brought a lot of joy. I currently am very close to being able to complete my first MFP Transition and I have really enjoyed that as well. I'm looking forward to the year ahead and working with consumers and this wonderful Freedom Staff.

Wahpeton

We currently have an open position, IL Advocate, at our Wahpeton location. It is posted on Indeed, our website as well as Facebook & Instagram. If you know anyone who might be a good fit that lives in that area, send them our way.

ND Accessibility Projects

from our IL Advocate/Accessibility Specialist: Jen Erickson

- 1 Fargo ramp installed.
- Home Usability Peer Network kick-off – Dec. 6th – Launched by National Council for IL monthly meetings currently scheduled through June; website provided w/ home usability resources: www.useablehome.com
- City of Medina Assessment (2 connected buildings) – restrooms, indoor ramp, parking, kitchen/public areas; working on full report for city auditor.
- Civil & Human Rights Taskforce – ND Human Rights Coalition and Paratransit represented, Workforce/staffing discussion, continued networking; reached out to Moorhead and Fargo's Human Rights Commissions for opportunity to share updates about FRC's work - waiting to hear back from both.
- 3 ramp/home entry reviews and a variety of ramp inquiries this past week, alone.

Event Updates

from our Office Coordinator: Wanda Lokhorst

Giving Hearts Day: Lots up updates :)

Our goal for this GHD is **\$35,000 for 35 years in business. GHD is on February 8th, 2024**

We will be using the same theme as last year. **"Nothing about us without us."**

Fundraising opportunities for the month of January and February:

Papa Murphy Dates

Fergus Falls Dates: January 10, 11th, & February 8th

Jamestown Dates: January 11th

Fargo-Moorhead Dates (All 5 locations): January 25th & February 7th

Jamestown: Century 21 and 4 other fellow agencies are hosting a Chili Cookoff

January 25th to raise money for their favorite charity. Whoever wins the best chili funds will be given to their chosen charity. Century 21 chose us! They are also doing a **vote, like and share event** on Facebook. Head to Freedom's Facebook page to find the posts and share them out.

Fergus Falls collaborative worked together to do another video this year (Leigh Lake is in it) and will have a portion of proceeds from Taco Johns given to the group of organizations.

Looking into a couple different platforms that have texting options. Found one that is free to nonprofits. Wanting to use it as a reminder to send to donors versus making phone calls.

We are working on different social media posts and videos. If you are on Facebook and/or Instagram- make sure to like and share.

Staff will be putting labels on 100 Grand Candy Bars to give to donors when doing an ask or when someone comes into the office to donate. The label will say, "Sweeten the Deal, Change a Hundred Lives." We are starting out with 74, if it goes well or more are needed, we will order more.

After GHD is over, we will need volunteers to help write thank you's to each of the people who donated, and a couple people to help call donors who gave larger amounts.

Appreciation Luncheon:

It will be held on May 16th from 12-1:00 or 1:30 at the Avalon. We are going to work on shortening it up to an hour. We officially have an **Emcee- Kerstin Kealy** (WDAY news anchor). BIG Thank you to Jen E!!

Looking for financial support from donors to help fund the event. Need help spreading the word and inviting people to attend. Silent Auction will be online starting the Monday prior to the event and closing out after the event is over. We can start collecting Silent Auction Items from now until May 10,

2024. Nominations for awards will be updated on the website soon so people can start filling out the form to nominate people, groups, or organizations.

35th Anniversary:

2024 will be Freedom's 35th year anniversary. We are looking for different ideas on how to celebrate. We will have a logo done up to include in emails, marketing, newsletters, etc. and will do a ribbon cutting during a celebration event over the summer. We would also like to have a "party" in the parking lot-- food truck, and yard games is the idea being thrown around currently. We are looking for input on other ideas to help celebrate this major milestone.

Directors Report - Independence, Inc. – February 2024
Scott Burlingame, Executive Director

A. Individual Services

A 36-year-old male diagnosed with Autism last year, has been working towards creating a budget to pay off debt for his family. Assisted in helping with the application process of applying for a university. He is now enrolled and started completing his second master's degree. Staff and consumer are now working towards learning more about autism.

We assisted a 24-year-old non-binary individual who is nonverbal with applying for Minot State University and financial assistance. They have been accepted for the fall semester of 2024.

We assisted a 51-year-old male who has experienced homelessness for the last couple of months to apply for housing options. He will be moving into his new apartment on Friday.

We assisted a 28-year-old male who experiences Autism with involvement in the community as a way to prevent incarceration.

We helped a 57-year-old lady with MS get a ramp to remain living in her home. The company that built the ramp did not include grip strips so when it snowed, the wood got slick and made it hard to get in and out of her home. We were able to purchase grip tape and after collaborating with Independence staff in Williston, we went and installed it on our next nice day. This included shoveling and drying off the ramp so that the grip tape now sticks. This lady is in a wheelchair and now will be able to leave her house after it snows.

A prior consumer's husband passed away. He was receiving VA benefits. Our staff did a home visit after hearing about the husband passing away and checked in. She wanted to know what kind of benefits she would be able to receive per her husband. Our staff simply provided her with a list of resources that she could reach out to and that I could assist her with this if she needed.

We assisted in establishing funding and finding a contractor to install a ramp for an individual who is 3 years old and uses a wheelchair. Before the ramp was installed, his grandmother was having to lift him up and down the stairs. As he grew older, she was no longer able to do this easily. The individual was part of DD services, but in order to access their funding, they would need three quotes from a contractor who is signed up as a vendor with the state. The DD case manager could not even find one contractor that was a vendor of the state. Together we were able to access funding from the Housing Finance Agencies Rehab Accessibility Grant and the ADRL Transition and Diversion funds to pay for the cost of the ramp.

We assisted a 64-year-old female, who has significant physical limitations from a previous stroke, find a new home after an eviction that led to her being homeless. We were able to find a temporary living situation and provide storage services for her household belongings while we located this home for her. We were able to locate a pet-friendly home, as well as assist in finding new homes for the pets she would be unable to bring with her into her new apartment.

A 33-year-old female sought out Independence, Inc. in hopes to improve her home life and get a front loading washer and dryer in her apartment building. With the help of Independence, Inc. staff, this female was able to successfully get a front loader washer and dryer in her apartment. This individual continues to advocate for herself and make her dreams a reality.

Barriers:

- A 69-year-old female we assisted out of the nursing home (she there for 7 years) is now back at the nursing home and is at risk of losing her apartment and everything we worked towards.
- A 43-year-old male experiencing homelessness. We have been working with him for over 6 months to find housing. The feedback on his most recent housing application with a rental company in town was "no matter how many programs he is involved in" they would not rent to him due to low credit.
- A 70-year-old woman living in her own home. She was beginning to have difficulty living independently, as her bathroom had a tub that was too high for her to step into. Through the ADRL program and RAP Grant, we were able to pay for a new walk-in shower to be installed. She is now having no problems living independently in her own home.

IL Skills Classes

Our most recent IL Skills classes were A Slice of Gratitude, Ugly Sweater Craft and Coca, and Budget Bites.

B. Community Services

Transportation Talk

The Transportation Talk Community Education took to the community to provide education surrounding the transportation services in Minot. We collaborated with three prominent transportation providers, Minot City Transit, Souris Basin Transportation, and TransportME to provide information to the community of Minot. We also collaborated with Milton Young Towers and Henry Towers to provide direct services to their residents as well as open the event to the public. The event was designed to address the differences between the three well-established transportation services so that attendees were able to make informed decisions of what best fits their needs. By bringing together providers into two full rooms of community members, it offered a unique opportunity to attendees to interact directly with our staff and transportation providers. It also offered the opportunity to ask questions and gain valuable insights about the transportation and Independence Inc.'s services. This event also created an open dialogue that bridged the gap between service providers and community members.

This event played a pivotal role in establishing and strengthening community connections between Independence Inc, transportation services, and the community. The networking opportunities presented at this community education event laid the foundation for ongoing partnerships between Milton Young Towers, Henry Towers, TransportME, Souris Basin Transportation, and Minot City Transit.

C. Community Accessibility:

Housing: The City of Minot is undergoing a comprehensive study of housing in the city. I had the chance to sit in on a public meeting and listen to the input of the company doing the survey. One of the early things they discovered is many people in the city are house poor, meaning they pay more than 35% of their income for housing. It likely means people who are living in rent-controlled housing are having more problems moving out when they have chances to earn more money. I was also able to share how the lack of accessible housing in diverse areas of town is creating problems. One of the biggest barriers that has been identified as problems with Mobile Home Parks and a massive the cost of rent.

We did a story on a person being affected by this, and you can see it here:

<https://youtu.be/V5lfYO2LmOc?si=ppD8Lp3G3umssrWa>

Transportation: Over six months ago, the City of Minot added two new public bus routes. Unfortunately, as a result of being unable to hire new drivers, the routes have not yet started. The City has been without a taxi service for about two years. It is expected that they will have a new

service next week. This service will include one accessible taxi that can be used on demand, however, they are asking for 24 hrs. notice whenever possible.

You can learn more about it here: <https://youtu.be/Z5YWZloMAAtU?si=c3QhtsTrJDN1czcg>

Recovery Reinvented: Seven of our staff were able to attend Recovery Reinvented at Minot State University on Oct. 5. At the event, state and national addiction experts will shared their insight into how to turn 'Advocacy into Action' at the event dedicated to ending the shame and stigma surrounding the disease of addiction.

Independent Living Fair

We held our Independent Living Fair on 11/1. We had about 163 people attend. Independence, Inc.'s youth staff played a key role in creating the youth event, EmpowerU Symposium, bringing students from 10 different schools together to go through interactive, educational sessions. These students were then encouraged to go through the Independent Living Fair where they were able to learn about different resources that could be useful to them.

Project BEE Closure

Following the announcement of the closure of the Project BEE warming house on 12/18/23, a significant amount of my time was spent trying to organize the nonprofit response to the homeless crisis it created. This group was able to organize a temporary shelter on less than 12 hrs. notice, and then a little more than a week later, when that had to close, we were able to find temporary housing for people until the Project BEE warming shelter reopened.

Since the last SILC meeting, the following staff changes have been made.

Nicole Beech is working remotely and working as part of the MFP/ADRL program in the Williston Area.

Jasmine Williams was hired in November to work as part of the FTR/CC programs.

Mellissa Miller was hired in December to work as part of the ADRL program.

Lindsey Wittmayer will start in our Bottineau office on 2/1/24. Her job will be 75% MFP/ADRL and 25 independent living programing.

Options IRCIL – Feb. 2024

Various staff have reported the application process and reporting processes for various services through the Dept. of Human Services have become very delayed and seemingly disorganized. The change to centralized, remote workers have caused huge delays and presents barriers to people with disabilities. The time spent on calls due to long holds and dependent on the need being redirected to other call bank representatives with each call resulting in additional holds results in people using an inordinate amount of time on their cell phones. People are coming to us two months after we have assisted them with food stamp reapplications with their applications still not processed. The representatives report they are behind in being able to process applications.

People with disabilities are coming to us because they cannot afford the time on their cell phones for the calls. They are coming to us because they cannot understand why ND has changed from local staff they can visit in an office to now talking to representatives in phone banks in California. Due to this Options staff are now documenting all the problems we have reported to us and documenting the timelines of every application or reporting process we assist with. Options staff are reviewing Federal Regulations from the USDA and Dept. of Health for each service to assess if the state has timelines they are to follow for processing and also what recourse P/w/D may have when they cannot go see a case worker any longer. This is very hard for such an impoverished group who do not have access to unlimited minutes or web-based computing devices.

Many persons who were able to access extra funding during COVID find themselves now having to figure out how to make ends meet without the extra help. Options is experiencing a number of people with disabilities who need help with figuring out their finances.

Options staff use a program from our local REA's Operation Round up program for many needs people with disabilities cannot find funding for from other sources. This program has partially funded remodeling needs, durable medical equipment, and lift chairs for people. Recently they have funded three lift chairs for people. One individual was recently diagnosed with cancer and needed a chair to help her get up from a seated position as she is getting weak. The chair was also equipped with heat to help her with chemo induced chills. The other two individuals needed new chairs to replace their other ones so they could remain independent.

The University of North Dakota, School of Medicine held a program emphasizing accessibility and mobility for students and the general public. Options set up a small adaptive recreation equipment display along with information about our services for attendees. Approximately, eighty-eight people were in attendance during the event.

Provided a presentation on "What is Options" at the local Sharehouse Recovery program. There were roughly 15 individuals in attendance and they asked lots of questions.

Options is fully staffed, at least for the next month, so for the first time in a long time we find ourselves not having to do to use our regular staff to fill in for MFP or ADRL. Options filled its position in Devils Lake. The individual hired is starting out running. She has resurrected a cooking class and has also interfaced with the local TBI support group to assist its regular coordinator filling in when she is unable to attend.

Our Recreation Specialist has resigned so Options will be consulting with the State to decide how to handle the gap. We only have approximately nine months left of the award. This award did not have the impact we had anticipated. Many people voiced that they wanted to participate in recreational activities but when push came to shove asked us to call them back later when they would be in a better position to participate. There were so many people who expressed this we decided to conduct a survey to assess what problems people of this area are experiencing which hinder their ability to participate in leisure activities.

To date Options has assisted 24 people out of institutional care and prevented the placement of seven people.