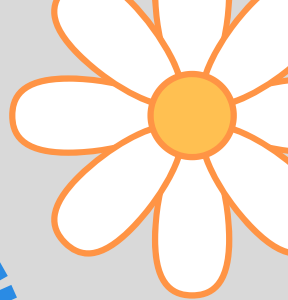




HI! I'M CATIE!



well





**Catie loves dressing up
like Mrs. Doubtfire
to surprise her
housemates and staff.
She also really enjoys
wearing red lipstick!**



Are you free to completely and authentically be yourself at all times? Well, our friend Catie is! One of Catie's favorite sayings is: "I am a hoot, aren't I?!", and she most certainly is. Catie is one of the most vibrant and fun-loving individuals we know. She brightens a room just by being in it.

Today, Catie is thriving surrounded by four housemates and 24-hour staff in a Friendship Ark home. Her staff shares that she is hilarious, thoughtful, and exceptionally kind and in-tune with others around her. The small group setting of her living environment gives her the ability to let her best qualities shine through, and she takes pride in herself and her accomplishments.

Catie experienced several different living situations before moving into a Friendship Ark home, each having an impact on her life and her development. After a volatile childhood, a serious incident at school required her hospitalization at Iowa Lutheran which culminated in a placement at Woodward Resource Center. Woodward Resource Center provided Catie with the structure and medication management tools she needed to stabilize her situation.





**Friendship Ark staff
provide guidance and
encouragement,
helping each core
member work toward
their individual goals.**



After a period of success at Woodward, Catie's father decided to seek a transition to a less restrictive environment within a group home setting for her to live in, providing her with the opportunity to grow, be more independent, spend more time in the community, and make new friends. Catie's family visited several service providers, but when they visited Friendship Ark, it just seemed like the right place for Catie. **The services that Friendship Ark provides along with an outstanding staff were the deciding factors for Catie's family to make the decision to place her here. Catie's dad shares that they "haven't regretted that choice for one minute and he really can't imagine Catie being anywhere else but Friendship Ark!"**

Like so many organizations across the state of Iowa and the nation, for that matter, Friendship Ark began with the parents, Joe and Lois Johanns, of a child with disabilities wanting more than an institutional setting for their child's future. On June 22, 1999, the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead vs L.C.* held that people of all ages with disabilities have the right to live and receive support in the community under the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.





Catie has formed a close bond with her housemates and they take many outings into their community together.



Following this ruling, there was a shift from institutional settings to community-based settings where people with disabilities were valued for their contributions and encouraged to live and participate in the communities of their choice. Over the years, Friendship Ark has supported a number of core members in their move from an institutional setting to the Ames community. We have seen our core members thrive and become more independent with the services and supports we offer. The State of Iowa's decision to close Glenwood Resource Center, will result in many more families experiencing the transition from institutional living into a community. Catie's story offers a glimpse into a successful transition to home-based community living and the positive impact this can have on the life of a person living with disabilities.

According to Catie's staff, since moving into a Friendship Ark home, Catie has gained self-confidence. She knows she has choices and a voice and is learning to advocate for herself in a positive, constructive, and safe environment. She not only relays her wants and frustrations but also her fears which is an important part of growing. Being a part of a home-based setting has given Catie the connection and freedom to be herself.





Catie has found her home with Friendship Ark. Will you help us provide the same opportunity for another individual from the waiting list?



Catie's dad reports that **"Catie is doing exceptionally well. She has grown so much since being at Friendship Ark and during our visits she always wants to go back HOME. Her home is Friendship Ark and that tells you quite a bit about how she feels and how great Friendship Ark is."**

It is our hope that Catie's message of resiliency and individuality will inspire you to boldly **BE YOURSELF** as well and that you will use the attached sticker as a reminder to "Be a hoot, like Catie" whenever you feel like it.

We invite you to invest in Friendship Ark in order to provide more individuals like Catie with the opportunity to live life on their terms, explore who they are, and develop the skills they are capable of. **We strive to help our core members reach their fullest potential through faith, family and friendship and we hope that you will join us in that mission.**

There are currently 50 individuals on our waiting list for supported community living services and your donation will help us to continue to grow and serve more core members. To make a gift, click the "Donate" button at the top of our website or mail a check to Friendship Ark, Inc., 130 S. Sheldon Avenue, Suite 203, Ames, IA 50014.





**THANK
YOU FOR
YOUR
SUPPORT**



