



Friendship Ark
HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

FAITH • FAMILY • FRIENDSHIP

Summer 2024
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We Said Goodbye to Winter in Style

If you made it to our second annual **Tropical Sangria Escape** fundraising gala in April of this year, you know that we had the best time as we sang and danced and hugged to our hearts' content while we enjoyed the tropical setting, great music, delicious food, and an extremely fun evening with friends. In coming together, we also raised \$15,000 more than last year in support of Friendship Ark's mission. All we can say is, "WOW", what an evening! A huge **THANK YOU** to everyone who supported this event. To our presenting sponsor, Chevron-Renewable Energy Group, our music sponsor, Discover Ames Community Grant Program, event donor, Mary Greeley Medical Center, our vendors, CPMI Event Center, Jason Whorlow Dueling Pianos, Apres Bar Co., Fareway, Great Caterers of Iowa, and Celebrations, our MC, Gary Botine, our auctioneer, Kelly Jackson, our speaker, Lisa Heddens, all of the live, silent and dessert auction donors, our Board of Directors, and many, many volunteers, this evening would not have been possible without you. If you did not make it to the party this year, be sure to mark your calendars right now. **The 2025 Tropical Sangria Escape will be on Saturday, April 5th, 2025.** Don't miss it!



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Recruiting and Community Engagement Corner

Summer is upon us and that means getting extra time to be outside and more opportunities to engage with our community. We continue to attend Ames Rotary, 1 Million Cups, and Leadership Ames events and had the opportunity to be a guest speaker on KASI's Mel in the Morning show to promote Friendship Ark and our Gala. Additionally, we were invited to be the guest speaker for the United Way DEI group to present about how we can promote an inclusive environment for adults living with intellectual disabilities, and our Executive Director, Jennifer, and House Supervisor, Delaney, spoke to a group of nursing students about who we are at Friendship Ark and the importance of their role as nurses to what we do. We are extremely thankful for several members of the Iowa State University Campus Service Council who helped us paint the Westfield house's hallway as a service project this spring.

One thing we are very proud of is how we provide our core members with opportunities to be active in the community. We have a Day Habilitation Program without walls which means we try to find activities you and I enjoy and make them accessible to the core members. Our community involvement activities vary and include music, art, and culture such as attending the Music Man Junior Play at the Community Theatre in Altoona, IA, attending concerts such as the Eli Young Band at the Val Air Ballroom and a Tribute to the Allman Brothers at the Camelot Theater in Nevada, IA, as well as the Bohemian Arts Festival at Merle Hay Mall and the Ames Renaissance Faire. Spiritual offerings for the core members have included a six-week series of The Chosen through Lutheran Church of Hope in Ames, and attending the special needs ministry at Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines called One Body. We are loving the connections we are making with peers from the Des Moines metro area as a result of our involvement. Other community events we have attended include the Cyclone Stampede Rodeo at Iowa State, one of our core members participating in two different book clubs at Dog-Eared Books on Main Street in Ames, and a group that has been going to BINGO in Ankeny regularly. Another way we like to engage with our community is by volunteering our time and talents. We regularly man the water table for the Runners United Nevada Running Club which offers a series of six runs throughout the year, we planted flowers at Daley Park in Ames through the City of Ames, and delivered flyers and collected food items door-to-door to help fill the pantries through the United Way of Story County Food Drive.

This quarter we welcomed Amy Arthur, Accounting Assistant, to the Friendship Ark family. Please help us to welcome Amy.

By Beth Lucht, Marketing Manager

Our Business Partners

Help us to thank our 2024 Business Partners at the Family Level of \$1,000 and above for their generous support of adults living with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our community. Business Partners at this level are recognized in various ways, including a quarterly mention in our newsletter. If you find yourself interacting with them or visiting their offices, let them know you appreciate their contribution.



Intermediate Service Option Leads to Success

Friendship Ark's first ever intermediate services house, the Fletcher House, opened in the fall of 2021 and was a milestone in the services we provide. Acting as a midway point between 24-hour in-person supervision and hourly Supported Community Living services, we have been able to closely support those who are ready for the next step towards independence. As featured in our year-end appeal mailing in the year of its opening, this project gave a group of core members, "A Chance to Fly", transitioning from 24/7 supervision to living together in a home with intermittent staff assistance. This summer, we are celebrating with two of the core members from the Fletcher House as they spread their wings and become roommates in an apartment they will be renting together, giving them even more independence with just the right amount of staff support from our hourly Supported Community Living Program to set them on a path to success. We are excited that the services provided at the Fletcher House have equipped these two with the skills and the confidence necessary for them to take the next step on their journey. Their current housemates, staff, families, and even a former staff member who has become a friend hosted a Move-Out Party for them last month. Congratulations and best wishes, Jayden and Chloe, in your new home. We are proud of you and cannot wait to see all that you can accomplish.



All of the ladies of the Fletcher House, Jayden, Caroline, Diana, and Chloe.

Meet Our Spring Intern—Callista Webb

Callista was our Intern for the spring of this year and was instrumental in helping us put on our annual gala, the Tropical Sangria Escape. As she concluded her internship with us, we asked her a few questions to provide some insight into the opportunities an internship with Friendship Ark can provide. Here are her responses.

How did you become interested in applying to be an Intern at Friendship Ark?

When looking for an internship I wanted to find an experience that would provide me with a lot of variety and give me a sense of independence. I also wanted to find a place that made me feel like an important piece of their organization. When meeting Friendship Ark at the Career Fair, it seemed like the internship would provide me with all of those things and more, and throughout the semester it proved to be the experience I was hoping for.



Continued on page 5.

Save the Date



Sara Ojard Memorial Golf Outing

The family of Sara Ojard (Prochnow) invites you to participate in the 3rd Annual Memorial Golf Scramble to benefit Friendship Ark. The outing is a 4-Person Golf Scramble with BBQ and prizes to follow and takes place on August 5th, 2024 at 10 a.m. at Coldwater Golf Links in Ames, IA. All golfers are welcome regardless of skill level. You may sign up as an individual or in groups of 2, 3, or 4. The family is happy to match you up.



Register today at:

sara-ojard-memorial-scramble.perfectgolfevent.com

Gentle Teaching—An Area of Continued Focus at Friendship Ark

“Companionship is a sense of connectedness. Connectedness to others is the center of the human condition.” - Dr. John McGee

Companionship is one of the foundations of Gentle Teaching. It stresses the importance of creating meaningful, human connections between our staff and the core members we serve. The unconditional acceptance and gentle presence of this relationship establishes trust and promotes mutual learning and growing together. We experienced mutual learning and growing together when we brought staff together to train on Gentle Teaching earlier this year. Staff were able to hear about how they can utilize the techniques of Gentle Teaching in the way they interact with both core members and others in their lives. There were a variety of activities to engage participants in, and of course we had to have pizza and treats for our three hours of learning. In addition to being trained in Gentle Teaching, we also look to our peers for examples of what Gentle Teaching should look like. An excellent example of companionship can be found between Direct Support Professional, Marisa, and core member, Bill. Below, Marisa describes how she used the tools (hands, eyes, presence, words) and pillars (safe, loved, loving, engaged) of Gentle Teaching to foster this relationship.

Marisa and Bill’s Story

“Bill and I met in 2021 when I began working at his home regularly. I typically work on the same day at the same time each week, which helps us establish and maintain trust and rapport. Over time, we built a beautiful friendship rooted in acceptance, respect, and humor. We talk, laugh, help each other complete tasks, and play games together regularly. Most importantly, I take the time to listen to and observe Bill, offering support and encouragement along the way. This enables me to understand who Bill is beyond his disabilities; his interests, and his needs. I think the key to success in our friendship is the level of mutual and genuine acceptance we share. I don't want to change Bill, rather, I aim to continuously support and provide him with a safe space to learn and grow as an individual and as a friend. Bill is hilarious, thoughtful, clever, curious, and extremely helpful! I love being a part of Bill's life and I am grateful he accepts me. Whether we are looking at cars, grocery shopping, going to lunch, cooking dinner, fixing things, playing Pacman or pool, riding a bike, or simply chatting at the kitchen table, we always find thoughtful ways to ensure the other feels seen, understood, and accepted.”



We talked with site Supervisor, Lindsey, on what this relationship means to Bill and here is her response:

“I think Marisa has done a phenomenal job of meeting Bill where he’s at. Bill is very private and protective of his bedroom and has trouble getting rid of items. This can be a very intrusive type of task for a person. I think the rapport she’s built with him has led to much success with this goal. She has also sought out opportunities to take Bill into the community and knows what he would like. Recently, he was just sitting at the kitchen table waiting for Marisa when I mentioned she was coming in tonight.”

When we asked Bill about his friend and staff Marisa, he shared that some of his favorite things to do with Marisa are to ride bikes and look at old cars and that a blue Camaro is a favorite for both of them.

As mentioned above, at Friendship Ark we strive to create an environment of interconnectedness, where we all support each other in growing and learning. Marisa and Bill’s companionship is a testament of that objective, and we are so thankful for the bond that has been created between these two!

Employee of the Quarter



Congratulations to Friendship Ark's Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2024,

Tadd Kingsbury. Tadd's nomination recognized him for being someone who is always consistent and can be depended on at all times. He is a supervisor who genuinely cares about his staff and core members by making them feel at home and like family! He is also quick to help out anyone who is in need! Thank you, Tadd, for your faithful commitment to the core members and to Friendship Ark. In recognition of his award, Tadd 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 awards can be submitted by any staff of Friendship Ark and winners are selected by a diverse committee of staff peers. All Employee of the Quarter winners for a year are eligible to be selected as the Employee of the Year.

Sharing a Love of the Arts



At our 2023 gala, FA HR Manager, Laura, won CY Stephens tickets for a performance of "Rain" in the Silent Auction which she shared with her dad

who loved the arts. It turns out that this was one of the last things Laura got to do with her dad before he passed away last year. This year, in his memory, she bid on and won a package of 30 tickets to a youth matinee at CY Stephens at our Gala Auction and gifted them to our Day Habilitation program so a group of our core members could be exposed to the arts. What a wonderful gift!

Spring Intern - continued

Favorite thing about being an Intern at Friendship Ark?

My internship has been such a positive experience choosing a singular favorite thing is very hard. I have loved the variety of working on marketing, event planning through working on planning the spring gala, and especially getting to know each of the core members.



Proudest accomplishment during your internship?

One of my biggest accomplishments was during one of the last days of my internship when one of the core members I see weekly came up to me and said: "You are just doing such a good job."

What has been your biggest takeaway from being an Intern at Friendship Ark?

Throughout my internship I have learned a lot about patience and humility. When working with the core members, growing patience in stressful situations, asking questions and understanding I could always work to do better helped me enjoy even the hard days. Taking a step back to watch other staff work with our core members, learning from them, and understanding I still have a lot to learn lead me to thrive and grow as a person and a new employee.

What are your plans after your internship?

I am so excited to be staying with FA as a Supported Community Living Coordinator. I can't wait to continue working for an incredible organization and continue the relationships I have built with the core members.

Who is your hero or who has been instrumental in making you who you are?

My parents and older siblings have helped make me who I am today. Each one of them has played a crucial role in the patience and understanding I have, the strength and perseverance I have learned, and how to enjoy life wherever you are. Being the youngest of three, my two older siblings cared for me and pushed me to be a better person. Seeing the amazing things they have done in their lives and the goals they have set for themselves has pushed me to thrive and to better myself. My parents have supported me through good days and bad days and shown me what unconditional love is and the dedication it takes to love someone.



Friendship Ark

HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

5820 Lincoln Way, Suite 101
Ames, Iowa 50014
P 515.292.9556
friendshipark@friendshipark.org

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Make a Donation

Name _____
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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
- New House
- Core Member Outings
- Transportation Fund
- Rose/Lois Johannis 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.

Donations to our Endowment Fund should be made out to Story County Community Foundation and sent directly to SCCF at P.O. Box 1666, Ames, IA 50010-1666, indicating Friendship Ark Endowment Fund in the notes section of your check.



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, Instagram and LinkedIn. Don't miss a thing, follow us today!

Wish List

- Basketball Hoop
- Badminton/Volleyball Set
- Full-Size Refrigerator (new)
- Area Rugs with Rubber Backing (new)
- Office Chairs
- Electric Can Opener (new)
- Quesadilla Maker
- Bag Clips (Chip Clips)
- Halloween Costumes, Unique Clothing Items, Dance Costumes (for our Halloween Boutique)

For your convenience, we have created a Wish List on Amazon. You may select the items you would like to donate and have them shipped directly to us by using the QR Code.

