

# FAITH • FAMILY • FRIENDSHIP

## Celebrating Our 2025 Business Partners

As we get ready to close out 2025, we want to take a moment to recognize our incredible business partners. It's hard to believe that just a few years ago we had only a handful—this year, we are closing out with **37 partners** supporting Friendship Ark.

Our hope is that you'll support them in return so they can continue supporting us. Even a simple "thank you" to someone you know from one of these businesses can mean so much. Their generosity helps us grow to serve more individuals, strengthens our events so more dollars go directly to our mission, and shows the broader business community the importance of what we do.

**They are saying, through their partnership, that our work matters—and that who we serve matters.**

Recently, we reached out to Justin Moorman of Moorman's Clothiers to ask how he first got connected with Friendship Ark and why he continues to hold a Shop for a Cause day at his store each year. Here's what he shared:

"We first came across Friendship Ark when we were paired with them for the Downtown shopping event 'Shop for a Cause.' Friendship Ark brought in a great team to work with us for a day and we had a blast with their members. We continue our Shop for a Cause day with Friendship Ark not only to give back to them but because we love interacting and having them join us for a day of work and fun!"



*Continued on page 3.*

## Final Call to Switch to Digital

As previously announced, our newsletter will be going completely digital beginning with the Spring 2026 edition. **With this move we will no longer be publishing a printed paper version of this newsletter.** Thank you for your continued support as we work together to make a bigger impact!



Scan the QR Code or email us at [friendshipark@friendshipark.org](mailto:friendshipark@friendshipark.org) to subscribe to our new digital newsletter.

**Published by Friendship Ark Homes & Community Services**

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## Recruiting and Community Engagement Corner

Winter came in like a lion this year, but that doesn't mean we have slowed down any. We kept especially busy this fall. In October we held our 4th Annual "BOO"tique fundraiser at the Lucky Star Market and we also brought our "BOO"tique to the Shipley Schoolhouse for their brand new event, The Howling. It is always so much fun visiting with people and helping them find the perfect costume.



Something else we enjoy doing in the fall is meeting all the ISU students at the People to People Career Fair. This is typically where we meet our spring interns who are extremely helpful with our gala event coordination and always bring in a fun perspective. This quarter, in addition to being active in Ames Regional Alliance events and Rotary, we spoke to a couple different Kiwanis groups and even a PEO group, spreading the word about who we are and sharing about our ARK-itects Capital Campaign that will provide us with a new programming and recreation hub. In addition, we spoke to the Iowa Board of Realtors regarding accessible housing. We even had the wonderful opportunity to talk to the Gentle Teaching United group with members from all over the world about Gentle Teaching. **Do you know a group we should talk to? Please connect us. We love sharing about Friendship Ark!**

Staff with milestone anniversaries this quarter include: Isaac Helbling, Emerance Iradukunda, Hamida Mohamed, Jaden Norris, Alexis Perry, Emily Walker - 1 year; Cassie Shivers - 10 years.

Please help us in welcoming the following new staff to the Friendship Ark family: Kyonna Manley, Tina Hansen, Jenna St. Sauver, Shawneen Wilson, Abby Collins, Jon McCord, and Jennay Rowley.

*By Beth Lucht, Marketing Manager*

## Our Business Partners

Help us to thank our 2025 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.



## Celebrating Our 2025 Business Partners, continued

Justin has supported Friendship Ark through Shop for a Cause since 2020. Not only does he donate 10% of the day's sales, but he also treats the core members and staff who participate to lunch. His generous spirit—and stories like his—show just how meaningful our business partnerships truly are.

Please take a look at our 2025 business partner list at the level of \$1,000 and above on page 2 as well as the additional business partners listed below, and join us in thanking them.

*If you're interested in becoming a 2026 business partner, email us at [friendshipark@friendshipark.org](mailto:friendshipark@friendshipark.org) and we'll send you more information. You can join for as little as \$250.*

**To our 2025 business partners—thank you!**

### Additional 2025 Business Partners

Friend Level - Ames Home Builders Association, Burke Corporation, Championship Productions, McFarland Clinic, Moorman Clothiers, Story Construction, US Bank

Advocate Level - Arends Sanitation, Cylosoft, Danfoss, South Story Bank and Trust, TS Bank

Plus three business partners who have chosen to remain anonymous.

*By Beth Lucht, Marketing Manager*

## Game Day for Core Members Made Possible by Generous Donation



Thanks to the generous donation of tickets and parking passes from our business partner, US Bank, core members enjoyed an outstanding afternoon of Iowa State Cyclones Football and an exciting performance by the Iowa State Cyclones Men's Basketball Team this fall. The opportunity to experience game day at Jack Trice Stadium and the renowned Hilton Magic would not have been possible without this support. We extend our sincere appreciation to US Bank for making these memorable moments a reality.



Have you added this date to your calendar yet? It will be here before you know it. Watch social media for tickets to go on sale in March. We expect another sell-out event.

## FA Receives Grants

We were excited to be awarded a grant of \$1,400 from Memorial Lutheran Church in Nevada towards a platform wheelchair lift for our Johannis house. Thomas and Josh did a great job of explaining why this is so impactful for the Johannis house.



We were also blessed to receive a \$500 grant for our race and a \$1,500 grant for our gala from Discover Ames.

Thank you Memorial Lutheran Church and Discover Ames!



## Learn About the Work and Impact of Our Gala Committee

Did you know Friendship Ark started a gala committee last year? Our gala has grown significantly over the past few years, and we recognized that Martina, our Marketing Assistant, and I could no longer manage it alone. As a result, we established a gala committee. We kicked off our committee meetings in October of this year and have already begun planning another amazing event for you.



The gala committee is an all-volunteer committee with the exception of Martina, a spring intern (when we have one) and me. Just last year alone, by bringing on a gala committee, we raised around \$20,000 more than in past years—truly showing we are better together. This committee helps with making decisions, securing volunteers, and most importantly helping us to gather AMAZING auction items. Committee members also volunteer to help with set-up and decorating the day before the event and on the day of the gala to help our event run smoothly and to facilitate tear down and clean up after the event. We'd like to extend a big thank you to the individuals who said "yes" to serving on this committee.

Our gala committee is comprised of the following community volunteers: Annie Almquist (Northwood Preschool), Ashley Rippke (Rippke Design), Kelli Hecker (TS Bank), Matt Bohner (Magic Matt's Cleaning), Melissa Muschick (Discover Ames), Nate Kuhn (Northwest Bank), Ronnie Olson (Ames Regional Economic Alliance), Stacy Duhn (ACSD), Susan Hoshor (Assured Partners), and Tiffany Tope (Stevens Memorial Chapel).

To give you a glimpse into the experience, we asked one of our committee members to answer a few questions about being on the gala committee. Here is what Susan had to say.



Melissa Muschick (l),  
Susan Hoshor (c) and  
Stacy Duhn (r)

**Why did you choose to say "yes" to joining the gala committee?** "I've attended the gala the last few years and when I learned the event was managed by just a few people, I was inspired to get involved. I've never been on the planning side of an event like this and thought it would be a fun thing to do and a great way to make new friends."

**What has been your favorite aspect of being a part of the committee?** "Meeting new people and working together as a team."

**What is your favorite part about the gala?** "I really enjoy the day we set up and the event itself. Seeing all the work we've done over the past 6 months come together with a sold-out evening of food, music, and laughter."

**Why is being a part of this committee important to you?** "I love witnessing the community embrace the organization, especially the core members."

*By Beth Lucht, Marketing Manager*

*If you know some of our gala committee members and see them out and about, please tell them thank you from us!*



Kelli Hecker (l), Melissa Muschick (c),  
and Susan Hoshor (r)





Has the hustle of the holidays had you too busy to make a donation to the ARK-itects Capital Campaign for our new programming and recreation hub? Not to worry, you can still contribute and be a part of this great project. As a matter of fact changing tax laws for 2026 may turn out to be in your favor. Consult with your tax advisor to map out the best strategy for your circumstances.

Please see page 6 for donation information and QR code. Visit our website to learn more.

## Friendsgiving Celebration



One of our most beloved traditions is our annual Friendsgiving celebration for core members and staff. Staff members and volunteers prepare a traditional Thanksgiving

meal with turkey and all of the fixings for our Friendship Ark family to share. We treasure this time we all get to spend together enjoying delicious food and catching up with old friends. Special thanks to St. Andrew's Lutheran Church for providing us with their space and to everyone who contributed to the success of the gathering.



## 2025 Milestone Staff Anniversaries

We thank all of our staff for their dedicated service to, relentless advocacy and unconditional love for the core members. You are what makes Friendship Ark great and we are blessed to have you as a part of the family.



*Cassie Shivers*  
Program Manager



*Cristeena Elkin*  
Direct Support Professional



*Nicole Kelly*  
Site Coordinator



*Kim Miles*  
Administrative Assistant/  
Representative Payee

## Employee of the Quarter

Congratulations to Friendship Ark's Employee of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2025, Nicole Kelly. Nicole's nomination recognized her for being an exceptional leader whose compassion, dependability, and positivity embody the core values of Friendship Ark. Her calm and encouraging presence creates a supportive environment where both core members and staff feel valued and inspired. Nicole's flexibility, professionalism, and dedication have been vital to maintaining stability and teamwork across all houses. Her kindness, integrity, and commitment to excellence make her truly deserving of this recognition. We are thankful for Nicole's faithful commitment to the core members and to Friendship Ark. In recognition of her award, Nicole 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 the year are eligible to be selected as Employee of the Year.





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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 ☐ New House ☐ Core Member Outings
- ☐ Transportation Fund ☐ Rose/Lois Johanns Educational Fund (Staff Training and Education) ☐ ARK-itect Capital Campaign
- ☐ 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!

## Ways to Support Our Mission

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.

Scan here to place an order for items from our Wish List.



Scan here to donate to the ARK-itect Capital Campaign.



Scan here to make a general donation by credit card.



Please note that in the near future, we will begin sending tax receipts electronically by email whenever possible.