



Developmental Disability Services December Newsletter

Dates to Remember:

Services Closed

12/25/2025

01/01/2026

Events at a Glance

Grand Island:

- 24th - Christmas Eve party
- 31st - New Year's Eve party

Hastings:

- 19th - Christmas Party

Kearney:

- 5th - Hosting movie at library
(donations for local food bank)
- 19th - Hosting bingo at library



On Human Rights Day, 12/10/2025, we extend our sincere gratitude to our Human Legal Rights Review Committee Members for their unwavering commitment to championing the rights and dignity of those we serve.



Services Showcase

INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS & GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Hastings DDS is thrilled to announce a new partnership with the local Salvation Army this holiday season. Together, we are joining forces to help ring the bells, spread festive cheer, and make a positive impact in our community. Our team is passionate about giving back, and this collaboration allows us to support a cause that truly matters during this special time of year.

Jason from Hastings DDS is proof that giving back matters—we're celebrating him for spreading holiday cheer in our community! Jason partnered with The Salvation Army Hastings NE, ringing the bell and filling the air with festive music. His enthusiasm and generosity made the season brighter for everyone.

Thank you, Jason, for your commitment to giving back—your positive spirit inspires us all. He had a wonderful time and can't wait to lend a helping hand again this holiday season!"

As we move through the rest of the holiday season, Hastings DDS remains committed to continuing our efforts and finding even more ways to support our neighbors. We look forward to additional opportunities to work alongside The Salvation Army and other local organizations as we spread kindness, joy, and hope throughout our community. Together, we can make every season brighter!

Community Connections

PARTNERING FOR GOOD

In recognition of the incredible dedication shown by family caregivers, our Shared Living Managers, Tia and Kira, took time throughout National Family Caregivers Month to honor our Shared Living Providers. They visited each location, sharing tokens of appreciation and heartfelt words of thanks. While many providers may not be related by blood, their kindness and generosity have helped create loving homes and families for those in their care. We sincerely thank and honor these extraordinary individuals this month appreciate everything you do.

Spotlight on Excellence

EMPLOYEE CELEBRATIONS

We're thrilled to share that Jill was honored with the Outstanding Professional Award at the annual Association of Community Professionals (ACP) conference in Kearney, NE!

Jill was nominated by Associate Director Chelsie Blunt, who shared:

"Jill goes above and beyond to create unforgettable experiences for the individuals in her care. She seeks out unique opportunities that foster engagement and build confidence—whether it's organizing visits to local police departments, fire stations, sheriff's offices, or even SWAT teams."

Your dedication, creativity, and compassion truly make a difference every day. Congratulations, Jill – we're so proud of you!



QUARTER



He is always willing to help. He always seems to be in a good mood. He is always doing something different every time I see him and always looks to be for the good of Goodwill!~ Laura

Kurtis Gierhan
Administrative Assistant DDS
www.goodwillne.org



Goodwill 9
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

Join us in congratulating Kurtis, our Administrative Assistant in the DDS department!

Today, we celebrated him with a special cookie, honoring his passion as a huge Huskers fan!

Thank you, Kurtis, for your hard work and dedication!

You truly make a difference!

Congratulations, Kurtis!

Team Talk

A MESSAGE FROM THE
DIRECTOR



Dear Stakeholders, Families, Staff,
and Community Members,

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for each of you. Your trust, support, and dedication have been instrumental in helping us fulfill our mission and serve individuals and families with compassion and care. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey and for making our community stronger.

This year brought meaningful organizational changes, including the restructuring of our medical services and the launch of a new partnership with Guardian (Midwest) Pharmacy. These changes have opened doors to exciting learning opportunities for our team and laid the groundwork for future growth. We look forward to advancing

together, with your continued support guiding us every step of the way.

We celebrated several achievements that highlight our collective commitment. Chelsie Blunt was appointed Associate Director, and Dacia Wright stepped into the role of Hastings Program Manager. We recognized excellence among our staff with employee of the quarter honors and celebrated those who earned external DSP awards. Our Celebrating Differences event, DSP week festivities, and Shared Living appreciation gatherings brought us closer, reinforcing the spirit of inclusion and teamwork.


Looking ahead, we remain devoted to service quality. We are increasing habilitative activities, strengthening community connections, and fostering respectful interactions to promote safety for everyone we serve. Our commitment to these values guides all that we do.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to our mission and for making a difference every day. We appreciate your partnership and look forward to another year of shared growth and success.

With heartfelt appreciation,





Laura Schenk

Resource Roundup

**NEWS RELEASE**

INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUPPORT ACT
Tax credits for direct support professionals, employers of individuals receiving services, and agencies

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Lincoln, NE – In April 2024, Governor Jim Pillen signed the Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities into law, effective January 1, 2025.

Employers:
\$ 500 per direct support professional (DSP) employed ≥ 6 months, 500 hours or more

Direct support professionals:
\$ 500 if employed as a DSP ≥ 6 months, 500 hours or more

Employers (HCBS):
\$1,000 per employee receiving Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) employed ≥ 6 months, 200 hours or more

Tax credit allocation locations:

- Up to \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2025-2026
- \$1,500,000 for fiscal year 2026-2027
- \$2,000,000 annually thereafter

“These tax credits are essential for supporting Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the people and organizations that assist them.”

Tony Green, Division of Developmental Disabilities
Division of Developmental Disabilities

UPCOMING TRAININGS

12/4 - MANDT Initial
12/8 - CPR Refresher
12/11 - Med Aide Refresher
12/15 - New Hire Orientation
12/17 - CPR Initial
12/18 - Med Aide Initial

Impact Initiatives

If you are interested in making a positive impact by supporting quality services and championing the rights of those we serve, please connect with your local manager to learn more about joining our Advisory Committee or Human Legal Rights Review Committee.

We are always seeking passionate individuals to get involved!

Employee Updates

NEW EMPLOYEES

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EMPLOYEES ON THE MOVE

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DEPARTURES

Pamela Buckles - Staffing
Development & Support Specialist



Give Big During Goodwill's 2025 Annual Campaign

