

SUMMER 2026

inspiration



EMPOWERING
ABILITIES

Creating Opportunities.
Changing Lives.

THE PEOPLE POWERING OUR PROGRESS

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Cover: Summer fun was in full blast at the Residential Center's annual Summer Bash! With a Super Soaker in hand, Greg Johnson celebrated friendship, soaked up the joy of the season, and made memories to last well beyond summer.

OUR MISSION

We believe in people and what's possible for them. This belief drives us to be a mission driven provider, working alongside people with disabilities, creating opportunities, and changing lives.

Miki Bulington proudly shows off the artwork she created at the third annual Camp Paradise, an experience hosted by our Residential Center Recreation & Activities team. We celebrate her creativity, self-expression, and the confidence that comes from sharing something uniquely her own.



The Heart of the Work

Guest column by Dawn Wilcox,
Lead Mentor, Daily Discovery East

Every day, Empowering Abilities team members step into roles that are about far more than a job title. They enter the lives of people who count on them—not only for support, but also for safety, respect, and meaningful human connection.

The people we support may experience challenges that others cannot fully understand. At times, the world can feel confusing, overwhelming, or unpredictable. In those moments, a calm voice, a patient response, or a familiar presence can make all the difference.

This work is not always easy. Long days and difficult situations can test even the most dedicated professionals. Yet our team members understand something important: Behavior is communication. A person who appears to be giving someone a hard time may, in fact, be having a hard time. That shift in perspective matters.

Our role is not to control. It is to listen, support, guide and uplift. It is to recognize what someone may be trying to communicate and respond with compassion. It is to protect each person's dignity while helping them feel safe, understood and valued. This work asks a great deal of those who choose it. It requires patience when they are tired, empathy when they are stressed, and gentleness when a situation feels anything but gentle. At the same time, it gives back in ways few careers can.

Our team members witness growth that others might overlook. They celebrate victories that may seem small to the outside world but mean everything to the person achieving them. They have the privilege of being part of someone's progress, joy, independence, and sense of belonging. When we show up with kindness, we create trust. When we show up with patience, we create opportunities to learn and grow. When we show up with respect, we create spaces where people know they matter. Every person we support is someone's child, sibling, friend or loved one. More importantly, each is a whole person—with individual strengths, preferences, goals, and dreams. They deserve the same care and consideration we would want for the people closest to us.

At Empowering Abilities, we believe in people and what is possible for them. That belief comes to life through countless everyday interactions: a reassuring word, a shared laugh, encouragement to try something new, or simply taking the time to listen. These moments may not always attract attention, but they are where trust is built, dignity is protected, and lives are changed.

To the professionals who bring their hearts to this work—even on the hard days—thank you. What you do matters. Every shift. Every interaction. Every time.





Rosemary McShane and Annie Grimm talk with a volunteer about how the millstone grinds grain during a visit to De Immigrant Windmill in Fulton. This Daily Discovery Community Group outing offered a fun learning experience as participants explored their greater community as local tourists and engaged neighbors.

**Performance objectives for
Daily Discovery West during the period
April 1, 2026 to June 30, 2026**

On a scale of 1-4:

- Individuals offered access to community activities: **4.0**
- Increase independence of participants: **3.8**
- Individual achieved at least one goal: **3.9**
- Ensure participants are aware of other service options: **4.0**
- Ensure choices are provided: **3.9**
- Individuals are satisfied with their amount of access to community activities: **3.9**
- Ensure overall satisfaction: **3.8**

Number served: **118**

Intakes: **4**

Daily Discovery: Meeting People Where They Are—and Connecting Them to Community

At Empowering Abilities, Daily Discovery begins with meeting each participant where they are. Every person brings different interests, goals, strengths, and support needs. Some enjoy busy social activities, while others thrive in quieter settings or smaller groups. Daily Discovery honors those differences through individualized programming at Daily Discovery East, Daily Discovery West, the Residential Center, and throughout the community.

Across each setting, participants build confidence, strengthen relationships, make choices, and take an active role in their communities.

For Annie Grimm, the community-based Daily Discovery group offers the right environment to thrive. While she actively participates in group activities at Daily Discovery West, Community Group provides a quieter, more focused experience with smaller groups, longer activities, and fewer transitions. On Community Group days, Annie begins her day directly in the community, bypassing the larger group setting at Daily Discovery West. Instead of occasional field trips, community engagement and integration become a regular part of her life.

Participants help choose where they go, what they experience, and how they contribute. Activities may include visiting libraries, museums, nature areas, coffee shops, restaurants, local businesses, and community events. Participants also volunteer with area organizations, sharing their time and talents while building skills and relationships.

"We do something different every day," Annie shared. "Community Group days are like going out with a group of friends."

Being in the community also provides a welcome change from busier environments. "It's quieter, calmer, and less busy," she explained. "I have fun being out." Annie's experience illustrates that meaningful

participation looks different for everyone. Success may mean speaking with a cashier, ordering a meal, choosing an activity, volunteering, navigating a new environment, or simply feeling comfortable and included.

In every setting, Daily Discovery programming is built around choice. Staff provide individualized support while creating space for participants to make decisions, practice skills, and develop greater independence.

Empowering Abilities is exploring opportunities to offer community-based programming on additional days, allowing more participants to benefit. As the program grows, its focus will remain the same: individualized support, meaningful choices, authentic relationships, and opportunities tailored to each person.

Community integration is about more than being present—it is about belonging as a neighbor, volunteer, customer, friend, and valued member of the community. Through Daily Discovery, participants like Annie are building confidence and creating connections—one experience at a time.

Performance objectives for Daily Discovery East during the period April 1, 2026 to June 30, 2026

On a scale of 1-4:

Individuals offered access to community activities: **4.0**

Increase independence of participants: **3.6**

Individual achieved at least one goal: **3.6**

Ensure participants are aware of other service options: **4.0**

Ensure choices are provided: **3.7**

Individuals are satisfied with their amount of access to community activities: **3.6**

Ensure overall satisfaction: **3.8**

Number served: **104**

Intakes: **2**



Partner Spotlight: McComas-Lacina Construction

Building Solutions—and a Partnership—Designed to Last

When a long-standing problem continued to affect the entrance of Empowering Abilities' Residential Center, McComas-Lacina Construction welcomed the opportunity to take a fresh look.

The team at McComas-Lacina Construction carefully evaluated the entrance, identified the source of the long-standing issue and developed a practical, lasting solution. The completed project stopped water from leaking into the building and created a safer, more accessible and dependable entrance for the residents, staff and visitors who use the facility each day.

The extensive work drew upon several of the company's construction capabilities, including selective demolition, sidewalk paving, wood framing, sheet-metal flashing, joint sealants, aluminum storefront framing, metal roof and soffit panels, and the installation of new gutters and downspouts.

While completing the project, the McComas-Lacina team also identified an ADA accessibility concern that could have otherwise been overlooked

and incorporated the necessary improvements into the work. The project was completed on schedule, and the final cost matched the original estimate. Throughout the project, the construction team remained mindful of the people who continued to live, work and visit the Residential Center.

"The McComas-Lacina team was wonderful with our residents, staff and visitors throughout the entire project," said Tiffany Sprague, Vice President of the Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities at Empowering Abilities. "They were respectful, patient and thoughtful about minimizing disruptions while completing the work. Their team understood that this is more than a facility—it is home to the people we support—and they treated it that way every step of the process."

Their attention to both the construction work and the people affected by it helped make the experience a positive one from beginning to end.

"It may have been a relatively small construction project, but resolving the issue made a meaningful difference for the people who rely on the building," the McComas-Lacina team shared.

Beyond correcting the entrance, the project created the foundation for a valued new partnership. McComas-Lacina appreciated Empowering Abilities' openness about the challenges the organization was experiencing, as well as the team's communication and commitment to finding the right long-term solution.

"Empowering Abilities was open and straightforward about the problems they were experiencing and worked with us throughout the process to evaluate the available options," they said. "Their team communicated well, made timely decisions and remained focused on finding the right long-term solution for the people who use the facility."

The partnership reflects values shared by both organizations: serving people, treating others with respect and doing the job the right way. McComas-Lacina Construction takes pride in finding practical solutions, standing behind its work and contributing positively to the communities it serves—values that align closely with Empowering Abilities' commitment to creating opportunities and changing lives.

McComas-Lacina described Empowering Abilities as a professional, responsive and community-focused organization and said it would welcome opportunities to work together again as future needs arise.

"We appreciate Empowering Abilities trusting McComas-Lacina Construction to help resolve a difficult and long-standing issue," the team shared. "We are proud of the work our team completed and grateful for the opportunity to support an organization making a meaningful difference in the community."

Thank you, McComas-Lacina Construction, for bringing your expertise, thoughtful problem-solving and commitment to quality to Empowering Abilities. Together, we are creating spaces where the people we serve can feel safe, welcomed and supported.

Honoring Deb's Legacy Through Learning and Leadership

Three Employees Receive 2026 Debra "Deb" Lindbom Memorial Scholarships

The Debra "Deb" Lindbom Memorial Scholarship honors a longtime Empowering Abilities participant remembered for her strength, determination, and infectious spirit. The scholarship continues Deb's legacy by helping employees pursue education and specialized training that strengthens services for people with disabilities.

Congratulations to our 2026 recipients:



Roman Reese, Daily Discovery Mentor, pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology at the University of Northern Iowa.



Taleigha Ellis, Endeavor Living, pursuing a Medical Assistant Certification through Midwest Technical Institute.



Steven Cargill, Enterprise Supervisor, pursuing Commercial Driver's License certification through Eastern Iowa Community College.

By investing in our employees, we strengthen our organization and the person-centered support we provide. Congratulations to Roman, Taleigha, and Steven!

Learn more about the scholarship and the 2026 recipients on our website.

<https://tinyurl.com/LindbomScholarship2026>



Empowering You

by Quad City Bank & Trust

\$617.20 billion is the amount of charitable gifts made in 2025 in the United States. Empowering Abilities appreciates all those who chose to support its mission to work beside people with disabilities, create opportunities, and change lives. Therefore, in this article, we will explore techniques that empower you to give in ways that are not only charitable but also tax efficient.

Gifting Appreciated Assets

One effective manner of giving involves the gifting of appreciated assets. Appreciated assets are investment securities (like stocks, or mutual funds), real property, or even collectibles (like artwork or coins). Consider this example: Jessica was given three shares of Alphabet stock (Google) in 2006 by her grandfather when she was 26 years old. Despite the urge to sell and spend the cash, she held onto the stock. Twenty years later, the stock has appreciated in value. For simplicity, let's say the stock was worth \$2,000 when Jessica was 26 years old, and now the stock is worth \$42,000. As a result, Jessica has \$40,000 of capital gains. Jessica is in good financial position with a salary exceeding \$150,000 annually. She also wants to donate to Empowering Abilities. When Jessica gives Empowering Abilities those three shares of Google stock, she gets credit for a \$42,000 donation and does not need to pay any tax on the \$40,000 capital gain. Normally, Jessica would have to pay 20% or more of capital gain income tax.

Gifting Required Minimum Distributions aka Qualified Charitable Distributions

Gifting your required minimum distribution (RMD) is another effective way to give. An RMD is an amount you must take from your retirement account annually to avoid an excise tax penalty up to 25%. Generally, you must take RMD withdrawals from your IRA, SIMPLE IRA, SEP IRA, or retirement plan account when you reach age 73. If you fail to do so, you are subject to tax penalties. Sometimes people do not need their RMD to meet their standard of living, so the required withdrawal along

with the tax consequences creates anguish in an otherwise fortunate situation. This is where a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) can be used. A QCD allows an owner of the retirement account, who is 70½ years of age or older, to give up to \$111,000 of their RMD to qualified charities while meeting other IRS requirements, and that amount will be excluded from their taxable income.

Here's an example: Alejandro retired after working more than 40 years. He was a saver, so he has a large-valued individual retirement account (IRA), but he also receives a pension of \$7,000 per month which is more than enough to cover his lifestyle. Alejandro had a much larger income tax bill after taking his first RMD when he turned 73, so he decided to consult a wealth advisor. After detailed conversations, Alejandro shared that he is a widower, has no children dependent on him or any inheritance he plans to pass on, and that he gives approximately \$20,000 to charity annually. As a result, Alejandro learned that he could reduce his taxable income by \$20,000 by making his regular donations through QCDs. In fact, if he feels he can and wants to give more, he could give up to \$91,000 more from this RMD, if applicable.

For more information about estate planning, legacy giving, or other wealth management strategies, we encourage you to speak with your financial advisor or connect with the Wealth Management team at Quad City Bank & Trust at 563.388.QCBT or online at: QCBT > Expert Guidance to Help You.



Our Thanks Goes To



Keller Williams - Red Day

Some days leave a lasting impact—and Red Day was one of them. Our participants spent the day painting canvases, making bracelets, enjoying mocktails, playing outside, and, most importantly, building new friendships. Thanks, Keller Williams!



Birdies for Charity

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated to support Empowering Abilities (Bird #127) through Birdies for Charity. We are grateful for every donation, every gesture of support, and every person who continues to believe in making a difference.



Quad Cities Disabilities Coalition - MLK Food Drive

Thank you to everyone who supported the QC Disabilities Awareness Coalition's Martin Luther King Jr. Food Drive in May! Our Daily Discovery Community Group participants collected and delivered 237 donated items from a local Hy-Vee collection site to The Salvation Army—building skills, giving back, and making a meaningful difference in our community.



Golf Outing - Organizers, Sponsors, Donors, Golfers

Behind every successful event is a community that believes in making a difference. A heartfelt thank you to our organizers, sponsors, donors, golfers, and volunteers for coming together to make our golf outing such a success. Your generosity, time, and support create a lasting impact in our community and help bring our mission to life.

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Fall Is in Full Bloom!

Pre-order your beautiful fall mums while there's still time! Every purchase supports activities, events, and meaningful experiences hosted by the Empowering Abilities Booster Organization.

Order by noon on Friday, September 4.
Drive through pick up on Saturday,
September 12.

Scan the QR code to reserve your fall favorites and help grow a more inclusive community!



Save the Date:

Ready to put your random knowledge to good use?

*Join us for the 2027
Empowering Abilities Trivia Night!*

Friday, January 15, 2027
Hickory Creek Event Center | Davenport, Iowa

Round up your cleverest crew, choose a team name worthy of the scoreboard, and prepare for a lively night of big laughs, friendly rivalry, and plenty of fun—all while supporting adults with disabilities in our community. Stay tuned for registration information and some fresh surprises coming to this year's event!