

## — GIRL SCOUT SERVICE PROJECTS —

Rebecca Kelly and Grace Perrin, Girl Scouts in the Sheldon area, are working toward receiving their Gold Award. The Gold Award requires the ladies to pick a volunteer opportunity, write a letter to the governor of Iowa for approval of their project and then put in 100 hours of work.

Rebecca chose to build moveable gardens and Grace is building bee houses. Rebecca chose to donate a moveable garden to VNU along with a bag of dirt and a few vegetables to get the garden started. Not long after Rebecca dropped off the garden, a resident and staff filled it with vegetables and herbs. Grace donated one of her bee houses and a bag of wildflowers which can be spread under the tree holding the bee house.

VNU appreciates the donations and hard work both ladies put into their projects. We wish them both luck as they work towards receiving their Gold Awards.



VILLAGE NORTHWEST UNLIMITED // SUMMER 2020

# VILLAGE VOICE



## — A NEW VISION IN 2020 —

### VNU adds ICF/ID Day Program Director

VNU is passionate about serving adults with disabilities. That passion means a continuous cycle of evaluating and improving the programs and services we offer. That's what led to an exciting addition to the VNU family. Cheri Brunsting of Hull, IA recently agreed to return to VNU to become VNU's first ICF/ID Day Program Director. The newly created position is yet another way VNU continues to proactively seek to improve opportunities and choices for persons served. Cheri will be responsible for developing and overseeing the day program activities for our on campus residents within the ICF/ID level of care. Justin Jonas, Director of Operations, commented "We are very excited to have Cheri back at VNU as her prior thirteen years of service to our residents provides a wonderful foundation for expanding our ICF/ID day program options. Cheri brings high energy and a resident first approach to the way she plans and does things each day. She has a passion for serving our individuals and loves to see them smile and laugh."

Cheri's current goal is to bring more fun and engagement into day programming. She's been coming up with fun activities and giving each resident choices on what they would like to do. The long term goal will be to offer several different activity choices that run for different lengths of time, then let each resident pick how much or how little they want to participate (Some people like to be very busy – so they will be able to attend several activities throughout the week. Other people can get very overwhelmed with too much activity, so they can choose to only attend those activities that they enjoy). Activities will be developed based on resident's current interests and abilities. The idea is to develop a more individualized program while still providing fun and educational opportunities.

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### INSIDE THIS EDITION

- ICF/ID Day Programming
- Run, Walk & Roll
- Marigold Planting
- Scholarship Recipient
- CARES Act
- Village Visionary
- Girl Scouts



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Cheri's first day in her new position was the first day the Iowa Governor closed down day programming for precautionary measures due to COVID-19. Staff who would normally facilitate day programming in the Wansink Center were moved to the houses to work during the day and provide activities for clients. Some of the activities that are being offered during the day in the houses are golf cart rides, nature walks around campus, flower planting around campus homes and around the gazebo that sits on the west side of campus, dress up days, learning about national holidays (national donut day, national day of prayer, national hamburger day), making cards for Sheldon High school graduates, dance parties, water games, crafting, baking and so much more!

Cheri commented, "I am so excited to be back at VNU. When the opportunity came to return to VNU in a different capacity to develop and lead the day programming services, I realized God had an ultimate plan all along. Many times people will talk about the Village family, but until you experience it for yourself, it's really hard to put into words. Being back feels like home. This is where I belong. This is where God intended me to be."

Cheri has already proved to be a blessing to those we serve and we can't wait to see what new ideas she brings to the day program.

## — MARIGOLD PLANTING —

The tradition of planting thousands of marigolds around the VNU campus continued in 2020. Residents in community homes were able to come to campus to plant a section of flowers with their roommates. The day chosen to plant flowers had a high of 90 degrees which meant planting began before 8am. This year staff and residents planted nearly 4,000 marigolds within a two hour time span. Like always, everyone enjoyed an ice cream bar after the planting was finished.



## — SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT —

Mitchel Wolf is the recipient of the 2020 Linda K. De Groot/Village Northwest Unlimited Spirit of Caring Scholarship. Mitchel will be attending South Dakota State University this fall and plans to study Exercise Science. Mitchel is the son of Ryan and Tabitha Wolf of Sheldon. The scholarship is given to a graduating senior from Sheldon High School who will be entering into a career field that focuses on working with individuals who have disabilities. We wish Mitchel the best of luck!



## — RUN, WALK & ROLL —

The 15th Annual Run, Walk & Roll fundraiser looked a lot different due to the pandemic, but we are so grateful for all of the support. While we missed seeing everyone in person, we appreciated seeing the photos shared with us on social media of participants running, walking and rolling on their own. Holding the event virtually we are excited to share we had an incredible 338 participants. Of those, 229 participated in the 1 mile walk; 96 participated in the 5K run; and 13 participated in the 10K run.

Everyone who participated helped us raise over \$52,000, all of which will be used to provide residential, vocational and therapeutic services for over 180 individuals served at Village Northwest Unlimited.

We look forward to hosting this event in person next year on Saturday June 5, 2021.



## — CARES ACT —

The CARES ACT, which was enacted to provide relief to Americans battling a pandemic, also includes charitable incentives you may benefit from. The act allows a \$300 above-the-line- deduction for 2020 charitable contributions to 501(c)(3) organizations for individual taxpayers that do not itemize. These contributions must go directly to the charity, donations to donor advised funds (DAFs) or other intermediaries will not qualify.

For taxpayers who itemize, the AGI cap on annual contributions will be temporarily changed from 60% to 100% of AGI for 2020 and any excess contributions will be provided a five-year carryover period. For corporations, the annual contribution limit is changed from 10% to 25%. The corporate food donation cap has also been raised from 15% to 25%.

Explore all donation opportunities with Ryan Haack at 712-324-5405 or rhaack@villagenorthwest.org.

## — VILLAGE VISIONARY —

VNU is excited to offer a new way for you to help those we serve by offering a new monthly giving program. You can become a Village Visionary by going to the donate section on the VNU website and signing up to give monthly. Village Visionaries share in our passion of providing Purpose, Privacy and Dignity to all People. Their ongoing financial support is critical as we continue providing premier programs and therapies for adults with disabilities.

