

Interested in Volunteering at the Village?

Are you passionate about making a difference in your community? We're looking for new volunteers to join our growing team! With over 75 dedicated volunteers, we're always excited to welcome new faces who are eager to help us continue our mission.

Whether you have a few hours to spare each week, want to get involved more regularly, or are looking to bring in a volunteer group, there's a place for you here at the Village. Volunteering with us offers the chance to meet incredible people, gain valuable experience, and make a real impact.

If you are interested in volunteering, please visit our website - www.villagenorthwest.org/volunteering - or contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Avery at averydh@villagenorthwest.org.



www.villagenorthwest.org

Phone: 712-324-4873

VILLAGE VOICE

VILLAGE NORTHWEST UNLIMITED // FALL 2024



Expanding Opportunities for VNU Panthers

As part of our continuous efforts to expand the range of athletic opportunities for our athletes, we are excited to announce the inclusion of Equestrian under our Special Olympics delegation. Equestrian offers a unique platform for development of new skills and connection with animals in an empowering environment. Village Northwest Unlimited is proud to now host eleven Special Olympic events and sports under our coaching and delegation.



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We are incredibly proud of our resident, Jacey, who took the leap as our first resident to participate in this new sport. Jacey recently competed in the Special Olympics Fall Classic and brought home first place in both Pole Bending and Barrel Racing! Jacey's dedication and passion for equestrian sports were on full display as she mastered the courses with precision and skill. Coached by her sister, Sydnee, Jacey's performance is a true testament to her hard work. We congratulate Jacey on this remarkable achievement and celebrate her dedication to Panther athletics.

The addition of equestrian not only broadens our athletic program but also highlights the physical, emotional, and therapeutic benefits this sport provides. Working with horses can foster a sense of responsibility and boost confidence both of which align with our mission to support positive emotional growth for each of our residents.



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Village Northwest Unlimited Independence Day Celebration

The Village Campus was abuzz with activity on the evening of Wednesday, July 3 as we hosted members of the community for the annual Village Northwest Unlimited Independence Celebration. The evening featured eight food trucks offering attendees a wide variety of dining options. Kansas City-based, Big Time Grain, Co. entertained our guests with a variety of country and 70s and 80s pop songs. This was the group's second year at the Village and they claim it is one of their favorite events to perform at due to the family-friendly environment. Kids had the opportunity to jump on a variety of inflatables, try their skills at the many carnival games, and encounter animals at the petting zoo. The celebration also featured fire truck rides and horse-drawn wagon rides. The evening concluded with one of the area's largest fireworks displays. Mark your calendars for next year's Independence Day Celebration as the Village will be celebrating our 50th Anniversary with an extra special fireworks display and a concert by Landslide - A Tribute to Fleetwood Mac.



23rd Annual Golf Benefit Tournament

On July 15, more than 148 golf enthusiasts invaded Orange City's Landsmeer Golf Club for the 23rd Annual Village Northwest Unlimited Golf Benefit. 38 four-person teams competed for prizes in four flights or divisions (Men's #1, Men's #2, Mixed, and Female). Each member of a flight-winning team received \$50. The Benefit began with a lunch provided by Iron Horse Catering and concluded with a dinner catered by Central Catering. More than 36 door prizes were distributed to participants during the closing ceremonies. Each year, the Village Golf Committee introduces at least one new element to the Benefit that will improve each participant's experience. This year, the Committee provided cooling towels to each golfer as they completed their round. These ice-cold towels with a scent of lavender provided the golfers with a cool refresh on a hot afternoon. It is these types of little extras that have given the VNU Golf Benefit a reputation as one of the premium golf events in the area.



Village Resident Nominated at the Iowa Podcast Awards

Podcasts are audio presentations that are accessed primarily on smartphones and are an extremely popular, current form of media. While there are many different types of podcasts, the majority consist of conversations about topics listeners may find interesting. Village Northwest Unlimited ICF-ID resident, Dakota Caldwell, has operated his own podcast for several years. Previously called, "The Dakota Show," Dakota has now transitioned the name of his podcast to, "Inclusion Series." Through his podcast, Dakota advocates for those with disabilities, discusses mental health, and integrates his Christian faith.



Dakota caught wind of the approaching, first-ever Iowa Podcast Awards and promoted his potential for award nomination to his listeners. He ended up receiving enough support and votes to be nominated for three awards! On Sunday, September 15, Dakota and I drove across the state to Cedar Rapids for the awards ceremony. For it being a first-time event, the organizers did an impressive job making it official, fun, and celebratory.

While Dakota did not come home with hardware this time, he looks forward to continuing his podcast and hopes he will someday win an award. While there, we had the opportunity to talk with some of the other Iowa podcasters, which was enjoyable and informative. The overarching theme we picked up from the event was that each of our voices matters and can make a difference in others' lives. Dakota is passionate about being a voice for those with disabilities in the hopes of improving care in the future. He is an inspiration for us all to use what gifts we possess to serve others. I was honored to accompany Dakota on this trip and am proud of all the work that he does.