

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

How Breck Was Able to Spend His Dad's Final Moments by His Side

It was the weekend when Emmy, one of our staff members, received a phone call she did not anticipate. Breck's mom was calling to let us know that his dad had unexpectedly gone into Hospice care and was given two days to two weeks to live. She asked if there was any way we could bring Breck the four hours to Canon Falls, Minn., so he could see his dad—and his dad could see him—one last time.

Whenever Breck goes into the community, he needs two staff members with him. Added to that challenge was the complication of an overnight trip. Emmy knew it might not be easy to find staff members to take Breck to see his dad. But the first two team members she contacted, Sam and Napoleon, agreed without hesitation—and they said they could leave at a moment's notice. They packed Breck's bags and medications, and planned to leave at 10 the next morning.

At 6:30 A.M., Emmy found out things had taken a turn for the worse, and Breck might not make it in time. She rallied Breck's staff, who left soon after. When they got to Canon Falls, Breck's dad was still hanging on.

Breck usually gets excited around his dad—one of his favorite people—who would often make the four-hour trip to Moorhead so he and Breck could go on bike rides or go out to eat. On that day, Breck was unusually calm. He sat in his dad's recliner, holding his hand, and telling him, "Good job!" An hour later, when Breck got up to use the restroom, his dad died peacefully.

When Breck returned home the next day, his staff made sure he had his dad's recliner with him.

This is why CCRI exists—to give the folks we support the freedom to live their lives as fully and independently as possible, whether they want to run a marathon, advocate for disability rights... or spend their dad's final moments by his side.

Thank you for supporting our organization and making stories like this possible.



IN THIS TOGETHER:

Setting a Bold, Audacious Goal for Giving Hearts Day 2025

This Giving Hearts Day, we plan to raise \$160,000, so (no matter what happens with government funding) we can make sure:



Christine never has to go without the mental health services that helped her leave her home after depression and anxiety kept her trapped inside for 10 years.



Brad has a staff member by his side when his chronic health conditions land him in the hospital.



Mitchell always has a place to go where he feels welcomed, included, and experiences a sense of belonging.

Giving Hearts Day is February 13, 2025—still half a year away. But we're thinking and talking about it now because we have a big, bold, exciting (and somewhat scary) goal of DOUBLING the \$80,000 we raised last year.

Here's why this goal matters:

We receive state and federal funding to cover our program costs. But it doesn't cover all of our costs:

- When the folks we support are hospitalized or visit family, we don't get paid. But it is essential that our clients see their families, that our staff members make sure our clients are not alone and are able to communicate when they're in the hospital, and that our clients (and their guardians) never have to worry about losing their space in our care—even if they're gone for a while. This all adds up to a \$318,000 loss every year, simply because life is unpredictable, and **we want to make sure the people we serve are ALWAYS supported.**
- **Our mental health program saves lives** but state funding for these services has fallen short for eight years now. Instead of leaving more than 100 community members with nowhere else to turn, we look for ways to fundraise at least \$82,000 a year to keep this program going.
- There is not enough accessible housing in our community to meet demand. And as the folks we support age, their need for accessible housing grows. Rather than separate roommates who have grown to be more like family members, we fundraise to build our own accessible homes, so we can **keep families together AND make sure every person we support can feel safe where they live.** Each home costs us about \$450,000 to build.

- Our life enrichment program gives the people we support opportunities to participate in inclusive, accessible activities. These programs don't just give people something fun to look forward to— **they also foster a sense of meaning and inclusion**, which helps with mental health; they teach life skills, which helps with physical health; and they offer opportunities for socialization, which research has shown can be the most important aspect of our mental, physical, and emotional health. This program receives NO state or federal funding, but because it's so important to a person's overall wellbeing, we fundraise \$50,000 every year to cover these costs.

CCRI started in 1977 when a group of families came together to say that just because their children had disabilities did not mean they were condemned to spend their lives in an institution. Instead, they built them a home in the community where they could thrive and have every opportunity for a beautiful life.

Nearly 50 years later, that mission has spread to more than 400 people with disabilities in our community. This is what **YOU. MAKE. POSSIBLE.** when you join CCRI in our belief that everyone, regardless of circumstance, deserves a fulfilling life and safe place to call home.

CREATIVE CARE

CCRI Team Members Are ARRM Cares Finalists



CCRI is honored and proud that two of our team members have been named ARRM Cares finalists for providing amazing care to the people we support. **Nikki Milburn**, a Direct Support Professional (DSP) in our Options program, is a finalist for the ARRM Cares Award and **Greta Szczur**, another Options DSP, is a finalist for the Rising Star Award (which honors DSPs with less than three years' experience).

ARRM is a nonprofit association of nearly 200 provider organizations, businesses and advocates dedicated to leading the advancement of home and community-based services supporting people living with disabilities in their pursuit of meaningful lives.



Our other nominees were: Fredetta "Etta" Weah, Holli Brager, Jennifer Behrens, Lisa Behl, Ivy Wiggs, Beth Dykema, and Jason Mehlhoff. They will be recognized for their service during our DSP week employee appreciation event September 13.

Congratulations to all of our nominees and finalists!

REACHING INDEPENDENCE

Welcoming Joel, David, Buck, and Gary Home

It was a dream more than two years in the making. On August 12, Joel, David, Buck, and Gary were finally able to move into their new home—a home that's safe for someone who uses a wheelchair, a home that's accessible to everyone who lives in it, and a home where this family of friends can continue living together even as they age and their needs change.

Gary was all smiles and laughs as soon as he entered the house and saw the new living room. After seeing his bedroom, he headed straight for the living room to find his blocks and start playing on the floor to break in the space.

David was eager to check out his new home and excited for how his customized bathroom (complete with posters of his favorite football teams) turned out. He gave his new room and bathroom two thumbs up!

Joel, who had been beyond excited for his new house to be built since it was first announced, clapped and loudly cheered on the workers that came to help him move and unpack his belongings. He gave everyone multiple pats on the back for a job well done.

Buck, who had also been talking about his new house since it was first announced and checking on its progress weekly, is a man of few words, but he was sure talkative as he let everyone know it was his "new house." It didn't take him long to find his favorite spot on his new living room furniture and customize it with his cars.

Concordia College Hands for Change volunteers even spent a few hours making sure the exterior of the home is just as beautiful as the inside.

The guys are very happy in their new space. And it's because of our generous community that we were able to make this dream home happen for these four best friends. Thank you!



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

The Shirt off His Back

It was a beautiful summer day, and two dozen volunteers decked out in bright blue “Noridian Volunteer” t-shirts, helped the folks we support dunk tied up hats into buckets of brightly colored dye.

They had already spent much of the afternoon learning about CCRI, creating decorations for our prom, and hearing from Bryan, a CCRI Positive Behavioral Support client, who bravely shared his story of learning about, coming to terms with, and learning to live with his disability.

As they tie-dyed hats alongside our clients, Noridian volunteers from all over the country gained a better understanding of CCRI, our mission, and the amazing individuals we support.

Suddenly, one of those decked out in bright blue was none other than Brad—a CCRI client of more than 30 years. It turns out he had asked one of the volunteers where he could get the shirt so many of those gathered around the tie-dye tables were wearing. So, the volunteer—a Noridian doctor—took the shirt off his back and handed it to Brad.

Whether or not Brad ever wears the shirt again, it’s likely the connection made that day won’t soon be forgotten.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CCRI

CCRI clients and people with disabilities from other organizations send the ball soaring, run the bases, and cheer each other on during **Red River Valley Adaptive Softball League**.



It's not just talent that goes into a talent show. It's also bravery, practice, and the enthusiastic support of family and friends. We saw that and so much more at CCRI's annual **talent show**.



For those we support, **Camp HERO** is a chance to connect with friends, nature, and be included in an experience many take for granted. It's possible thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers, and donors—especially the FM Crusaders M.C.

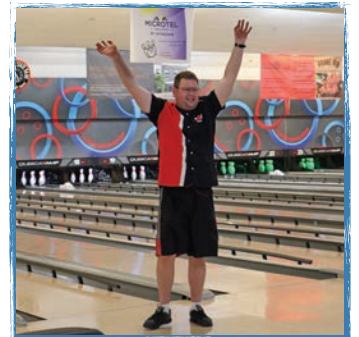




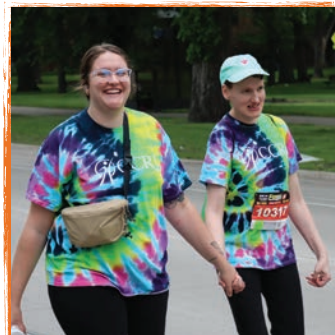
We didn't let a little heat get in the way of our **annual picnic!** Every year we gather at Goosebury Mound Park to celebrate the amazing people we support with great food, lots of laughs, and plenty of hugs!



Minnesota State Representatives Heather Keeler and Brion Curran joined CCRI for **pizza and bowling** to celebrate the work the folks we support have done advocating for themselves, their staff, and for disability services.



The folks we support had a blast running, walking, and being cheered on in the **Fargo Marathon 5K!**





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HOW TO HELP

Visit CCRIMoorhead.org/Community for more event details.



CCRI Candy Crawl at the FARGODOME

Tuesday, October 22 | Set-up: 3–4 P.M., Event: 4–6 P.M. | FARGODOME

Have fun while giving back by helping us give the folks we support a spooktacular time trick-or-treating at the FARGODOME. Dress up, decorate a table, and bring candy, treats, or prizes to hand out to CCRI clients. To sign up, email Kimberly.McGuire@CreativeCare.org.



TableScapes—Make Life Colorful

Thursday, November 14 | 5:30–8:30 P.M. | Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead

Save the date for our fall fundraiser and plan to join us for a night of creativity, inspiration, and making life colorful for more than 400 people with disabilities in our community! When we come together, **anything is possible**. Let's make sure everyone, regardless of circumstance, has a safe place to call home, access to mental healthcare, and opportunities for a fulfilling life. To decorate a table, email Kimberly.McGuire@CreativeCare.org.



Designer Purse Bingo

Tuesday, January 14 | 6–9 P.M. | Vic's Bar and Grill, Moorhead

CCRI's designer purse bingo is a fun way to raise money for a great cause—providing opportunities to help the amazing folks we support live full, independent lives! Tickets are \$40 cash only and sold at Vic's. Follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/CreativeCare) to see when tickets can be purchased.