

Have you met... David Schneeweis

You may not know him by name, but if you're involved with Special Olympics or the ARC, you probably have met David Schneeweis. David is a person with a full social calendar. Besides working his two jobs, he follows the example set by his mother Velma and late father Don and is an active member of his community.

David's involvement with the Special Olympics started when he was eight years old. His mother recalls that there was really no sport that he didn't like when he was young, so the Special Olympics were a perfect match for David. Eventually, the entire family became active in Fargo Special Olympics, working across most areas of the organization throughout the past 22 years. In 2003 David qualified to attend the Special Olympics World Games in Dublin, Ireland. David's family attended with him and were thrilled when Dave brought home three medals; a gold, silver and bronze for bowling.

David's drive for community participation comes naturally to him as he is a member of a family that has been very involved in the community throughout the years. From an early age, his parents stressed the importance of community involvement to David and lived this ideal by example. Both his mother and father were longtime supporters and volunteers for the ARC. Vel currently sits on the ARC board and she is a member of the Area Management Team for the Special Olympics.

A goal of David's parents was for their son to be an active participant in the community. When David was 10 years old he began to receive In-Home Family Support Services (IHS) from CCRI. The IHS caregivers came to their home on a daily basis and soon David began to thrive with the service provided by them. The bond between these caregivers and the family grew so strong that Velma considers some of the caregivers as "family" to David and her. The CCRI caregivers worked with David on goals and objectives related to school as well as many home skills. They also took David to countless social functions and sporting events, thus fulfilling the wishes of his parents to be involved in the community.



David, waving his homer hankie!

When David was a junior in high school, one of his teachers suggested that he move into his own apartment prior to graduation. The teacher suggested this would minimize the amount of disruption to David's life upon graduation and make his transition an easier one.

David's Story continued...

David's mother remembers asking herself how her son would survive without his family and her biggest fear was that no one could take care of him like they could. David's longtime CCRI IHS caregivers played a significant role in making this transition a smooth one by helping train his new staff, something that Vel noted was a huge comfort for both David and the family.

One major difference in David's living arrangement offered by CCRI was that instead of an apartment, David moved into a house operated by CCRI. While this is now considered the norm at CCRI, at the time of David's graduation this was a revolutionary idea. Prior to this time, it was common for CCRI's clients to live in apartments alone or with one other roommate. The apartments were segregated in one area of town in close proximity to each other.



*Dave sporting his three metals
he won at the Special Olympics*

As the first people to live in this new living arrangement, David and his roommates helped usher in the new paradigm for CCRI's Supported Living Services (SLS). Living in a house provided David and his roommates all the comforts of home; a private room, ample living space, a backyard and neighbors. CCRI quickly learned that neighborhood involvement was the key to fostering good relationships. David's caregivers invited their new neighbors over for cook-outs, and one of David's roommates would even remove snow for their neighbor. These small cookouts led to neighborhood potlucks. Their active participation in their neighborhood led to new friendships and set the standard for CCRI's positive reputation as a neighbor.

As David and his roommates flourished living in their new house, many of our families wanted the same opportunity for their son or daughter. As a result CCRI now has 31 houses available to our clients. By expanding living options throughout the community, we offer our clients beautiful homes as well as an opportunity of being a part of a true neighborhood environment. In addition, the ability to make lasting relationships with roommates is very rewarding. David has attended numerous Vikings games and travelled to Disney World with his roommates and friends. Being a part of a neighborhood fits exactly with Velma and Don's wish for their son to be involved in his community.

It has been 20 years since CCRI began serving David. Over this time there have been new roommates and new homes but through it all, David's mother believes firmly that CCRI has been very good for her son. Many of the caregivers have become life-long friends and virtual members of her extended family. In fact, David has participated in the weddings of two of his caregivers and the husband of one of his caregivers helped him get his dream job at Papa John's Pizza (a job that he has held for the past eight years).

Looking ahead, Velma knows that CCRI is an organization that can best support her son and offer him the opportunities in the community so important to her family. For now, she's concentrating on the important things—she's thrilled now that David has turned 30 she can be his partner in bocce ball.

SAVE *the date*

for the FM Crusaders Annual Bike Show

on March 19th at the Ramada Plaza Suites

On the 19th at 3:30 p.m. there will be a live auction from which all the proceeds will go to benefit CCRI's Camp HERO. Show your support for CCRI by attending. Last year, this event raised over \$12,000. Auction items can be donated by calling Rhonda King at 331-2002.

CCRI's 4th Annual Client Appreciation Meal

CCRI's 4th annual client appreciation was a big success. We served over 300 people and still had leftovers to donate to our clients and the homeless shelter. Paula Short, Kayla Aanenson, Sue Lopez and Lynette Weber were the driving force behind the event this year. They headed up a large group of staff and volunteers who prepared the tasty feast.



These volunteers peeled this mountain of potatoes

How much food was prepared?

- * 500 pounds of turkey
- * 450 pounds of potatoes
- * 12 gallons of gravy
- * 75 pounds of beans
- * 75 pounds of corn
- * 5 roasters full of stuffing
- * 15 pounds of onions were used for dressing
- * 16 pounds of butter were used in the preparation
- * 18 pans of pumpkin bars made from fresh pumpkins

A special thanks to all who donated towards the meal and all the volunteers and staff who helped. For many, this was their Thanksgiving meal and first home cooked meal in a long time.

A large portion of the meal was made possible because of donations from the following:

*Tom Erdmann with Cole Papers
Pan-O-Gold
Great Harvest Bread Co.
Candi Dunham*

*Border States Paving
Richard Muscha
Roger and Fran Manz
Rhonda King*

Supported Living Services welcomes their 100th Client

As we welcome the 100th person into our Supported Living Services (SLS) program we take time to reflect on the changes that have taken place since welcoming our first SLS clients; Dan Heil and Kevin Bartel back in 1986.

For the past 14 years, Sue Lopez, SLS Director, has seen a lot of changes in the department. Perhaps the biggest change is where and who our clients live with. In the past people lived alone or with one roommate. According to Sue, people with disabilities might have been deinstitutionalized, but they were very isolated. Today, people are living much fuller lives and it's not the solitude that she used to see twenty years ago when she was a caregiver.

Currently our clients live in 30+ homes/town-homes in the Moorhead and Hawley area. Apartment living is no longer the norm. Today, they live in wonderful homes throughout the city and enjoy all the comforts of home; private rooms, lovely living space, backyards and patios. Whether it's grilling, a block party or shoveling a person's walk, CCRI clients are active participants in their neighborhoods.

Today, many of our houses have been renovated or built to be accessible with wider hallways and doors, appropriate flooring, walk-in showers, and other modifications. As a result, people are able to move about their homes freely. In the past, people's independence and mobility were significantly limited as apartments did not meet the needs of a person in a wheel chair. In fact, we are very proud of the fact that next month we are closing our last apartment that currently serves people in wheelchairs. These two roommates are moving out of their minimally accessible apartment into a fully accessible new home built especially to meet their needs. They even got to provide some of the input for the design and layout of the house.

As people started to move into their own homes, they also gained a few roommates. It has been amazing to watch the bonds of friendship strengthen through the years. We see roommates travel together, play sports together and some even work together. A few years back one of our homes started throwing "round robin" parties. It went from a simple backyard barbeque with a few friends to a huge social event. The last round robin had over 200 people attend and had to be held at Heartland Industries to accommodate everyone. The network of friends really is amazing and so is the party planning. Parties range from game night to pedicure parties. The sky is the limit.

Today SLS challenges people to reach goals they never thought possible. Sue states it best; "It's not just about taking care of people anymore. SLS services is merely a stepping stone towards greater independence and experiencing life's possibilities."



After living together for 24 years, Dan and Kevin have become the best of friends

Thank you donors!

Our ability to enhance and enrich the lives of those we serve is directly tied to the support we receive from individuals and organizations who believe in our mission.

At a time when our industry was facing HUGE budget cuts we were able to continue to support our clients with the things that they needed to enrich their lives.



All our campers would like to extend their thanks for supporting camp H.E.R.O.!

Thanks to donors we continue to offer unique programming like Camp H.E.R.O., the Red River Adaptive softball league and our Community Connections program.

In addition, donors paid for horse therapy, art therapy, music therapy, therapy equipment, winter coats and boots for people who had none, uniforms so people could work, bus passes so people could access the community independently and exercise clothes and shoes for those wanting to change their lifestyle. Donations also made it possible to make modifications to our client's homes to increase accessibility. The list goes on and on- which is wonderful.

2010 was an incredible year for those we serve- I would like to thank all of you for enhancing and enriching their lives.

Many thanks!

Jody Hudson, Development Director



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The mission of CCRI is to enhance and enrich the lives and learning of people with disabilities

The vision of CCRI is to provide an environment where people of all abilities may experience life's possibilities

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Thursday, February 10th, 2011
is Giving Hearts Day

Please visit www.impactgiveback.org
and click on the Giving Hearts Day
button to make a donation.

***Dakota Medical Foundation
will match online contributions
of \$10 or more to CCRI***