



the JOURNEY

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A Publication of LifeScape

Fighting ALS with Assistive Technology

Each morning, 36-year-old David Eisenhauer of Orange City, IA, greets his wife Brenda by saying, "Good morning, beautiful!" At some point in the not-so-distant future, however, he'll be unable to articulate those words. David has ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease, which is slowly robbing him of the ability to speak and move independently. LifeScape is helping him remain as independent as possible through assistive technology and other services.

David had never heard of ALS when he was diagnosed with it in July 2018. The cramping in his left arm had been diagnosed first as carpal tunnel syndrome and then as a pinched nerve. When his left hand started contracting, he went in for nerve testing. The diagnosis came the same day, just four months after David and Brenda had married. Suddenly their wedding vows, "for better or for worse, in sickness and in health," were no longer abstract concepts, but a sobering reality that drastically changed the course of their future.

ALS is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord. The person slowly loses the ability to speak, eat, move, and even breathe, even while the intellect remains intact. Almost immediately, David had to leave his job at Pizza Ranch in Orange City. He was losing strength, which made handling food around a deep fryer dangerous for him and others. With her own health problems, Brenda left her job the following month, in August 2018. She is now his fulltime companion and caretaker.

The next year, David began getting services at LifeScape, where he got a hand splint to control contracture, plus ankle-foot orthotics to stabilize his feet. In February 2021, David got a power wheelchair from LifeScape subsidiary RISE Custom Solutions, which he controls with a head switch. "My hands don't work much anymore," says David.



LifeScape Speech-Language Pathologist Carrie Vermeer shows David and Brenda Eisenhauer how to use the eye gaze system after downloading David's recorded messages. Eye gaze or eye tracking is a form of assistive technology that enables a person to control a computer or generate synthetic or recorded speech with their eyes. Carrie specializes in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), a type of assistive technology.

"We take one day at a time and meet it together," says Brenda. "I wouldn't have it any other way. He's a good guy – my rock." "And she's mine," says David.



Brenda and David Eisenhauer were married just four months when David was diagnosed with ALS.

David regularly visits an infusion center in Orange City for administration of the drug Radicava, which slows the progression of the illness. Brenda says he gets compliments there on how well he drives his wheelchair with the head switch. Assistive technology is a huge help to people with ALS and other degenerative illnesses, and it continues to evolve.

LifeScape Speech-Language Pathologist Carrie Vermeer set David up with a Tobii Dynavox communication device, operated through an eye gaze system. He is still able to speak, but as his voice fatigues throughout the day, he can use his eyes to look at pictures on the communication device, which will speak the messages for him. With it, he can also make phone calls. This allows him to remain safely at home alone for short periods while Brenda runs errands.

"He's a quick learner," says Carrie. "With his DynaVox, he can control some of his environment at home, too. The communication device can learn infrared signals. So, anything that has a remote, we can program the signal into the Dynavox to control his TV and DVR. He can also control lights in his home by using Alexa and smart plugs, which are plugged into electrical outlets to voice-activate small appliances. "As his voice fatigues throughout the day, he can use his eyes to look at pictures on the communication device. The communication device will then speak the messages to others to make comments or assist in directing his care."

In November and December 2020, David came to LifeScape to record key phrases in a process called message banking. "Message banking is used to help preserve one's voice," says Carrie. "We like to encourage patients to record stories, jokes, or trademark phrases. It's a hard thing to contemplate, but right after a diagnosis is the best time to record these messages. This can be very emotional but it's helpful to think of it as a proactive approach for when it is needed later."

Continued on Pg. 7

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From Our Chief Executive Officer



**Steve
Watkins**
Chief
Executive
Officer

In the last issue of *The Journey*, I asked you to advocate for an increase in state funding to help us attract and keep good staff for direct support roles. I spent many hours in Pierre this past legislative session, telling legislators in personal discussions and in formal testimony why increased funding was critical for the children and adults in our residential and school programs.

Many of you did reach out to legislators to tell your personal stories, and I'm sure you've heard that the message was received! The South Dakota Legislature granted an unprecedented boost in funding to LifeScape and the other 19 agencies in South Dakota similar to ours. The increase, effective as of July 2021, amounts to nearly 18% in additional funding, and we have been excited and relieved to offer wage increases to our direct support staff. With staff shortages stretching everyone thin and the incredibly difficult year they have had in the past year with the pandemic, this increase in wages is a huge blessing.

Staff shortages have put us in a situation that's difficult for us and frustrating to the nearly 60 adults we have on our waiting list. We do have openings in our residential homes, but because we have over 100 direct care job openings, we can't admit those who are waiting. We know that each family on the waiting list has their own story and challenges, and we are doing our very best to meet their needs.

Another difficulty is that because of years of funding shortages that have not kept up with inflation and cost-of-living expenses, the new increase still may not be enough. We continue to compete with retail, the hospitality industry, and other job sectors for workers—good workers—to help us provide care to loved ones.

Some of our state legislators are looking at legislation to require a regular rate analysis for organizations providing care to people with disabilities. This would help keep funding in line with the real costs of providing excellent care to our vulnerable populations. It's a situation I will continue to track closely.

The recent increase in funding was a huge hurdle to overcome, and my one small request now is that you reach out again to your legislators, the Department of Human Services, and Governor Kristi Noem to thank them for making these resources available. With that support, we have a fighting chance of rising above our staffing challenges. We can accomplish great things when we stand strong together!

With Sincere Thanks,

Steve Watkins
LifeScape CEO

Community Partner: **The University of South Dakota** *Partnering to Meet Critical Needs*



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH DAKOTA

This fall, the University of South Dakota will start a new Graduate Certificate Program in Applied Behavior Analysis. The first cohort will include seven students, including three LifeScape employees. Graduates from the program will have the necessary preparation to sit for exams to become board certified behavior analysts. The BCBAs will treat children and adults with autism spectrum disorders and other behavioral conditions.

LifeScape reached out to USD several months ago with the idea, offering to help with the curriculum, instruction, and field experience for the program. LifeScape had a large and growing list of children awaiting outpatient ABA treatment, but there was no educational program in South Dakota to train clinicians. The demand for BCBAs is high nationwide, so LifeScape proposed "growing our own."

Students will complete six graduate-level courses in sequence for two years, including summers, with the first group finishing in August 2023. The seventh course is 2000 hours of supervised fieldwork experience to prepare for the exam with the Behavior Analyst Certification Board. Doctoral-level behavior analysts from LifeScape will be among the course instructors. LifeScape will also provide clinical supervision, with candidates rotating through our school, children's residential, transition-to-adulthood programs, adult services, and our outpatient settings in Sioux Falls and Rapid City.

The LifeScape Foundation, through the Henry and Eleanor Carlson Staff Training Endowment, will provide scholarships to help offset tuition costs for LifeScape employees accepted into the program.

It's an exciting collaboration – one that will have a huge positive impact on South Dakota families, while providing high-demand jobs for the clinicians. It's a next step in a longtime partnership.



Representatives from LifeScape and USD at a March press conference announcing the BCBA Graduate Certificate Program.

Back – Dr. Tim Ridgway, Vice President for Health Affairs/USD Sanford School of Medicine Dean; Steve Watkins, LifeScape CEO; and Eric Kurtz, Ph.D., USD Center for Disabilities Executive Director.

Front – Haifa Abou Samra, Ph.D., School of Health Sciences Dean; Laurie Gill, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Social Services; and Kimberly Marso, Rh.D., BCBA-D, LifeScape COO.

For years, the University of South Dakota has sent students to LifeScape to job-shadow and do internships, clinicals, practicums, or postdoctoral programs. USD is one of 26 schools LifeScape works with to provide "real-world" training for students, and often those students come to work for us. It's a winning arrangement that benefits all parties.

Just in the past year, LifeScape has worked with 15 USD students in the fields of speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, clinical psychology, and special education. We often host nursing and social work students as well, plus undergrads from other majors.

We are excited about the outcomes this partnership can provide. Our collaborative relationship with the University of South Dakota will provide lifelong, life-changing help for children across South Dakota and beyond.

For more information about the graduate certificate program at USD, visit www.usd.edu and search for Board Certified Behavior Analysis Graduate Certificate.

Physical therapist Christine Stephenson works on core strength and balance with seven-year-old Lalyssa One Horn at LifeScape in Rapid City.



Family Honors Past and Present with Memorial to LifeScape

In the late 1950's, eleven Sioux Falls families banded together to provide educational and enrichment programming for their children with intellectual disabilities. It was the beginning of Sioux Vocational Services, a forerunner of LifeScape.

Among those founders was the family of Denise Benson. Denise's mother Lois Benson and Denise's aunt, Janet Johnson, were active in the early formation of what is now LifeScape's adult services. Their efforts helped the organization grow and evolve, and we are thankful for their grassroots efforts.

Other family members benefited from LifeScape and its forerunners over the years, most recently 22-year-old Dalton Foster of Crooks. When Janet Johnson passed away recently at age 95, the Johnson family wanted to make a gift to LifeScape in appreciation. They asked Dalton to choose where the funds should go. He chose the activity fund for the Pathways to Life Specialty School, which he graduated from last year, and the activities fund for the LifeScape Specialty School.

From Denise Benson to Dalton Foster, the LifeScape story continues through the generations of this extended family. Dalton's mother Ronae said, "Dalton was honored to deliver the gift in memory of Janet."



Dalton Foster, right, wanted to deliver the memorial gift directly to LifeScape CEO Steve Watkins. The Johnson family asked Dalton to choose which areas the funds should benefit.

From Our Foundation President



**Jessica
Wells**
LifeScape
Foundation
President

Switzerland is a beautiful, serene country. I had the opportunity to visit there with my family as a freshman in high school. It was clean, the people were friendly, and of course, the scenery of the surrounding Alps was breathtaking. Politically throughout history the country has played an important role in providing a neutral space for world leaders to meet and hopefully find common ground for the goodness of humanity.

At LifeScape, we often feel like Switzerland. We are a connector, often filling gaps in care and education for individuals across our region.

We have a small, 18-bed pediatric rehab hospital which serves patients transferred from hospitals in Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota. We're able to keep their rehabilitation care close to home and their families. We have over eight multidisciplinary teams and clinics collaborating with three hospital systems in the state to bring the very best care to the people who need us. We also have partnerships with four universities for technology and treatment development, and advanced specialized training for future leaders in healthcare.

We fill a gap in care within our communities and complement the care and education provided by the larger hospital systems and institutes of higher education in South Dakota.

We are heavily dependent—some programs at 98%—on state funding through Medicaid, which is allocated by our state legislature and school districts. We are a public non-profit, but highly dependent on our collaborative relationships to provide services. We are dependent on our state legislators to recognize our obligation to educate and care for vulnerable populations, and dependent upon you, our generous donors, to help meet the ever-changing needs of the individuals we support across the state.

This past year and now as we get back to a new normal post-pandemic way of living, we are grateful for the collaboration and generosity of you and our partners around the state. You provided funding for personal protective equipment, helped us set up quarantine sites to care for the sick, and helped us with equipment and supplies so we could provide teletherapy and day services in residential locations. You helped children and adults continue to receive services in safe environments during the pandemic. In this issue of the Journey, you'll see ways we're getting back to normal, exciting expansions in program areas helping eliminate long wait lists, and how we're meeting workforce challenges. We couldn't realize a fraction of this vision without you. Thank you for joining us on this journey!

Stay well and take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica B. Wells".

Jessica B. Wells
LifeScape Foundation President

Leave a Legacy

Imagine leaving a legacy that will help provide lives of dignity and fulfillment for countless people with disabilities. Through your estate planning, you can make a difference far into the future, while providing tax advantages now for yourself and your family. As you review or write your will, consider including a charitable bequest for the LifeScape Foundation. The assets you provide will be carefully invested, and only the interest is used. In this way, your gift will continue to provide for individuals with special needs indefinitely. Your attorney can advise you on the language to use. It is commonly worded as below:

I give, devise, or bequeath to the LifeScape Foundation, a South Dakota corporation, for its real purposes, all (or a fraction) of the rest, residue, or remainder of my estate whether real or personal.

For more information on how you can help those supported by LifeScape—even beyond your lifetime—please call the Foundation office at **(605) 444-9800**.

Registered Nurse Rebekah Matson provides medical care to Ben Richards who lives in one of the residential homes LifeScape supports.



Finding Strength Through Gratitude

By Guest columnist Audrey Miller-Brush

Two? Now I have two children with Down syndrome? Is that even possible? After going through the hurdles of genetic testing, the doctors explained that it was Trisomy 21, an extra chromosome in every cell. A “sticky” chromosome. I thought an extra chromosome made them very special. Another doctor explained that older mothers were more likely to have a child with Down Syndrome. That was me, I was going on 42 years of age. For many years, I had been in education working with children of all ages. Hesitantly, I told myself that I could tackle this challenge as a single mother.

My son, Nathan, age 42, has a great sense of humor. He organizes his life in ways which help him feel secure. He has a Monday shirt, a Tuesday shirt, a Wednesday shirt, etc. Even though his speech is a challenge for him, his gestures and movements are how he expresses himself. However, over the past few years he has gained many words in his vocabulary! He has a phone and calls me every day. Our calls are “just keeping in touch moments.” They are my favorite part of the day. Nathan spends his time watching movies and TV shows. He is a big fan of the Walking Dead and Marvel super heroes!

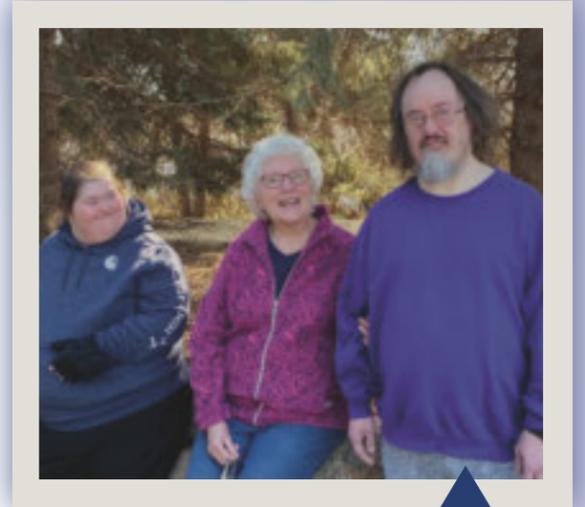
My daughter, Melanie, is 36 years old. She’s the definition of a busybody. She loves helping me

with chores, going to church, and eating out. Her favorite foods are calamari and oysters... I think she just likes to shock others! Traveling is one of Melanie’s favorite hobbies. Together, we’ve been to the Harry Potter theme park at Universal, Sea World, the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Branson, MO, Portland, OR, and we often visit the Twin Cities in Minnesota. She is full of glee and “squeals” of joy when showing delight over people and events.

Being a mother of two children with Down syndrome (I like to call it Up syndrome) wasn’t always easy. In my senior years, I like to look back and wonder how I survived. What gave me courage to persevere when things got difficult?

I prayed a lot. I also kept a gratitude journal to help me see the bigger picture. It gave me perspective. I journaled every day for two years while my children were in their teens, sometimes searching for something to write. There were times where I would just mention the weather or what we had for dinner that night. But I kept writing.

My unconditional love for my little family is all that mattered to me. Every night I pray for their safety and leave them in God’s hands; I believe all children are gifts from God. I am truly blessed to have them in my life.



Audrey and her daughter, Melanie, and her son, Nathan.

-Both of Audrey Miller-Brush’s children are supported by LifeScape. She is an active member of the LifeScape Ambassadors.

It was Lauryn Pederson’s birthday when she made her first visit to Trent Farm in June, and she got to drive a tractor with the help of volunteers Roger Wolles (left) and Kenny Reed. She was all smiles as others sang “happy birthday” to her! The site near Trent/Dell Rapids is run by volunteers who offer “a day in the country” to people supported by LifeScape and others.



Ways to Give

- **Sustainer Club!** – Set up convenient monthly gifts of \$15 or more, which can even be automatically charged to your credit card or deducted from your checking account. Each year you continue your membership, an individual supported by LifeScape will receive a warm blanket in your name and you’ll receive a thank you from that individual.
- **Matching Gifts** – Check with your employer to see if they will match charitable contributions or volunteer hours made by their employees.
- **Airline Miles** – Donate your frequent flyer miles to provide transportation to children and adults in need.
- **Donate a Vehicle** – Help provide for children and adults at LifeScape with a tax-deductible gift of a vehicle you no longer use.
- **Box Tops/Milk Caps** – Help meet needs at LifeScape’s Specialty School by donating your Box Tops and Land O’ Lakes milk caps.
- **AmazonSmile** – Shop at www.smile.amazon.com and designate LifeScape as your charity of choice.

These are just a few of the many ways you can give to support LifeScape! To learn more, contact the LifeScape Foundation at 605-444-9800 or giving@lifescapesd.org. Or, visit www.lifescapesd.org/foundation.

Despite Pandemic Challenges, Ambassadors Grant Over \$107,000 for LifeScape Needs!

After a long, hard year of meeting challenge after challenge presented by the COVID-19 outbreak, LifeScape had plenty to celebrate on May 18 with some good news from the LifeScape Ambassadors. That was the day the Ambassadors met to award 45 Wish List requests, either fully or partially, in the amount of \$107,858.31!

The grants ranged from rent and grocery assistance for adults supported by LifeScape, to a high-tech speech-generating eye-gaze system to help children communicate their wants and needs. A pressure mapping system for wheelchair fitting was granted, plus support for a 2022 Center for the Arts production. Furniture, games, and craft items will grace the lives of people in adult services, and therapy equipment will help kids in Rapid City, Sioux City, and Sioux Falls to be more independent.

For a while, the Ambassadors wondered if they'd have any funds to grant. They knew the needs continued—and in some cases increased—but their usual in-person fundraisers could not be held. One Autumn Night, the fall social gathering, had to be cancelled. MallWalk, which raises the bulk of the Wish List funds the Ambassadors gift to LifeScape, couldn't be held as usual in the Empire Mall in Sioux Falls. Ambassador and MallWalk chair, Kathy Hammond and her team rolled up their sleeves and got to work hosting a virtual MallWalk on February 6th, livestreaming on Facebook and the web. "Thanks to the many people who care about the kids and adults supported at LifeScape, we were far more successful than we dreamed we'd be," says Kathy. "Like everyone, we were out there doing our best to make it work." The event raised an amazing \$85,604.57.

Throughout the year, staff note areas where funding of equipment, services, and other items would help provide a better quality of life for kids and adults supported through LifeScape. Due to the COVID outbreak, some of the items funded last year could not be used, so that money went back into the total for this year's giveaway. The group met to consider all of the requests and were able to fund most of them – a very good day indeed! Many thanks to all who support LifeScape and the Ambassadors' fundraising efforts to put a little light and sparkle into the lives of those we support.

The LifeScape Ambassadors meet monthly for lunch and learning. Contact Ambassadors@LifeScapeSD.org to learn more about getting involved in this great organization!



LifeScape Chief Financial Officer Steve Wilson accepts a check for new funds raised by the LifeScape Ambassadors from their president, Vonny Revell.

One Autumn Night will be back October 8th at The Country Club of Sioux Falls, and MallWalk is February 5th, 2022 at the Empire Mall. We hope to see you there!

2021 Ambassador Grants to LifeScape

Adult Services

- Rent assistance
- Food assistance
- Kitchen table
- Couch & loveseat
- TV
- Shed for outdoor furniture
- Outdoor and indoor games for day services activities center
- Nintendo switch
- Four bean bag chairs
- Art supplies
- Cricut craft supplies
- Outdoor patio set with chairs
- Two rocker recliners
- Two smart boards with learning suite
- Pool table
- Basketball arcade game
- Volunteer services activities & supplies
- Camp Create & 2022 theatre production: Cinder-Really?? (Ambassadors/Sammy's Fund*)

Children's Services

- Two portable audio/visual carts
- iPad Mini (Sammy's Fund*)
- Smart Fire TVs for hospital rooms (Sammy's Fund*)
- SoloStep ceiling track & harness system
- Multimedia center with kit for children with visual impairment
- Adapted switches
- School yearbooks
- Volunteer services activities & supplies
- Camp Bravo & 2022 theatre production: Cinder-Really?? (Ambassadors/Sammy's Fund*)
- Sensory swing kit (Sammy's Fund*)

Outpatient Centers

- BodiTrak pressure mapping system
- Speech generated device with eye gaze
- Meerkat modular standing frame
- Child-sized tables & chairs

- Data collection program for ABA therapy
- Tumbling mats
- Language building curriculum for autism treatment
- Air fryer/toaster oven for feeding therapy
- Speech therapy materials & supplies
- Water table & water toys (Sammy's Fund*)
- Treehouse staircase & platform
- Toy boxes
- Toddler gross motor equipment
- Gonge River Balance Landscape
- Adjustable incline board
- Soft Lite Kid Barrel
- South Paw Cuddle Swing
- Blaze Pods
- Training staircase/ convertible stairs
- Oxo Tot Sprout highchair for feeding program
- Puzzles and other learning items
- PEAK Comprehensive ABA Assessment booklets

*Gifts for Sammy's Fund are given by the Jeff & Erin Horstmeyer family in memory of their son Samuel John, who passed away in 2010.

Five Years, Five New Homes:

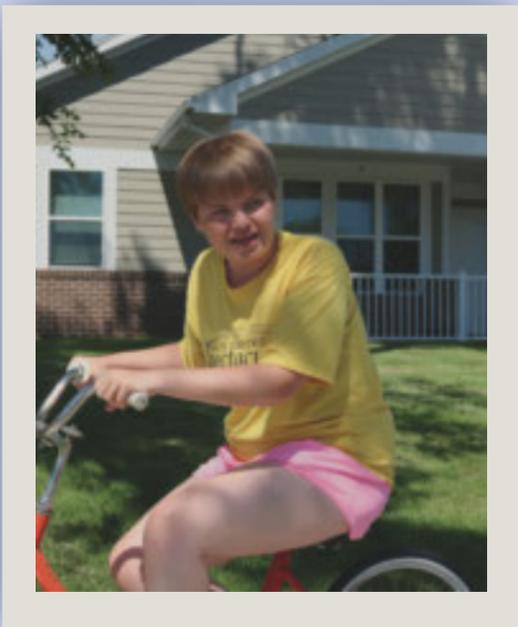
LifeScape is Building Bright Futures in Housing for Adults

With one new home finished and another in the works, LifeScape is well on its way to meeting a five-year goal of providing high-quality affordable housing to adults with disabilities in Sioux Falls.

The Continuum Home, a duplex located near LifeScape's Adult Services location, opened to eight residents in February 2021. It is the first of its kind in South Dakota—designed in cooperation with the Department of Human Services. Its focus is to help prepare young adults who are moving from children's services with high supports to more independent adult settings. Kari Green of Rapid City is thrilled that her 21-year-old son Christian is able to live at Continuum Home. "This home I believe will help him gain the confidence that he needs to continue to progress throughout his adult years," says Kari.

The South Dakota Housing Development Authority provided \$902,000 in funding for the Continuum Home. In addition, the LifeScape Foundation—through donor support—provided \$171,000 toward the project and purchased the land.

The Continuum program provides dedicated behavior support and training on community skills and independence. Its day program teaches vocational and employment skills. Four residents are enrolled in the transitional program, and four are currently residents who moved from other LifeScape supported adult housing locations. One is Amy Ernster of Salem. Her mom, Kim, says she just seems happier. "She was in a basement apartment before," says Kim. "She loves to look out the window now, and she



Amy Ernster is able to ride her bike on the sidewalk near her home.

and her friends like to sit outside. They have a water table—she loves water—and she has a three-wheeled bike she rides almost every day. She likes helping with meal prep and loading and unloading the dishwasher, and she's getting out more post-COVID. Things are better and better for her at Continuum."

The second home is under construction in the Froehlich Addition of north Sioux Falls. The 5,475 square foot duplex—with the same design at the Continuum Home—is set to be ready for its eight residents by the end of 2021. They are all moving from rental properties managed by LifeScape and have named their new place Linden Home.

The plan is to build a new house every year for the next five years in various parts of the city. The goal is always for the homes to blend into their neighborhoods. Besides the cost and availability of building materials, the biggest obstacle now is finding land. The lots need to be about 15,000 square feet—basically the size of a double lot—to accommodate an accessible, one-story home. There is also an initiative to renovate homes already in use. The overall cost will be about \$5 million.

"As Sioux Falls continues to grow and housing prices rise, we're helping ensure that people with disabilities have safe, comfortable homes," says LifeScape Foundation President Jessica Wells. "Most have very limited incomes, depending on Medicaid or Social Security to survive. This initiative allows LifeScape to provide and maintain quality homes that will last generations."



A ribbon cutting was held in February at the Continuum Home.

Derek Martin checks in with six-year-old Ruby Lehmann while fixing her chair at RISE Custom Solutions in Rapid City.



Getting Back to a Post-Pandemic “Normal”

While keeping a close eye on the development of COVID variants, LifeScape is carefully moving to a “new normal” in the Specialty School, as well as in Day Services for adults. In both areas, though, there will be a “new and improved” look and feel.

For Adult Day Services, a new recreation room has been added at LifeScape’s Western Avenue location in Sioux Falls, and thanks to Wish List Grants from the LifeScape Ambassadors, it’s all decked out for fun, fitness, and active recreation. “There are two pool tables, a foosball table, darts, arts and crafts, shuffleboard, arcade games, and all kinds of other fun options,” says Day Services Coordinator of Support Services Lexi Swanson. “And for those who want to work out, we have a gym area with treadmills, weight machine, stability balls, free weights, and other exercise equipment, thanks to a donation from the Gates Corporation.” The rec room area also has space for socializing.

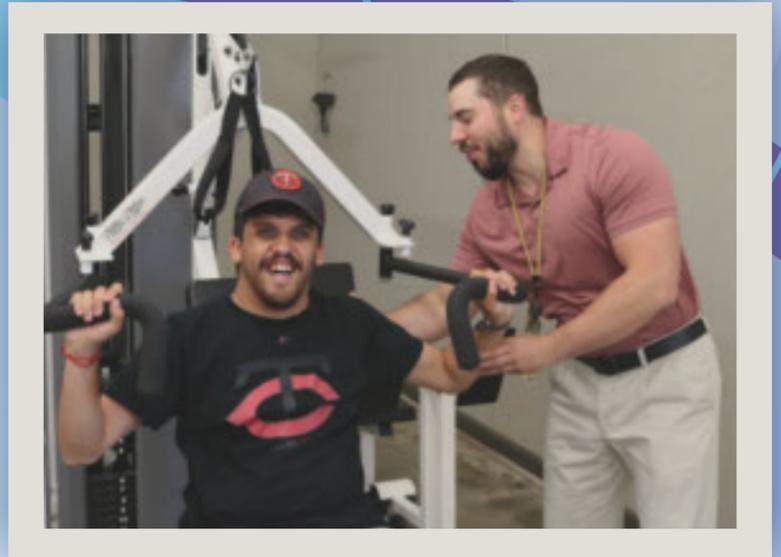
“We know many people are anxious to get back with their friends, and I think they’re really going to like the new set-up,” says Vice President of Support Services Rick DiSanto. “We will open in three phases based on who wants to return to day services and our ability to assign staffing to meet their needs. Our plan is to bring the first group back on August 2nd with a second and third group added shortly after. We hope to add newly enrolled people by the end of the year, and that will depend on staffing availability.”

For children, the LifeScape Specialty School brought its day students back to the 26th Street location on July 12th. This was the first school day for residential students and day students to be under one roof since March 13, 2020, when COVID-19 shut down the school. At that point, the school moved to online learning. Beginning August 18th, a temporary off-site school for day students was opened on North Lake Street in Sioux Falls, while residential students continued to learn at the 26th Street location. About 40 day students have attended classes at the Lake Street location, with their own administration, teachers, physical education areas, therapists, treatment rooms, and onsite dining. Keeping the two populations of students separate helped keep both groups safer from the virus.

New renovations at 26th Street will continue to keep the two populations separate. Day students now attend classes in the south end of the building, with residential classrooms located in the north end. Staggered start and end times will allow for less congestion in the hallways and the staff to transition better between areas in the building.

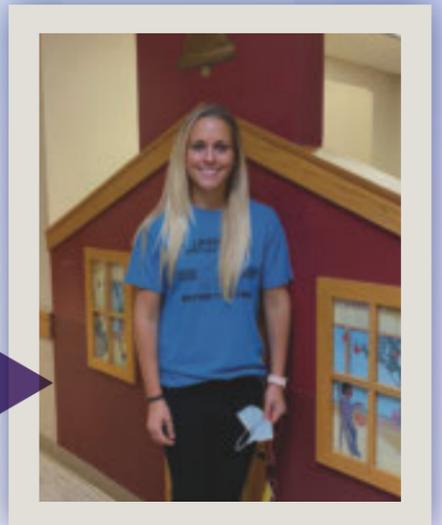
“We are thrilled to be able to re-integrate day school students at 26th Street,” says Superintendent Vicki Isler. “2020 was a long year and I am proud of how our staff, students, and families embraced the changes that were necessary to keep our students safe while we navigated our way through the pandemic.”

We all look forward to more typical times going forward and thank those we support and their families for working with us to keep everyone safe.



The former work center at LifeScape’s Western Avenue location has been transformed into a recreation room for Adult Day Service activities. Luis Betancourt gets some weight machine tips from Adam Geffre of Human Resources, who was formerly a Physical Education Lead Teaching Assistant for LifeScape.

LifeScape Specialty School Principal Brittany Dawson – and all the education staff – wore “Better Together” t-shirts on July 12th. It was the first time since the beginning of the pandemic that day and residential students had classes under the same roof.



Upcoming LifeScape Events!

July 23-25, 2021: 52nd Annual Winner Elks Rodeo. Three days of classic rodeo events at the Winner, SD Fairgrounds to benefit children’s outreach services across South Dakota.

July 25, 2021: Sioux Falls Sunfish Baseball. Christmas in July at Augustana University’s Karras Park, home of Ronken Field. Game starts at 6:35 p.m., with tickets starting at \$8. Proceeds benefit the LifeScape Christmas Wishlist Program.

September 17, 2021: Hope for the Hills Radiothon-Rapid City. The six HomeSlice Group radio stations will air uplifting LifeScape stories of hope to benefit LifeScape.

September 18, 2021: 4th Annual LifeScape Cornhole Tournament-Rapid City. Watch for details!

October 8, 2021: One Autumn Night. An evening of music, friendship, and food, hosted by the LifeScape Ambassadors at The Country Club of Sioux Falls.

November 13, 2021: Sioux Falls Stampede. LifeScape night at the Premier Center as the Stampede take on the Omaha Lancers. Proceeds from ticket sales will come directly back to LifeScape.

December 20, 2021: Holiday Jam with the Hegg Brothers. The best holiday music with a jazzy twist! 7:00 p.m. at the Orpheum Theatre, downtown Sioux Falls.

Third Monday of the Month, September through May: LifeScape Ambassador Meetings. The Ambassadors support children and adults through activities and fundraising. 11:45 luncheon meeting with speaker. Our meetings are on Zoom until further notice. Contact Ambassadors@LifeScapeSD.org to get involved!

Get details on all these events at www.LifeScapeSD.org, or call the LifeScape Foundation at (605) 444-9600.

Cover Story (continued)

David had several trademark phrases he wanted to record and preserve. He and Brenda returned earlier this month to download the messages to his DynaVox. He now will be able to tell his wife and mom that he loves them, as well as to say, “Good morning, beautiful,” long after his voice fails him.

“I can’t do much that I used to love doing, but we try to keep a positive attitude because it really does help,” says David.

For those in a similar situation, Brenda advises reaching out for help. “Make sure you have your support system of family and friends,” says Brenda. “Even if they come and sit and visit for ten minutes, it’s a really important break in their day.”

David also says he doesn’t mind when people ask questions about his condition. “I don’t see it as an infringement on my privacy,” he says. “I want people to know more about ALS and hopefully find a cure.” Breakthroughs do seem to be on the horizon in treatments and perhaps a cure for ALS, largely due to the \$220 million raised worldwide for research through the 2014 Ice Bucket Challenge. “I didn’t do the Ice Bucket Challenge, but a good friend of mine did,” says David. He had no idea how grateful he’d someday be for the viral online fundraiser, which was started by someone who had ALS himself.

Until a cure comes, LifeScape will stay ahead of technology to help David and other ALS patients maintain independence—and to tell those who matter most how much they love them.

3 Missteps in Estate Planning & How to Avoid Making Them



Kameron Nelson, CFRE
Director of Major Gifts

A major consensus within the estate planning world finds that between 60-70% of adult Americans do not have a will. These pitfalls may occur because a person does not believe they have a large enough estate, they have not set aside time, or even that they don't know where to start. No matter where you are in the process, here are a few things to consider as you work with an advisor to make sure your wishes are carried out as you see fit.

1 Failure to Make a Plan

Are you part of the roughly two-thirds of Americans that will inevitably leave your property and asset distribution to local intestate succession laws? If you pass away without a will, the probate process kicks in and your heirs might find themselves in a less than desirable situation as the courts decide how to deal with your things. The state will name a personal representative to distribute your assets. Many times this is a surviving spouse or family member, but could even be a public trustee if nobody is willing to serve as your executor. The process can be slow and expensive all the while following guidelines that vary state by state. It may also inadvertently leave someone out entirely that you had meant to provide for.

Consider things like nominating an executor, guardians for minor children and/or children with special needs, and caretakers for your pets. You might include instructions for debts and taxes or establish a gift to a non-profit that you cared for during your lifetime like LifeScape. You can even ensure that your favorite granddaughter, Jennifer, receives Grandma's china hutch!

*The information contained herein is provided for informational purposes only, and should not be construed as legal advice on any subject matter. You should not act or refrain from acting on the basis of any content included herein without seeking legal or other professional advice.

Teacher Associate Ari DenOtter Conroy works with 9-year-old Amaya Weston from Trent, SD on a reading assignment using a book and an iPad. Ari is South Dakota's first Certified Deaf-Blind Intervener, meaning she is specially trained to help children with deaf-blindness communicate, develop social and emotional skills, and gain access to environmental information.

2 Forget to Coordinate your Beneficiary Designations

Making a will is only part of the picture. Your will formalizes what to do with assets left in your individual name. However, assets like retirement plans or life insurance policies pass outside of one's will by way of a beneficiary designation. It is very important to periodically review these designations, so they are cohesive with your overall estate plan.

Many people set it and forget it, meaning that they choose a beneficiary immediately when they open a policy or start a new job and never revisit those initial decisions. If you are charitably inclined, it may make sense to give these more heavily taxed assets to a charity like LifeScape rather than to individuals. This is an easy and simple way to support our mission!

3 Neglect to Review Asset Titles

This refers to the way in which you own an asset – your individual name, joint tenancy, held in trust, etc. Assets titled in joint tenancy will pass outside of a will to the surviving joint tenant. Your will might say everything goes to your children equally, but if an account is held in joint tenancy with just one child, it could pass only to that child resulting in your children receiving unequal shares contrary to your intent. Proper asset titling can help ensure that your heirs have immediate access to funds after you are gone.

Please reach out if you need help reviewing your estate plan to consider ways of helping us provide exceptional services to people across their life span.

Needs & Dreams Wish List

Your gift helps
change lives.

Here's what your gift can buy for the kids and adults supported by LifeScape:

Big Dreams

- Mount'n Mover High-Tech Device Mount
- Ultrasound Imaging System

\$2,500

- Rent Assistance
- Food Assistance

\$1,000

- Wall-Mounted Mat Table
- Steamroller Ramp

\$750

- Adaptive Aquatics Scholarships
- Horsepower Fees

\$500

- Hearing Assistive Device
- Medical Bill Assistance

\$350

- Mobo Triton and Mobo Triker Pro

\$200

- iPod Touch
- GoTalk 4+ AAC/Communication Device

\$100

- Language Builder Picture Cards
- Visa Card for essential daily living needs and community activities

\$50

- Hy-Vee or Target Gift Card
- Jelly Bean Switch

\$25

- Men's/Boy's Underwear
- Restaurant Gift Cards
- Arts and Crafts Supplies

If you wish to donate for one of the above needs, please circle the dollar amount and check the need you're interested in funding. Clip this form and include in the attached envelope with your gift.

**Thank you
for your
generous support!**



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