



# Gazette

## Inside this issue:

Annal Meeting Recap.....	1
2026 Arc Membership Drive.....	2
Fall/Winter Weather Policy.....	2
Winter Weather Precautions.....	3
Annual Meeting Photos.....	4-5
Ultimate Life.....	6
Halloween Dance Photos.....	7
Valentine Bingo Party.....	8
Prism.....	9
Next Chapter Book Club.....	10
Best Buddies.....	11
Just Friends.....	11
Continuing Ed.....	12
Supported Employment.....	13
Art of Imagination.....	14-15
Staff Directory.....	16



## ANNUAL MEETING RECAP



The Annual Meeting of Ollie Webb, Inc. was held on November 10, 2025

### Awards were bestowed to:

#### The Arc of Omaha at the Ollie Webb Center

Best Buddies College Buddy of the Year: Taylor Buckley

Just Friends Mentor of the Year: AJ Kirsch

Next Chapter Book Club Facilitator of the Year: Terese Hammond

#### Career Solutions, Inc. at the Ollie Webb Center

Employer of the Year 2025: Chick-fil-A, Papillion

Agency Artist of the Year: Arielle Almaguer

#### Ollie Webb Center, Inc. Community Awards

Community Artist of the Year: Kevin Lawlor and Great Plains Theatre Commons

Community Partners of the Year: Whispering Roots

Community Volunteer of the Year: Werner Enterprises

#### Board Member Service Awards

Phil Gray

Shruthi Manjunath

Jeff Sime

#### Employee Recognition Awards:

15 years of Service

Jim Hoggatt

10 years of Service

Chris Greco-Dawson



### Mission Statement

*To enrich the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families through collaboration, advocacy, relationships, and education.*

*Please see the photo gallery of the annual meeting on pages 4 and 5*



# OLLIE'S BULLETIN BOARD

## DON'T FORGET!

to renew your Arc of Omaha membership for 2026.



### Ollie Webb Center Inc. offers a pass to Fontenelle Forest.

The Fontenelle Forest pass is based on availability and you must call in advance.

#### *This pass allows:*

- Free admission for up to 15 people
- Free admission to Raptor Woodland Refuge
- Free admission to Habitat Hollow for indoor play & learning at the Nature Center

Fontenelle Forest Location:  
1111 Bellevue Boulevard North  
[www.fontenelleforest.org](http://www.fontenelleforest.org)

If you would like to reserve our pass, please call (402) 346-5220.

## Fall/Winter Weather Policy

The following weather conditions may cause us to close our office and/or cancel/reschedule events.

- Heavy accumulating, blowing and drifting snow
- Ten degrees or more below zero and/or wind chill
- Ice, sleet and/or freezing rain

If the weather is questionable, our services will be canceled.

Our services will generally be canceled if Omaha Public Schools cancel their day/evening activities and/or staff deem it unsafe for travel.

**Please check social media or verify with staff.**



## 2026 Arc of Omaha Membership Drive!

*"Time and money spent in helping people to do more for themselves is far better than mere giving." ~ Henry Ford*

You are doing more than mere giving when you become a member of The Arc of Omaha. You are supporting efforts to help individuals with developmental disabilities and their families lead lives of greater independence, productivity, integration, inclusion and self-determination.

**Becoming a member for 2026 is easy!** Options start at just \$35. This can be done by mail (fill out the form below) or online at [www.olliewebbinc.org](http://www.olliewebbinc.org). The benefits of continued membership include:

- Use of the Ollie Webb Center, Inc. pass to Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo. Pass use is unlimited based on availability and entitles 2 adults and up to 6 children free admission to the zoo.
- Discounts on many activities and events sponsored by The Arc of Omaha. For more information, please reference our monthly newsletter or [www.olliewebbinc.org](http://www.olliewebbinc.org).
- Support from The Arc of Nebraska and The Arc of the United States, including representation at local, state, and national policy forums and publications on a variety of topics.
- The satisfaction of supporting a local community agency that tirelessly informs the public of the needs, rights, and abilities of individuals with developmental disabilities.

**Your Arc of Omaha membership sends a strong message in support of the rights of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Please consider becoming a member today!**

## The Arc of Omaha 2026 Membership Form

Your membership will be valid from January 1 through December 31, 2026  
**Thank you for your past support! Please consider once again being a part of our team!**

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_  
(As you wish it to appear when we publicly recognize our members.)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \* \_\_\_\_\_

\*May we send our monthly newsletter to your email address: \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Each Single Membership is entitled to one (1) vote. Each family membership is entitled to two (2) votes.

**Please circle:** Single \$35    Family \$50    Contributing \$75    Sustaining \$100    Corporate \$150

☐ I would like to sponsor an additional single membership for a person who is unable to pay, for an additional \$35

**Total amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Your contribution is tax deductible.**

Please make your check payable to Ollie Webb Center, Inc. Mail this form and your check to:  
Ollie Webb Center, Inc., 1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 122, Omaha, NE 68105

## Zoo Pass Available to 2026 Arc Members!

The Arc of Omaha has a free Family Zoo Pass available for use by its 2026 members. It allows two adults and six children to visit the Henry Doorly Zoo. Please note the following rules for its use:

1. The pass can be used anytime the zoo is open.
2. Families may use the pass as often as they like, as long as it is available.
3. Families using the pass must sign it out, giving their name, address, phone number, date of use and date returned. If a family misuses the pass, it is possible that the pass may not be available for them to use again.
4. When families arrive at the zoo, they must present the pass and check in at the Visitors Center.

**Call 402.346.5220 to reserve the Family Zoo Pass.**





# WINTER WEATHER PRECAUTIONS

Before a winter storm strikes, make sure your home, office and vehicles are stocked with the supplies you might need. Make sure pets also have the essentials they will need during a winter storm. Know how to dress for varying degrees of cold weather.

## At Home and Work

Your primary concerns at home or work during a winter storm are loss of heat, power and telephone service and a shortage of supplies if storm conditions continue for more than a day. In either place, you should have available:

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio and portable radio to receive emergency information
- Extra food and water such as dried fruit, nuts, granola bars and other food requiring no cooking or refrigeration.
- Extra prescription medicine
- Baby items such as diapers and formula
- First-aid supplies
- Heating fuel: refuel before you are empty; fuel carriers may not reach you for days after a winter storm
- Emergency heat source: fireplace, wood stove or space heater properly ventilated to prevent a fire
- Fire extinguisher, smoke alarm; test smoke alarms monthly to ensure they work properly
- Extra pet food and warm shelter for pets

Review generator safety: Never run a generator in an enclosed space

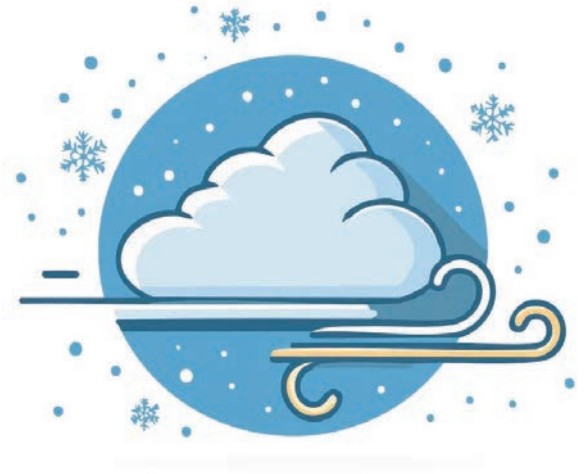
Make sure your carbon monoxide detector is working correctly and that the outside vent is clear of leaves and debris. During or after the storm, make sure it is cleared of snow.

Home fires are common each winter when trying to stay warm. Review ways to keep your home and loved ones safe.

Stay Inside: When using heat from a fireplace, wood stove, space heater, etc., use fire safeguards and properly ventilate. If you have a gas furnace, make sure it is not blocked by a snowdrift as soon as it's safe to go out. If you have an upstairs gas furnace that vents out the roof, you may need to turn off the upstairs unit until the snow melts off your roof.

## If Your Heat Goes Out

- Close off unneeded rooms to avoid wasting heat.
- Stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors.
- Close blinds or curtains to keep in some heat.
- Eat and drink. Food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat. Drink lots of water and other non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic drinks to prevent dehydration. Cold air is very dry.
- Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing. Remove layers to avoid overheating, perspiration and subsequent chill.







# PHOTO GALLERY

## 2025 Annual Meeting







# PHOTO GALLERY

## 2025 Annual Meeting





# SOCIAL RECREATION

## The Best of Ultimate Life!

Ultimate  
**LIFE**

The Ultimate Life program is a fee-based companion recreation program for adults ages 18 and older with developmental disabilities. This program offers opportunities for adults to participate in small, planned group activities of their choice in the community. Trained staff accompany participants and transportation to and from the activities is part of the program. **APPLY NOW!**

### **Need an evening out? Looking for fun times with a group of friends? Join Ollie Webb Center, Inc.'s Ultimate Life Program!**

#### *Here is how it works:*

- Enroll in our Ultimate Life Program with a \$50.00 registration fee.
- We offer numerous exciting activities and send you a monthly calendar of events for you to choose from.
- You choose the events you are interested in. Attend every event or just a few per year, there is no minimum participation requirement!
- Each event has a cash fee, which covers meal and other costs such as entrance fees. Then a second fee for the companion time and mileage are billed monthly.
- A trained OWCI staff member (a Companion) picks you up and drops you off at your home.
- You join other friends and staff at the actual event.
- Most importantly, you have fun!

#### *Past activities include:*

- Dancing
- Bowling
- Miniature golf
- Picnic at the Lake
- Movie Night
- Dinner with Friends
- Game night at Spielbound
- Lauritzen Gardens
- Dave & Busters
- Sporting Events, and more!

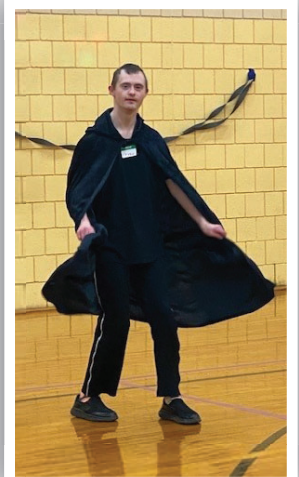
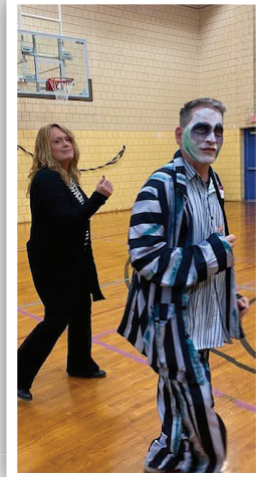






# SOCIAL RECREATION

## Halloween Dance



# Valentine BINGO PARTY

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2026**    **DRINKS, SNACKS AND PRIZES**

Time: 1:00 to 3:00

Cost: \$15 Arc Members • \$20 Non-Members  
\$10 Staff/Family Members

**LOCATION: SADDLEBROOK COMMUNITY CENTER**

14850 Laurel Avenue, Suite 2, Omaha, NE 68116

**REGISTER BY FEBRUARY 20**

via mail or email Audry Childers at [achilders@olliewebbinc.org](mailto:achilders@olliewebbinc.org)



Partnering with the City of Omaha Parks and Recreation



## RESERVATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Staff/Family Member Attending (If Applicable) : \_\_\_\_\_

I allow the use of images for public relations purposes and release and discharge Ollie Webb Center, Inc. and its employees and volunteers from any liability as a result of my participation and/or my individual's participation.

\*Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

BINGO (February 28).....\$15 Arc Members • \$20 Non-Members • \$10 Staff/Family/Caregiver

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Please make checks payable to: Ollie Webb Center, Inc.

Return to: Ollie Webb Center, Inc., 1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 122, Omaha, NE 68105



PRISM (Parent Resource Information and Support Meetings) provide informational and support programs for families of individuals with developmental disabilities. Family-friendly meetings offer educational programs, disability-related information and the opportunity to network with other parents and children with disabilities.

## 2026 I/DD State Legislation Review

**Date:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026

**Time:** 6:30-8:30 p.m.

**Location:** UNO-Community Engagement Center (CEC)

6400 S University Dr Rd N • Omaha, NE 68182 • Combined Room 231

**Registration Required via Eventbrite:**

<https://2026-Nebraska-IDD-Legislative-Panel.eventbrite.com>

**For accommodation requests, please contact:**

Audry Childers by January 30, 2026: [achilders@olliewebbinc.org](mailto:achilders@olliewebbinc.org) or 402.346.5220 ext 31

**Reserved Parking Available in the CEC lot (map available on Eventbrite Link).**

When arriving inform the parking attendant you are attending the PRISM event.

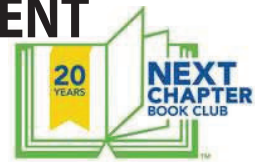
Engage with parents and professionals on legislation introduced in the 2026 session of the Nebraska State Legislature, how it may impact the intellectual and developmental disability community and how you can advocate for the rights of those who may be impacted.

Parent, Advocates, and Professionals will be in attendance will be updated at a later date.



# HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Next Chapter Book Club



Book Clubs meet once a week for an hour as a small group at a local coffee shop to read and discuss a book. All reading levels can participate! Members enjoy social connections and the delight of expanding their literacy.

**Do you enjoy reading and want to share the joy of literature?**

**Join Ollie Webb Center, Inc. Next Chapter Book Club!**



Book Clubs meet once a week for an hour as a small group at local coffee shops and community venues to read and discuss a book.

**We are looking for members to join the following clubs!**

Panera off 78th and Dodge

Hy-Vee at 156th and Maple

**Annual \$50 fee provides club membership and access to a variety of books from  
The Next Chapter Book Club Lending Library**

**Become a Volunteer Book Club Facilitator!**

For just one hour a week, make a difference in the lives of adults with intellectual and development disabilities.

Facilitators needed to host clubs at local coffee shops and community venues in the Papillion/Bellevue and Omaha Metro areas.

**We are currently in need of a second facilitator for our 78th & Dodge Location**

**If you would like to become a member or volunteer facilitator, contact Kaitlin Pearson**

**Lifelong Learning • Friends • Community**

The Next Chapter Book Club is a program of  
Chapters Ahead, Inc.





# MENTORING SERVICES

## Best Buddies

## Just Friends

Best Buddies is a peer mentoring program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through this program, adults with disabilities are matched to Creighton college students and participate in social and recreational activities, enabling these individuals to experience friendships with peers.

### Matching Ceremony



Just Friends is a peer mentoring and friendship program that gives adolescents with developmental disabilities the opportunity to participate in social and recreational activities with adolescents who do not have developmental disabilities.



Matches spend the year hanging out, getting to know each other, and having fun!

### Now accepting applications for 2025-2026!

Just Friends pairs teens ages 13-18 with and without disabilities. Adolescents are matched 1-to-1 and participate in social and recreational activities together. Participants learn and experience age-appropriate social interaction, build self-advocacy and leadership skills, and enjoy meaningful social inclusion.

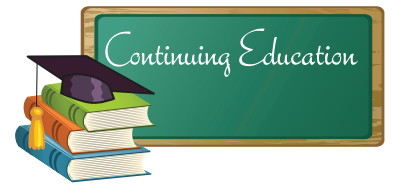
### Mentors & Mentees agree to:

- ✓ 1 year mentoring relationship
- ✓ Weekly communication
- ✓ Monthly in-person hang outs
- ✓ Just Friends events & classes

All peer mentors attend a mandatory 2.5 hour training prior to being matched with a mentee. Please note that mentors and mentees are responsible for any associated costs with outings.

### Apply Today!

To apply to be a mentor or mentee, request an application from Kaitlin Pearson.



## Across the Floor Dancing Classrooms

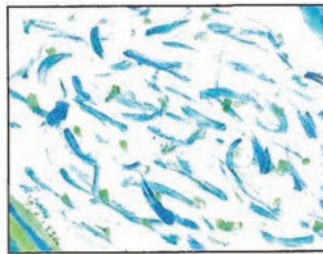
Back by popular demand, for the third year in a row, we have been able to partner with WhyArts, Inc. and bring their Across the Floor Dancing Classrooms (ATF) program into our Continuing Education (CE) classes. Lead by WhyArts' teaching artist, Pamela Dutton, CE participants have spent 10 weeks over the fall semester learning various ballroom dances, while touching up on their etiquette skills. WhyArts is a partner organization that provides arts education and access to underserved communities. ATF programming utilizes a set curriculum where instruction occurs in the form of a 10-week residency, two workshops per week, within the structure of a regular class day.

In previous summer semesters, ATF had been a shortened six-week summer activity only. In talking with the WhyArts staff, we decided to introduce it into the fall semester, and use the entire 10-week curriculum. It is also one of the rare opportunities that we have that brings all our CE classes together for one activity. The Monday-Wednesday-Friday classes met on Mondays and Wednesdays at the A.V. Sorensen Community from 1:30-2:30PM each week, and the Tuesday-Thursday classes met on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Hot Shops Arts Center from 10:30AM-11:30AM each week.

Over the course of the 10-week session, participants learned several dances from the tango, to the foxtrot, to the waltz, along with a brief history of each style and its origin. Along the way, they also discussed how to ask permission from a partner to dance, as well as that it is acceptable to either accept or decline the invitation. Participants even learned how to politely serve one another a snack or hors d'oeuvre.

This all culminated in a final sharing presentation that families were invited to attend in mid-November.

We are so grateful to continue this fun and educational learning opportunity and for the amazing partnership with Pamela and the WhyArts team.



## DANCER ARTWORK!





# SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Supported employment is a community-based work option for adults with developmental disabilities. Supported employment is based on the premise that work should be accessible to everyone, regardless of disability. By providing the necessary support, people with disabilities increase their opportunity for community integration, independence and productivity. Services in this area include: Job Development and Job Coaching.



Cody Sperl



Cody Sperl was officially recognized by Shanda Glenn, Nebraska Association of Service Professionals (NASP) Director of Association Operations, for earning a 2025 Top 10 Direct Support Professional (DSP) award.

Cody was selected from a pool of over 70 nominations. Lisa McMichael, Program Director, and Becky Cano, Operations Director, were present for the award recognition. Cody received an engraved glass award and check for \$250. Ollie Webb Center, Inc. is very proud of Cody and the exemplary service he provides.



The Art of Imagination classes are focused on the visual and performing arts. Classes offer artistic opportunities in traditional art forms such as painting, writing, drawing, photography and more. Theater classes include improvisation, playwriting, scripted pieces and radio drama culminating in rehearsals and public performances.

## Through the Looking-Glass: Inclusive Theater Shines in Omaha

Every fall, Ollie Webb Center, Inc.'s Art of Imagination program brings inclusive theater to the stage, showcasing creativity, collaboration, and community. This year's production, *Looking-Glass*, was performed on October 17 and 19 at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center in downtown Omaha, featuring more than 30 artists with and without disabilities. It was co-produced with our artistic partner, the Great Plains Theatre Commons.

Written by Kevin Lawler, Director of the Great Plains Theatre Commons, and directed by Kim Clark-Kaczmarek, *Looking-Glass* reimagined the classic *Alice in Wonderland* story through an inclusive lens. Music direction and choreography were by Courtney Stein Cairncross, with lighting by Jared Wolt, sound by Craig Marsh, costumes by Shannon Bittner-Miller, and props created by Brandon Mass.

Students in The Art of Imagination program helped create costumes, props, and set pieces through hands-on coursework, supported by local professional theater artisans. Participants with disabilities contributed to every aspect of the production, from design to performance.

The role of Alice was portrayed by three performers—Youngest, Younger, and Mature Alice—each representing a stage in the character's life and personal growth.

For many participants, the social connection was the highlight of their experience. New friendships formed, old ones rekindled, and everyone agreed that while the rehearsal schedule was demanding, the rewards were worth it.

This year's show also featured professional actors Mary Kelly, Tom Neumann, Kevin Olsen, Roz Parr, Giovanni Rivera, and Julie Ryan. Both public performances were well attended, with a full house on closing night.

*Looking-Glass* once again affirmed that inclusive theater can be both artistically compelling and deeply human—inviting Omaha audiences to see themselves reflected on stage.

To learn more about our co-producer and artistic partner, the Great Plains Theatre Commons, please sign up for their newsletter: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeS4LnoRXeDdKANx-bYeHleUPyleCdyYFcLmvCLqF3HEz34Zjw/viewform>







# THE ART OF IMAGINATION





The Arc of Omaha & Career Solutions, Inc.  
1941 South 42nd Street  
Suite 122  
Omaha, NE 68105-2942

## ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



## STAFF DIRECTORY 402-346-5220

		Ext.
Executive Director	Laurie Ackermann	17
Operations Director	Becky Cano	23
Education Services Director	David Ackermann	13
Family Services Coordinator	Cheri Albin	14
Arc Program Manager	Audry Childers	31
Education Manager	Deb Gibson	28
Art of Imagination Artistic Director	Jim Hoggatt	18
Administrative Specialist	YuLon Kimbrough	29
Office Assistant	Jenny Koley	11
Employment Coordinator	Joe Koll	20
Independent Living Director	Lisa McMichael	24
Arc Program Coordinator	Kaitlin Pearson	12
Executive Administrative Assistant	Maureen Proksel	10
Accountant	Valeria Silva	26

For more information about Ollie Webb Center, Inc. activities and programs, you can pull up our website on your smart phone QR app!

**It's Free!**



- I/DD Legislative Panel Tuesday, February 3rd, 2026 from 6:30-8:30pm
- Valentine Bingo Party – Saturday, February 28th, 2026 from 1:00-3:00pm

If you have received this newsletter via e-mail in error and/or wish to unsubscribe and no longer receive this newsletter, please send an e-mail to [info@olliewebbinc.org](mailto:info@olliewebbinc.org) with "unsubscribe" in the subject line. You may also contact us to unsubscribe by sending a letter to: Ollie Webb Center, Inc. • 1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 122 • Omaha, NE 68105