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Nothing About Us Without Us

Keeler Client Advocacy Committee



April Club Schedule >>>

Garden Club

Tuesday April 1st from 12:30-1:00

Volunteer Club

Thursday April 3rd from 10:00-10:30

Band

Monday April 7th from 9:30-10:00

Puzzle Club

Tuesday April 8th from 1:00-1:30

Cooking Club

Wednesday April 9th from 10:00-11:00

STEM Club

Thursday April 17th from 1:00-1:45

Book Club

Monday April 21st from 12:45-1:15

Video Game & Comic Book Club

Tuesday April 22nd from 12:45-1:15

Art Club

Tuesday April 23rd from 10:30-11:00

*Please note that Art Club is on a different day this month!

Lunch Club

Thursday April 24th from 11:00-12:00

Schedule is subject to change



Picasso Self Portraits created by the Art Club

Committee Update

March was an exciting month for the Keeler Advocacy Committee!

We attended the "Let's Start a Self Advocacy" webinar with Krescene Beck and Adam Wiser of the Illinois Self Advocacy Alliance. During this webinar, clients and staff learned about some important components of an advocacy committee. Clients voted to incorporate some new aspects into our committee such as a group motto, group rules to be read at the start of every meeting, and bringing on additional client members. The KCAC is excited to welcome Carol and Jenny to our committee this month!

Additional projects included working with Keeler clients to write emails to their elected representatives asking them to defend Medicaid and awarding the first Bill Davis Sunshine Award in memory of our beloved Keeler client, Bill Davis.

We had our second round of monthly club meetings and introduced a new club: Volunteer Club lead by Valerie Smith.

In our monthly meeting, we planned for our first quarterly outing, got ready for our logo contest, talked about how we had advocated for ourselves and others this past month, learned about famous people with disabilities, and decorated a box for the food drive.

Advocacy Corner >>>

Our advocacy efforts for the past month have been focused on reaching out to our elected officials to ask them to vote against proposed cuts to Medicaid. Medicaid is a government program that many people with disabilities use to help pay for health services like doctor visits, hospital stays, medication, day programs, and residential services. Cuts to Medicaid may cause fewer services to be available, and people may need to wait longer for medical care. Keeler clients wrote emails telling their elected officials how important Medicaid is to them, and how different their lives might look without this important funding. Client Emmy had this to say: "It would be hard to do the things I like if I had to pay more money for things like medication and going to the doctor. I would feel really sad and frustrated if I couldn't do things at my day program anymore. Help me save Medicaid!"

You can help save Medicaid by reaching out to your Senators and telling them how important Medicaid is to you. You can find the contact information for your senators by visiting www.elections.il.gov and using the "Find My Elected Officials" option.



Janine's Jokes >>>

What do you call a rabbit with fleas?

Bugs Bunny

Why did the tree go do the dentist?

To get a root canal

What season is it best to go on a trampoline?

Spring time



Club Spotlight >>>

This month, we are spotlighting our Cooking Club! This is a club that gathers clients in the kitchen to cook a snack together.

In February, the Cooking Club made a delicious fruit salsa with homemade cinnamon tortilla chips. Clients scooped the inside of kiwis and used a fruit chopper to cut other fruit for the salsa. They spread melted butter on pieces of tortilla chips, sprinkled them with cinnamon, and cooked them in the oven.

In March, the Cooking Club made sugar cookies. They mixed all of the ingredients together and added rainbow sprinkles to the top before baking them to perfection.

The Cooking Club is led by Heather O'Grady and attended by Janine, Graham, Sheila, Chuck, and Hannah.

They are looking forward to making even more delightful snacks together in the future!



Janine shows off the club's sugar cookies

Ask Alison & Emmy >>>

Dear Alison & Emmy,

My housemate won't stop unbuckling my belt when I ride next to him on the bus. How can I get him to stop?

Sincerely, Frustrated Friend

Dear Frustrated Friend,

I would be upset, too. It's not nice! He needs to be a better friend. Can you ask him why he does it? Does he like teasing you? Is he doing it for attention? You can ask him to stop. Say "Please don't do that, just in case we get in an accident". If that doesn't work, you can tell staff. You can try moving to another seat. We hope this helps!

Sincerely, Alison & Emmy



Bill Davis Sunshine Award Winner Dan Trippon (March 2025)

This award was created by the KCAC to honor the memory of Bill Davis, our beloved Keeler client and friend who passed away in February 2025. It is awarded monthly to a client who exemplifies the good-natured attitude that Bill brought to Keeler. The monthly winner is chosen by the KCAC clients.

Congratulations to Dan Trippon for winning the BDSA for March 2025! Dan's nominators had this to say about him:

"Dan is as happy and bright as Bill Davis with an amazing work ethic." -Diego Huitron

"Dan is a sweet and kindhearted man who always brings a ray of sunshine with him to Keeler. From stopping to chat with folks in the hallway to happily participating in activities and outings, Dan's friendly and positive nature make him a joy to be around. He was a longtime close friend of Bill's, and it seems fitting that the first ever BDSA be awarded to him." -Becky McBoom

We are so grateful to Bill's sister, Laurel Davis, for donating trophies for our BDSA winners! Thank you for your generosity.



Bill Davis ♥

Client Spotlight >>>

Emmalina (Interviewed by Heather O'Grady)

Meet Emmalina, affectionately known to all of us on the AID campus as "Emmy". Many will be surprised to learn that Emmy is a native of Aurora, and lived here with her Mom, Sylvia, before moving to Texas when she was in elementary school. Some of her fondest memories growing up include watching her Mom's favorite, vintage television shows together, such as "Full House", "Little House on the Prairie" and "The Waltons". Several years later, following the passing of her beloved Mother, Emmy moved back to Illinois with the love and support of her extended family. She attended Hope D. Wall School and after graduation, became a valued member of the AID family.

Emmy comes from a large family, many of whom still reside in the greater Aurora area, including her Godmother, one half-sister, three half-brothers and their spouses, as well as a growing number of nieces, nephews and cousins, with whom she gathers to celebrate her birthday, holidays and other special occasions.

In her leisure time, Emmy likes to read and watch game shows, such as "The Price is Right", "Family Feud" with Steve Harvey. She likes the day programming here at Keeler, especially the planned outings, which include fun trips to the movies, shopping malls, bowling centers and local parks. Emmy is also quite active as a member of the Keeler Client Advocacy Committee, as well as the Lunch Club, with some of her friends and peers.

Emmy shared that she would like to take a vacation with family and "...go see the mountains", in a western state, such as Colorado. She also shares that her most important goal in life is to strive to establish a fully independent life for herself in the future. We appreciate you, Emmy, not only for bringing such joy to our days here at Keeler, but also for sharing your life with us, so we may all get to know you even better!

