



# NDAD

helping others to help themselves

Spring 2021

# Insider

**NDAD'S MISSION:**

Enhance the quality of lives  
of individuals facing health challenges.

## Helping hands

*NDAD brings attendant care to individuals in need, helps them remain in homes*

Helping Others to Help Themselves. NDAD's motto is particularly apt when it comes to providing attendant care assistance to people with disabilities and health concerns.

Attendant care is hands-on assistance to an individual for daily living tasks that people with physical disabilities would normally do themselves if they could. Day-to-day tasks many of us take for granted, such as eating, dressing and bathing. Tasks we rely on for our own mobility, independence and health. For some, attendant care is needed to remain in a home setting within our communities. An NDAD-funded care attendant may do light housecleaning, laundry, and grocery lists, plus communications such as monthly bills, phone calls and budgeting help, among other tasks. Care recipients find their own part- or full-time attendant.

When Grand Forks' Joan Schiele (right) twice needed to fill gaps in her attendant care, she applied for help from NDAD and qualified. Learn more on the next page.





# Joan Schiele

*NDAD gives Forks woman help with attendant care gaps, other needs*

Joan Schiele is no stranger to NDAD, and vice versa.

"They've known me since I was little," she said.

The Grand Forks woman with cerebral palsy was a child when her parents were members of a 1970s local support group for families with children and adults with disabilities that, 46 years ago this June, became NDAD.

Joan has qualified for NDAD's help on multiple occasions in recent years. "It's been a good experience," Schiele said of her

*"NDAD's been a lifesaver for me, but it'd be a lifesaver for many people who really need it."*

Joan Schiele

relationship with the nonprofit. "It hasn't been a bad one. I've never had problems with them."

On two occasions, NDAD's direct financial assistance program covered Joan's costs for much-needed part-time attendant services when she faced several unplanned gaps in Medicaid coverage. The first occurred years ago, when she received NDAD's help paying for attendants over the course of about a year; the other occurred in April 2020.

When you qualify, NDAD can cover expenses that help you maximize your independence



**Joan Schiele demonstrates how to use a digital temperature gauge for LISTEN Center in Grand Forks, where she works part time as a recreation assistant and self-advocacy team leader.**

by helping you perform tasks you cannot do yourself, such as bathing, dressing and eating. In Joan's case, care attendant tasks included applying and removing leg wraps for her lymphedema.

"It was a big help," she said, "because there's no way I could have gotten help from anyone else."

For about nine years, NDAD also has provided Joan with free, door-to-door accessible transit on

the Dial-A-Ride program that serves Grand Forks and neighboring East Grand Forks, Minn. It's one of multiple paratransit systems in North Dakota communities that NDAD helps clients receive access to.

NDAD purchased leg wraps, a bed rail and tub grab bars for Schiele in 2017, plus compression garments the year before that, and a reacher and toilet safety frame in 2012. The organization also helped Joan with accessories to her power wheelchair in 2019.

Once, her father borrowed one of NDAD's accessible vans for loan so she could attend a graduation ceremony. NDAD's Grand Forks and Minot offices have vans with ramps that can be borrowed for pre-approved medical purposes and in-state events.

Schiele said she definitely would recommend NDAD: "If I know the person really, really needed it, I would let them know and have them go there."

Contact NDAD ([NDAD.org/contact](https://www.ndad.org/contact)) for more details about these and other programs. ■

# Tyreece Vondall

*Williston teen with TBI reaches appointments with NDAD's help*

Mary Mathers used the same word repeatedly when asked recently about charitable nonprofit NDAD.

"Amazing," the Williston mom said. "Without you guys, I don't know if we'd have made half of the appointments."

Since 2017, NDAD's charitable medical travel assistance has helped Mary's younger son Tyreece, now 14, fulfill seven scheduled medical appointments and surgeries in Minneapolis and Fargo. NDAD has helped with his lodging, too. NDAD's help definitely eased some of her family's financial burden, she said.

Tyreece's first surgery actually took place in the fall of 2015. He had an asthma attack during a football practice in Williston and went to the hospital. A hospital scan revealed a colloid cyst in the third ventricle of Tyreece's brain. But during surgery at a Fargo hospital to remove the cyst, a nicked blood vessel in his brain hemorrhaged, Mary said. Tyreece ended up staying about two months in the hospital - the start of a stressful medical journey now more than five years long.

"Every time we have to have surgery, I freak out now. And we've gone through several," said Mary, a kitchen manager at a Williston service station.



**Tyreece Vondall (left), 14, with his older brother, Latrell.**

Subsequent surgeries have verified cyst's repeated regrowth and attachment to a vein, Mathers said. Tyreece now has a programmable shunt to drain away excess spinal fluid to his abdomen

that could damage his brain; that needs to be checked annually, she said.

His right leg and foot also are shorter than his left leg and foot, and he may need surgery to address that, she added.

Because of his new learning disability, Tyreece was held back an extra year in the fourth grade. He's an eighth grader now but learns at roughly a sixth-grade level, Mary said, and he still deals with some short-term memory loss.

From the get-go, Mary said, NDAD client services employees have been very friendly and helpful while her family has tried to keep up with Tyreece's surgeries, the travels and "just bills in general."

"You guys," she added, "are amazing." ■

## Pandemic uncertainties push next Escape to the Lake to June 2022

Escape to the Lake will not return to NDAD's event schedule this year after all.

Concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to the 2021 cancellation - the second in two years for the popular adaptive water-ski event at Nelson Lake near Center, northwest of Bismarck and Mandan. Tentative plans call for the event to return in June 2022.

Escape is a day of summer recreation for adults and children with physical disabilities that began in the early 1990s. Based for many years at Nelson Lake Recreation Area, the event includes pontoon rides, a performance ski show and catered picnic lunch, all free of charge for participants and their families and caregivers. Call NDAD at (800) 532-NDAD or email [lstastny@ndad.org](mailto:lstastny@ndad.org) to be notified in 2022 when information becomes available about the next Escape to the Lake. ■



# Dan Butts

*NDAD a big lift to independence of man with spinal cord injury*

Dan Butts can access his cupboard shelves these days - a feat that, for him, had long been out of his reach.

The Grand Forks resident, 43, still needs companion DeeDee Lewis' help to get in and out of bed, and vehicles, too, but with less difficulty than he used to face. NDAD provided him with a power elevating seat lift for his wheelchair in 2020 that has helped add to Dan's independence - a boost he's welcomed since seriously injuring his spinal cord in a near-fatal 2013 automobile crash ejection.

NDAD has helped Butts multiple times. A year ago, he borrowed an NDAD portable ramp so he could visit his ailing mother in her Fargo garden-level apartment which, without that

ramp, was inaccessible to him. "It was a great experience to be able to sit at her table and visit with her... for the first time in years," he recalled.

The ramp came via NDAD's Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP), which provides free loans of durable medical

equipment and other adaptive devices for up to 90 days. In past years, he's also borrowed a wheelchair to use while getting his repaired and a bathroom commode several times prior to having a colostomy.

Lora Machart, Grand Forks client services representative, was quite helpful when he applied for the elevating seat,



Dan said. "She let me know what I had to do. She must have gotten on it right away.... Even with COVID and all going on, we were able to work right through it. It was a great experience working with her.... I have brought up NDAD to other people. I would describe (NDAD) as very giving... (and) very responsible. I'm very grateful." ■

## Thank you for your Giving Hearts Day 2021 generosity

Giving Hearts Day 2021 donations to NDAD totaled the most our charitable nonprofit has received since our participation in the

regionwide fundraiser began several years ago.

That proved particularly helpful, given the stresses and challenges that all of us - clients and their families, NDAD staff, and supporters such as you - have felt while dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your generosity at such a difficult time definitely makes a difference, since 100 percent of the Giving Hearts Day donations NDAD received have gone to to client assistance for vital prescription medications, medical travel expenses, durable medical equipment, home and vehicle accessibility, personal attendant care and adaptive recreation activities.

Thanks again to our 2021 Giving Heart



Day ambassadors - Jamestown's Chanae and Patrick Stegeman, Bismarck's Tim Heckelsmiller, Elgin's Braydon Kauzlarich and Grand Forks' Dan Butts.

Thanks also to NDAD supporters who publicly said "#countme4NDAD" in social media, including Fargo's Laurie Parsons, Grand Forks' Virg Foss and Marilyn Hagerty, and NDAD's own Sheryl Swanson, Lora Machart and Alan Marmon.

Finally, a truly heartfelt thanks to you and your generous giving heart. Thanks for becoming a truly appreciated participant in NDAD's much-valued mission.

If you missed the Giving Hearts Day opportunity to help NDAD, don't feel blue. Visit [NDAD.org](https://www.ndad.org) to learn various ways you can assist people with health concerns and disabilities through our organization, including a way to donate online. ■

## **NDAD 2020: By the numbers**

Our nonprofit programs helped **2,159 people** with health issues and disabilities in North Dakota and adjacent border communities. Here's how:

**3,026**

Pieces of durable medical equipment loaned through NDAD's free Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP)

**1,816**

People borrowed equipment through HELP

**\$254,162**

Total savings to individuals who used HELP

**53** wheelchair-accessible van loans to **38** individuals with disabilities

**2,335**

Trips to out-of-town medical facilities funded

**1,974**

Prescription medications purchased

**230**

Pieces of medical equipment purchased

**6,867**

Hours of personal attendant care received for people to remain in their homes

**2,891**

Accessible rides for employment, shopping, community events and medical appointments

**\$19,611** donations made into **5** NDAD-sponsored Community Fundraiser accounts

**\$2,750**

Donated to three other N.D. nonprofit organizations



## NDAD Faye Gibbens Memorial Grant returns for 2021

NDAD is accepting applications for its next Faye Gibbens Memorial Grant. NDAD will award a \$5,000 grant to an agency/organization to be used for a health, welfare, social service or educational purpose for at-risk populations.

The grant is named for NDAD's late co-founder and longtime client program services leader. Faye Gibbens (right) died in 2014 at age 70.



Applications must be completed and received by NDAD no later than 5 p.m. Central on Friday, April 30, 2021. Visit [NDAD.org](https://www.ndad.org) for more grant information, including the full downloadable application and more information about Faye Gibbens. ■

### **Past Faye Gibbens Memorial Grant recipients**

2019 - Northlands Rescue Mission  
2018 - The Arc, Upper Valley  
2017 - Altru Health Foundation  
2017 - Child Care Aware of N.D.  
2016 - Home on the Range  
2016 - Altru Family YMCA  
2015 - Mayville State University & Griggs/Steele-Traill Special Education Cooperative

## Tech helps Family Voices stress family-centered care thru COVID

North Dakota's Family Voices chapter has dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic perhaps better than some nonprofits while pursuing its mission to ensure family-centered care for children and youth with disabilities, chronic health conditions and other special healthcare needs.

"By and large we are operating the same as we always have.... I feel we are all adjusting to a new normal," said Donene Feist, Edgeley, FVND's executive director. Like NDAD, "we have worked really hard to keep families as informed as possible."



"Certainly calls to all of our offices have increased," noted Feist, who founded Family Voices in 1997 as a mom of a young child with a hearing impairment. Families, she said, "have been stressed not only with all of the adjustments but also with worry of going to appointments, safety, mental health - ongoing support across all settings"

Fortunately for both FVND and its clients, the organization is accustomed to remotely assisting families. Besides providing the state's Family-to-

Family and Parent-to-Parent Health Education and Information Centers, FVND started offering frequent online extended learning calls on a variety of subjects at least five years ago, particularly during the fall and winter when travel can be difficult, Feist said. "Who wants to go out when it is 30 below?" Feist said. "Providers and families have been wonderful participants in them."

Now Zoom and other online livestream formats "have been much better verses teleconferencing," she added. Online platforms have helped FVND aid families one-on-one when in-person meetings aren't possible.

FVND's signature trainings such as Caregiver Cafe and Care Coordination are moving online, joined by new trainings on telehealth and emergency preparations. Family Voice's parent leadership training didn't occur in 2020, but FVND is making adjustments and hopes to still offer some of it online this year.

FVND can be found online at [FVND.org](https://www.fvnd.org) and on Facebook at [facebook.com/FVND1](https://facebook.com/FVND1). To contact Family Voices, call (888) 522-9654 or email [fvnd@drtel.net](mailto:fvnd@drtel.net). ■

# Nearly \$90,000 in grants help NDAD get through pandemic

NDAD was awarded grants totaling \$89,328 during 2020, which proved to be particularly helpful given the impact the pandemic had on NDAD operations and its charitable income sources.

A very appreciative thank you to these grantors:

- **American Crystal Sugar**, Grand Forks-area Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP)
- **Capital Electric Cooperative**, Escape to the Lake adaptive water recreation (carried over to 2022)
- **Cass County Electric Cooperative**, Fargo-area prescription medications and supplies
- **Community Foundation of GF, EGF & Region**, GF-area prescription medications and supplies
- **FM Area Foundation**, Fargo-area prescription medications and supplies
- **Kirkwood Bank & Trust**, Escape to the Lake (carried over to 2022)
- **Medica Foundation Rural Health**, statewide medical travel
- **Myra Foundation**, GF County prescription medications and supplies
- **Northern Plains Electric Cooperative**, GF-area prescription medications and supplies
- **Rural Community Grant Fund**, Williston Crisis Residential Unit security system upgrade
- **Slope Electric Cooperative**, Escape to the Lake (carried over to 2022\*)
- **Souris United Way**, Minot-area prescription medications and supplies, and medical travel
- **State of North Dakota Economic Resiliency Grant**, statewide needs
- **Verendre Electric Cooperative**, Minot-area HELP

\* - approval pending

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NDAD is a nonprofit, charitable organization founded by concerned citizens to assist mentally and physically disadvantaged people in North Dakota, many of whom are not eligible for services from other agencies.

NDAD provides financial assistance through funds generated by both the organization and community projects. NDAD also provides information and referral services to help people receive assistance through other agencies, when possible.

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