The Link Connection
keeping you connected...

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WE WANT TO STAY IN TOUCH

if you have not been receiving breaking news emails and invitations to meetings, please send me your email address so we can add you to the email list. Write me at ldunshee@linkassociates.org

KEEP CURRENT

Check out our website at www.linkassociates.org
We Have So Much To Be Thankful For

Greeting all,

We have faced so many challenges over the last few years and sometimes it seems like all we have accomplished is worry, fear and fighting for what is right. In this special time of year as I reflect, it seems only right to focus on just how much we have to be thankful for.

1. We have each of you who continue to put your trust in our hands to be very thankful for. You have many choices in who provides for your family member. We are caring for very special people in your lives and your trust is not something we never take lightly. We understand that respect is earned and trust is gained. Thank you for trusting us.

2. We are beyond thankful for the amazing staff of Link Associates who have stood proud and strong thru very difficult times to support those we serve. It takes a lot to remain committed when the grass looks so green on the other side. These are the people who know that comparing and complaining will not be what makes life good. They know that by working together and remaining strong the the fight we will achieve.

3. We are thankful for those elected officials who have taken the time to visit, listen and understand the issues surrounding the funding and the restraints of managed care. This is a massive program with many complexities. It would be easy to turn away - but for those who took up the advocacy - thank you thank you thank you.

4. We are thankful for those in our community who have reached deep inside and have donated to help us keep services and supports in place despite the cuts we have had with managed care. Quality of life matters - these are the people who have helped up make sure life for all we serve has QUALITY - something every person deserves.

5. We are thankful for the volunteers who support our programs and give the extra hands and enthusiasm that makes everything possible. Without you so much would be impossible.

6. We are deeply indebted to the volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors and on the Link Foundation Board. So many hours, so much knowledge and so much passion is received from these people. They keep this organization moving ever forward.

7. We are thankful for our families and friends who support our work - your families and those you care deeply about.

Because of these people true inclusion occurs.

Wishing each and everyone of you peace and happiness.

Linda Dunshee, Executive Director, Link Associates
Annually our Representative Payee team attends an update training of changes within the Social Security Administration (SSA) rules and regulations. The SSA is the oversight body for Representative Payee services and we want to make sure everyone is aware of some of this year’s differences.

**Social Security Rules Regarding Beneficiary Monies Requested for Family (or Companion) Travel Expenses to Support Persons Served**

Link Associates recognizes that for our persons served, the opportunity to travel with family members is very important. Persons may want to travel with a parent, sibling, or other family member to a desired destination, or sometimes may be asking a family member to support them so they can travel to these destinations. As a result, we sometimes see requests for persons served to help cover the costs of other people’s travel expenses. Social Security has rules regarding requests for a beneficiary (someone who receives Social Security funds) with a Representative Payee and requires additional steps to be taken and Social Security wants to review and approve these requests on a case by case basis.

If there is a requests are for the beneficiary to pay for anyone other than themselves, request could include:
- Admission costs (Theme parks, theater/event tickets, etc.)
- travel expenses (plane tickets, vehicle rental, gas, etc.)
- Lodging for any person other than the beneficiary (limited to the family member or staff needed to support person served)

The beneficiary cannot pay for anyone’s food expenses or other incidental expenses. Their monies must be used to pay for themselves and (if approved) the travel/admission/lodging for their supporting person.

The process/option Social Security prefers is to have a family member make purchases up front, and then request reimbursement. This can be done by combining combination of travel expenses (plane trips/hotel stays/etc.) being paid for up front and one reimbursement sent out for the beneficiary’s portion of these costs, or could be separate reimbursements per travel expense. Again, if the beneficiary is asked to pay for anyone other than themselves, Social Security wants to see this information in advance to review and decide on approval. Reimbursements for

If Beneficiary funds are needed to make the purchases, the best practice for larger trips/requests for funds to travel with family is to first outline the details of the trip.

How they are traveling (i.e. flying or driving). If driving, tools such as Google Maps can be used to estimate the number of miles expected to travel, multiply by the federal reimbursement rate for mileage and then dividing by the number of persons traveling together to get the beneficiary’s portion.

Where are they staying. (Hotel, Motel, rental cabin, etc.). For lodging, Social Security wants it to be identify what the person’s portion of that cost would be by reviewing who all is going and the beneficiary’s individual portion. (ex. Persons served and 3 family members all staying at a rental home on the beach, the person served would be responsible for ¼ of the cost)
Any cash on hand needed for travel requires a very detailed ledger and (of course) returned receipts for EVERYTHING. The responsible party would need to sign for any monies received and would need to return receipts and all unused monies. Social Security will look to the documentation to ensure that all monies spent were used for the beneficiary. For example, if a receipt showed two meals purchased at Applebee’s, only one meal would be approved and the other would be expected to be paid back to the beneficiary.

Also - the letter below outlines the guide for spending approval for gift giving.

11/11/19

Dear Parent / Guardian:

With the holiday season here, we would like to provide a reminder of our Rep Payee procedures for processing requests for money by parents/guardians/relatives using consumer monies. As previously shared, Social Security requires Link to be sure we collect and account for all consumer expenditures that use their representative payee account monies.

With this in mind, please become familiar with the following:

- Link is requesting that you contact the Residential Supervisor to verify monies are available before making purchases that you are planning to be reimbursed.
  - If monies are not available, you will not be reimbursed if you try to seek reimbursement.
- Reimbursements can only be made if there is a receipt to support the purchase(s) made; please provide receipts that only reflect the items to be reimbursed (versus a receipt that has items to be reimbursed, and items that are not to be reimbursed). The receipts that are submitted for reimbursement must clearly show what was purchased and a note to indicate who the gift is for (i.e. - hairdryer for sister for Christmas).
- Once you submit a receipt(s) to the supervisor, they will fill out a check request and route to the rep payee designee. The rep payee designee will issue a reimbursement check, assuming monies are available.
  - Link cannot authorize gifts that are cash only.
  - Link cannot give cash advances, nor can we provide a blank check.
  - Gift cards – gift cards cannot exceed $25.00, and only one gift card per person. We will need to know who the gift card is for, and the purpose (Christmas gift, birthday, etc.)

We apologize if this may cause any inconvenience to you. Please know we are looking out for our consumer’s best interest and following social security guidelines.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please don’t hesitate to call Derek Steenhoek, Residential Administrator (515-262-8888 ext. 250); or Allison Warren, Residential Administrator (515-262-8888 ext. 229).

Sincerely,

Derek Steenhoek
Residential Administrator
Link Associates can provide Representative Payee Services for those in our residential program.

The rules are real and the responsibility is serious

Social Security Administration Updates

SSA Representative Payee Newsletter

Fall 2019

Applying to be Payee

In order to process an application to be payee, SSA must conduct an interview with a representative of your organization.

- If SSA receives a paper request to be selected as a payee, we must follow up with a face-to-face or telephone interview.
- We must verify the applicant is an employee of your organization.
- If a corporation operates its business using a DBA name, the application must be filed by a representative who works for the DBA entity that will serve as payee, not the corporate office.
- SSA does not accept payee applications from third party vendors.
- SSA will appoint the most suitable payee for a beneficiary based on our review of case factors and preferred order of selection. Filing an application does not guarantee you will be selected as payee.

Note: If SSA appoints your community based organization as payee, your organization must carry out all payee duties and responsibilities. Third party vendors or your corporate office cannot transact business with SSA on your organization’s behalf. While third party vendors or your corporate office may assist you with bookkeeping or administration, your local organization is solely liable for completing new payee applications and submitting all forms and documentation requested by SSA.

Payee Account Title Reminders

Bank account titles must show that you, the payee, manage the account but the funds belong solely to the beneficiary.

Example:
- Helping Hands Payee for John Smith

Accounts holding benefits for multiple beneficiaries (called Collective Accounts) must be titled to show the account belongs to multiple people.

Examples:
- Helping Hands Fund for SSA Beneficiaries
- Helping Hands Resident Trust Fund

Organizations operating under a DBA must use bank account titles reflecting the DBA. SSA does not require the corporate name to be part of the title, but some banks may.

Examples:
- Manor Corporation DBA Helping Hands Resident Trust Fund
- It can also remain: Helping Hands Resident Trust Fund

Annual Accounting: Go Online!

Online reporting is easy to use and saves you time with built-in features to help guide you through the accounting process.

When you receive your next paper accounting form in the mail, go to www.socialsecurity.gov/payee and click on “Complete your payee accounting online”.

Complete your payee accounting online

You’ll receive immediate confirmation when you submit the form, and you can save a copy of the completed report for your records.

Using Benefits

As payee, you alone are responsible for determining how Social Security and SSI benefits are used. You must use benefits to provide for the beneficiary’s current needs or save for their future use. SSA will require you to pay back any funds you spent for someone other than the beneficiary.

Beneficiaries and their family members, friends, or guardians may make requests, but you have the ultimate say in spending these funds.

You have the right—and responsibility—to say no to requests that do not adhere to Social Security policy or are not in the best interest of the beneficiary.

Remember, as the appointed payee, you are the one accountable for the benefits received!
Recordkeeping

As payee, you are required to keep a detailed record of the money received and how it is spent for each beneficiary you serve.

- You must keep records of all payments SSA makes to you, bank statements, receipts or cancelled checks for rent, utilities, and any purchases made for the beneficiary.

  **Example:** You withdraw $100 from the beneficiary’s account and buy an $80 item. You should have a receipt for the $80 and a record reflecting the disposition of the remaining $20.

- You must maintain records for at least 2 years plus the current year.

- You must maintain an accounting system that reconciles the bank statements with the accounting ledger for each beneficiary on a monthly basis.

- You must be able to provide detailed and accurate records to SSA when requested.

- You must obtain approval for group purchases in writing from SSA before making the purchase. You should keep a copy of this approval in file.

- When you have conserved funds for a beneficiary you no longer serve:
  
  1. If the beneficiary is living, return the conserved funds to SSA. We will reissue the funds to the proper person.
  2. If the beneficiary is deceased, the conserved funds should be turned over to the legal representative of the beneficiary’s estate for disposition under State law.

For more information on your duties and responsibilities as payee, click on the graphic or visit: [www.ssa.gov/payee/NewGuide/toc.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/payee/NewGuide/toc.htm).

Reporting Changes for Your Organization

You must promptly notify SSA if any of the following occur:

- You suspend or terminate an employee due to theft or misuse of beneficiary funds;
- You are no longer responsible for a beneficiary;
- You no longer wish to be payee;
- Your organization gets a new address or telephone number;
- Your organization is sold, changes name, or changes EIN;
- Your representative payee bank account changes:
  - New bank or bank accounts
  - Starting or ending collective accounts
  - Master/Sub account changes
  - Account title changes

**Important:** Your organization cannot receive benefits in a payee bank account for any individual who has a different payee.

Connect with us on Social Media!

![Social Media Icons](https://example.com/socmedia.png)

SSI: Property Tax & Rent Rebates

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a needs-based program. A beneficiary’s income and resources can affect the amount of their SSI benefit. Property tax and rent rebates can be counted as income and resources.

Most property tax and rent rebates are excluded income in the month they are received by an SSI beneficiary. However, the first moment of the month after the funds were received, any funds the beneficiary retains become a countable resource.

**Example:**

- Your client receives a $250 rent rebate on June 15.
- You report it to your local SSA Office timely.
- The rebate will be excluded from income for the month of June. If your client has no other income, they will be due the full SSI benefit for their living situation.
- If your client still has these funds as of July 1, the funds would count towards the $2,000 individual resource limit. If your client has over the resource limit, they could be ineligible for SSI.

**Reminder:** You are responsible for reporting all income and resources to SSA.
Direct Support Professional (DSP) Week

Thank you to all who helped recognize Link’s Direct Support Professionals during DSP week by sending in your comments! It was a massive success and they loved hearing directly

From The Director

As we look forward - September is National Support Professional Week and Link Associations will be celebrating all of the staff of Link Associates, because together you really are the heart of the organization.

Working together you are the lifeline to the people we support and their families.

- You help those we serve know that each and every day they are safe
- You are the link that lets each family know their loved ones are always in good hands
- You show members of our community how each citizen can contribute in all aspects of life
- You assist individuals with a disability to navigate the world and lead a self-directed life
- You help those supported contribute to the community which enhance community inclusion
- You advocate in communicating each person’s needs, self-expression and goals

The people we support are not equipped to improve their quality of life without the hands and hearts of our staff. All of you invest yourselves in this career and are literally each person’s life support, day in and day out. The careers you have chosen are noble and necessary occupations and deserve respect and recognition.

Those we serve did not choose to have the challenges they face but they do deserve the highest quality support. That what you do. The careers you have chosen will never be easy, you will never get rich, you will always need to be flexible and patient & kind and you deserve our community’s recognition and our state’s financial support in respectful wages.

Because of your dedication, those we serve live integrated into the community, they engage in work and day programs and maintain connections to family and friends. Without they would suffer greatly and could not receive the same high quality of services and supports that Link offers.

Support Professionals Week is September 9 - 15. Link will be having a few fun things, thanks to the LOL squad.

I wish I had the budget to do something amazing to show you how much you are appreciated and respected, but since we have not been able to raise wages I can’t commit financial resources. Each of you will receive a small token of my appreciation, which was not funded by agency resources. Although small, I hope you know how much respect and gratitude it represents. Your supervisor will be getting this to you sometime during the Support Professional’s Week.

On behalf of all of the people we support, their families and advocates and our Board of Directors THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!!

Linda Dunshee - Executive Director

See photos on next page from DSP week!
What is a Link GEM?
Each month the Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) Committee selects an employee, recognized by their peers who exemplifies the values of Link and PBS. This staff member is awarded the GEM award.

This employee will:
- Receive a certificate and have their picture displayed for an entire year at the administrative building
- Be featured in the monthly Link Ink, quarterly newsletter, Link’s Facebook page, and the agency website
- Recognition from Link Associates Board members during a celebratory meal in July with all Link GEMs
- A piece of Link GEM apparel
- The choice of:
  - $40 Link General Store gift card
  - 1 day of PTO

Next time you visit Link, look to the north of the elevator to see our wall of recognition for the Link GEM of each month. A very impressive group of people! Read about the GEM winners on the next page.
About Tasha
Tasha works in the Day Program department as Lead Float. She has been employed with Link Associates for almost 3 years. Person served motivate Tasha to work hard. They deserve the best! Her proudest accomplishment at Link is moving into the lead float position and seeing the difference she makes. Tasha can count on her 4 boys to make her laugh with the stories they tell. Tasha shares her happiest moments are with her boys. They have a driving tradition - they just drive around back or crank up the tunes and sing out loud!

Words from her Supervisor
Tasha is an amazing team player, she will help out in a moment's notice. Sometimes she doesn't even have to be asked. Her dedication to persons served is also outstanding. She has built lasting relationships with each person Link supports. As her supervisor, I know I can count on her.

Well Done Shoot Outs Received
"I strive to be as amazing as you are! You know so much about our consumers. And you always truly show how much you care. Thank you for being such an inspiration for us all!"

"The passion you have for Link Associates and those you support is amazing. I admire the lasting relationships you have built with those you support. You treat them with the utmost respect and follow their wishes to keep their dignity intact. You're an inspiration!"

About Emily
Emily works in the Outreach department as a Health Services Assistant. She has been employed with Link Associates for 11 1/2 years. Want to see those we serve have better things and watching them grow are a few things that motivate Emily to work hard. Her proudest accomplishment at Link is being employed for 11 1/2 years and being in the health services department that entire time. She's enjoyed watching her area grow to have 4 staff, 4 vehicles, their own area, all of which allow them to take on more people and run almost all types of appointments. She's also proud of her boyfriend, Tim Kilner. Some things that make Emily laugh are some of the things the people we support say, her and Tim's 3 grandchildren, along with their 3 cats in her department. Emily cannot live without her Mother, Tim's cocking, Starbucks, and sour cream cheddar chip with cola cheese.

Words from her Supervisor
Emily has really become a great and vital "team player" in Health Services, Outreach Department and for the agency. She is very reliable, dependable and dedicated to providing the best care for persons served; always advocating for their needs and best interests. I truly appreciate all that she does!

Well Done Shoot Outs Received
"I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate you! I think we do really well as a team and enjoy working with all of you!"

About Adam Stout
Adam works in the Employment Department and has been an employee of Link Associates for 2 years and 6 months. On the morning of Nov. 20, 1998, as supervisor of a job site, Adamany spontaneously offered Adam a job. Knowing he's being watched and that he represents both Link and himself when he's not aware makes him proud to know he's doing well. Adam shares his proudest accomplishment at Link is seeing those he supports succeed. Adam had a gentleman working downtown at the Marriott, doing dishes. He did so well that not only did he graduate from Link's services, but he's receiving benefits as well. Hanging out with his friends and family playing games together makes him laugh the most. Adam shared he can't live without watching his puppy being adored at places like the farmer's market, and hearing his wife's manic laughter watching funny videos.

Words from his Supervisor
Adam is great at what he does. He's doing well working under pressure and not letting the job get to him. He is a big help to the Employment department always willing to pick up and work additional hours when they are needed. Adam is positive and encouraging to those who support.

Well Done Shoot Outs Received
"You do an awesome job of using FTS to help support persons served on a daily basis. You are incredibly patient and do a great job of explaining things so those you support understand. I'd like to give a special thanks for helping MM when he was having some anxiety at work and helping him talk about the situation over the phone with him. With your help, he was able to use coping skills and return to work. By the time I arrived at his workplace he was already feeling calmer and stated you had helped him a lot. Keep up the great work and thank you for all you do!"

"Thank you for sending the email to your peers outlining MC’s new job expectations as well as the culture of his new employer. The information you shared is so valuable and will allow folks to better support MC and help him be successful. Keep up the great work!"

About Andrea Price
Andrea works in the Employment Department and has been an employee of Link Associates for 2 years. Knowing she's being watched and that she represents both Link and herself when she's not aware makes her proud to know she's doing well. Andrea shares her proudest accomplishment at Link is seeing those she supports succeed. Andrea had a gentleman working downtown at the Marriott, doing dishes. He did so well that not only did he graduate from Link's services, but he's receiving benefits as well. Hanging out with her friends and family playing games together makes him laugh the most. Andrea shared she can't live without watching her puppy being adored at places like the farmer's market, and hearing her wife's manic laughter watching funny videos. Andrea is an exemplary DSP and leader. She goes above and beyond to create opportunities for those she works with to be engaged in their homes, access their communities, and develop relationships with their families and friends. The men and woman Andrea works with are highly dependent on staff for day-to-day functions, but Andrea uses creativity and works as a member of their team to find ways for them to be more independent and engaged in their lives and their home.

Well Done Shoot Outs Received
Nice work helping a woman you worked with update her VHS to DVDs. She was very excited about her new set up and made it her day!

Andrea responded immediately to an emergency situation and performed Heimlich when a person served was choking. Andrea remained calm through updating her supervisor and contacting paramedics ensuring the best care for the person served. Well done Andrea!

A personal thank you to Andrea. Thanks so much for helping out with TV at SO bowling last week. For you to see a need and graciously step in and assist was so very much appreciated. A world full of critical and negativity, people like you and your concern for others restores my faith in humanity. Thank you!
Dear Family and friends of a person served by Link and supporters of Link Associates:

This Giving Tuesday December 3, I am fundraising for Link Associates. As a supporter of Link, I need your help.

**How can you help?**
Please create a Facebook fundraiser and share it with your friends on Giving Tuesday, 12/3/19. Creating a fundraiser is easy and will be so very helpful! Every dollar raised is greatly appreciated!

Your donation will help change the lives of persons with an intellectual disability served through Link programs.

**Facebook is contributing** up to a $7 Million match to US nonprofits for #GivingTuesday 2019. Starting 8:00am EST (5am PST) on December 3, 2019 the match will go live, matching dollar for dollar on a first come first serve basis until it hits $7 million matched. **Please make your donation early to qualify for the match!**

Thank you for your support! Funds will directly benefit persons served!

*Linda Dunshee*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 8, 2019

**Director Garcia Begins New Duties**

**Team-Focused Schedule Planned for First 30 Days**

(Des Moines, Iowa) – Kelly Garcia officially began her duties as the director of the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) this past Friday. Director Garcia has an ambitious schedule planned for the month of November, including team-building efforts, briefings on critical issues and tours of DHS sites across the state.

“Everything we do is about the families we serve. Building relationships is the first step to better serving the Iowans who rely on us,” said Director Garcia.

During November, Director Garcia will meet with staff in every division and staff throughout the state, including front line staff in Medicaid, child welfare, field operations and mental health and disability services. In her first 30 days, she will work with division administrators to better understand the complex challenges facing the Department. Her schedule includes tours of local field offices and the Boys State Training School in Eldora. Additional tours of facilities and field offices will continue throughout the coming months.

The new director prioritized meeting with leaders of other state agencies. “I’m eager to explore ways DHS can better collaborate with other departments to really help Iowans thrive,” said Director Garcia. “So much of the work we do intersects with other state services. Great opportunities exist for innovation and I look forward to those discussions.”

“In the coming weeks I will also be reaching out to stakeholders—hearing directly from those impacted by the decisions we make—as well as legislators, who are critical to influencing thoughtful policy decisions,” said Director Garcia.

“As a working mother, I take seriously the charge to ensure the families we serve have the supports necessary to foster independent and healthy lives. There is a lot of work to do, and I am grateful to have the support of my family and Governor Reynolds as we work to build a better Iowa.”

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**Electronic Medication Administration Records (eMAR)**

Link has transitioned to using electronic documentation for all medication administration in both Residential and Day Habilitation Services. This transition began in April and all sites were onboard by July. The service is a cloud-based system working through our vendor pharmacy.

Time has been spent training staff and learning the intricacies of the Point Click Care eMAR system. Immediate advantages included the easy and available access to all those supporting persons served, lending to quicker attention to any issues and knowledge of current medications administered. There are still things to learn and utilize with the system but a notable decrease in doc omission errors has been recorded.
The Bankers Trust – Gehm Legacy Home honors Tim Gehm, who passed away in March 2018 after a battle with liver cancer. Gehm was Vice President and Finance Manager at Bankers Trust, where he’d worked for 28 years. He was also a member of the Link Associates Board and Link Foundation Board. Bankers Trust made a significant donation in Gehm’s name toward the construction of the home. “Tim was a great leader and his impact continues to be felt at Bankers Trust,” said Don Coffin, CEO and President of Bankers Trust. “And, while Tim achieved many impressive accomplishments during his time with the bank, what we remember and miss most about him is his friendship, the kindness he showed others and his love for his family and the community. It’s an honor for everyone at Bankers Trust to remember him through this gift to Link Associates.”

Linda Dunshee, Executive Director at Link Associates, added, “Tim was a combination of a thinker, doer, leader, advocate and father, and the difference he made to Link will never be forgotten. Bankers Trust’s generous gift enables Link Associates the ability to support people who have never had the opportunities this home will offer them. Tim was passionate about making a positive difference in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and The Bankers Trust-Gehm Legacy Home will be a permanent reminder of his impact on the community.” Construction of the home is a partnership between Link Associates, Bankers Trust, Tanzanite Homes and Coldwell Banker, Mid-America Group, Realtors®. The 1,400 square-foot residence will become home to four individuals. The home’s accessible features include an oversize bathroom with roll-in shower, overhead track systems for special lifts in the bedrooms and open spaces in all rooms that allow for ADA clearance.

Due to the generosity of many, Link Associates is building

Very soon a new home will be a part of Link’s services. This home is very special as it is specifically designed and built to meet themes of people with physical disabilities. The seed money was a very generous gift in the honor of Tim Gehm by Bankers Trust. As the project has developed many contractors are reducing their bids or offering them free of charge. Below are some photos from the Groundbreaking.

Picture to the right has the four people who will be living in the new home. Bret T, Molly G, Lynn H and Matt H.

Press Release
Kirk Mickelson, Owner Tanzanite Homes, and Adam Hoeft, Volunteer employed by Agriland FS challenge contractors to build more than a "handicapped accessible" home, but instead a dream that will help people reach their highest potential and serves as an icon for our community.
Our team the **Link Associates Demolition Crew** is raising money for Special Olympics, and the Leisure Department by participating in the Polar Plunge! Please consider donating to these wonderful causes!

The Polar Plunge is taking place at the Raccoon River Nature Lodge at NOON on December 8th. All participants that have joined our team will plunge into the freezing waters at the Raccoon River to celebrate all the donations received to support Special Olympics and Leisure Services.

**You can DONATE here:**
[https://www.classy.org/team/255246](https://www.classy.org/team/255246)

Just click "DONATE" and follow the prompts!

We are so excited for another year of FUN!

If you have any questions, please call Adria Smith at 515-262-8888 ext. 207 or email asmith@linkassociates.org

Link to DONATE here: [https://www.classy.org/team/255246](https://www.classy.org/team/255246)
Think of the excitement you have when planning a vacation or out of town trip with your friends. Leisure has made this a reality for participants in the leisure services program.

♦ Last Spring a group of 12 traveled to Branson, Missouri for a weekend of fun and adventure! What an amazing success the trip was – see a few of the pictures below.

![Images of participants in various activities in Branson, Missouri.]

*Quote from a guardian: "Thank you for making peoples dreams come true"*

♦ The second trip was planned for a weekend of fun at Minneapolis, MN on Nov. 9th & 10th, a blast was had by all as they visited the Galaxy Con, an aquarium and the Mall of America!

![Images of participants enjoying activities in Minneapolis.]

♦ What’s to come with the Overnight Club Travel Program:

  - March 2020 a trip to St. Louis, MO
  - Spring 2020 a trip to Colorado Springs
  - Fall 2021 an East Coast Road Trip

The excitement is contagious and unbelievable – many are enjoying what they call “their very own vacation” for the first time in their life!

*Truly Inspiring!*
As a parent, relative, volunteer or friend of a person served by Link Associates, you are acutely aware of the support needs of a person who has an intellectual disability. You are committed and dedicated to the well-being of that person and you believe in helping them to live their best life.

Link Associates has a number of values that are held dear, which we continue to work towards fulfilling: quality services, caring and supportive environments, dignity and respect, personal choice and long-term commitment. I sense that like me, you also hold these values for your relative or friend with a disability who is served by Link. Even more importantly, like me I imagine you have deeply held moral values and believe in upholding the rights of those who are less fortunate.

At Link we strive to do our very best each day to provide quality services. Unfortunately, Link is challenged by a number of outside forces beyond our control: a society that does not always understand the needs of persons who have an intellectual disability and the reality of underfunded services. This causes us to not have the fiscal resources to upgrade equipment, obtain program supplies, complete building remodeling projects, and otherwise not invest money in ways that would benefit Link in the long term.

I come to you with a number of areas where funding is needed. Can you put your name by any of these significant needs?

**Day Habilitation and VIP (Volunteer Investment Program) Needs:**
- **Curriculum Supplies:** $1,000 - $5,000  
  Supplies to provide quality learning and meaningful activities for persons served during their day program. To stimulate minds and encourage persons served to be involved in their world, learning and growing.
- **Sensory items to create a sensory room:** (Amounts vary)  
  Supplies needed to create a special room designed to develop a person’s sense, through special lighting, music and objects. It will be used as a therapy for persons with limited communication skills.
- **Flooring in the small lunchroom:** ($4,800)  
  This small lunchroom is carpeted and difficult to keep clean. Due to the acoustics of the area, the best solution is to install carpeting specially designed for cafeterias, to create a more attractive space for persons served and much easier to clean.
- **Equipment used to provide personal care in the restroom:**  
  Mechanical lifts ($6,756) and slings ($322) are needed for persons who cannot support their own weight. Changing tables ($7,500) are used to assist with clothing changes and personal care needs.
- **Water fountain in first floor hallway:** ($840)  
  The fountain has had a great deal of wear and tear in the busy hallway and needs updating. The replacement fountain will be energy efficient, offer refrigerated water, ADA accessible and allow easy refill of water bottles.

**Residential Program Needs:**
- **Home remodeling:** ($1,000 to $5,000)  
  Link homes have been offering supported community living services for many years. Unfortunately, funding reimbursements do not cover all of the expenses of managing properties. Remodeling and property updates are necessary to maintain good quality homes. This includes Radon Mitigation Systems for Link Homes (Pebble, Westwood, SE 5th, Amos, Bel Aire, Sunnyhill) $1,450 per home and a new bathroom floor at the Pebble home, $1,000.

**Leisure Services Program Needs:**
- **Scholarship money for overnight club travel:** The next trip is $4,200 per person. These trips are life-changing experiences for persons served; opportunities to experience the world in a whole new way with friends in a supported environment. Trips are planned for Minnesota, Colorado, the east coast and more. Please consider donating to these life enhancing adventures for persons served.
- **Art and Craft Supplies:** Supplies to provide quality programming to persons served ($500 - $1,000).
- **New flooring in the Leisure program area:** $17,225 will allow us to remove and install new flooring in this large room, it is used by many individuals daily, both day habilitation and evening Leisure Services program participants.

Please take a moment now to help us to do our very best to provide quality services. Your donation is fully tax-deductible – whether for $40, $50, or even $100 or more – will ensure that Link Associates moves closer to meeting the needs of persons served in the best possible way. They deserve no less than the very best that life can give them!

Thank you so very much for considering a donation; we can’t do it without you! Your thoughtful donation will help some of our community’s most powerless people attain the skills, knowledge, and access to resources needed to improve their lives.

Most sincerely, **Linda Dunshee**, Executive Director of Link Associates

PS: I am so very grateful for your support! Whatever amount is so welcome. You can designate your contribution for a specific purpose or if not, it will be used for the highest need.

Our wish list is on the next page.
Your support, which allows us to continue offering quality services, is deeply appreciated and extraordinarily helpful!

Please mark how you wish to support Link Associates and return with your donation in the envelope provided. Please make your check payable to Link Associates.

Or donate online at: linkassociates.org/donate.

I/we would like to sponsor:

☐ Curriculum supplies for Day Habilitation for quality learning experiences
☐ Sensory items to create a sensory room for persons with limited communication ability
☐ Flooring in the small lunchroom for the Day Habilitation program
☐ Mechanical lifts and other equipment needed to provide personal care in the restroom
☐ Home remodeling to update Link Associates owned homes where persons served live
☐ Scholarship money for overnight extended travel within Leisure Services program
☐ New carpeting within the Leisure Services program area
☐ Water fountain in first floor hallway of main building. Already generously donated!!! Thank you
☐ Non-designated donation to Link, used for highest need

Thank you for supporting persons served by Link Associates!

Follow us on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/linkassociates/
The American Legion of Iowa Foundation Donates $650 for Health Services Equipment

Steve Neal, American Legion Member, presents the donation check to Cristy Jennings, Outreach Director and Renate Shotwell, Program Development Case Manager.

The donation is designated for Health Services equipment, such as thermometers, pulse oximeter, bandages dressings, medical tape, thermometer, blood pressure cuffs and other essential supplies to keep persons served healthy.

The American Legion of Iowa Foundation is incredibly generous. Since 1979, over $1.4 million has been contributed in support of veterans’ assistance, educational programs, patriotic endeavors and children and youth programs.

A whole hearted thank you to The American Legion of Iowa Foundation!

Casey’s Donates $5,000 to Keep Persons Served Safe!

Casey’s General Store has donated $5,000 to Link Associates to help keep persons served safe. The money will pay for two evacuation chairs, which will allow persons who use wheelchairs to be evacuated from the second or third floors of Link when the elevator is not working. They can also be used for any staff, persons served or visitor on the upper floors needing assistance and evacuation when the elevators are down. A Big Thank You for your generosity!

Please visit the Link General Store and enjoy Casey’s hot food for lunch one day soon!

Thanks to Prairie Meadows, Link Associates is a Big Winner!

Since 1999, Link has received $182,678 in Community Betterment Grants from Prairie Meadows and a very generous $200,000 special grant to help Link move to the building at 1452 29th Street. This year Link received a $5,000 grant to help fund Leisure Services Special Olympics programs.

To date, Prairie Meadows has given $1.8 billion to the state of Iowa, with more than $803 million remaining right here in Polk County.
WHAT CAN YOU FIND IN THE LINK ASSOCIATES WEBSITE?

There is a ton of information on Link’s website. Simply type in [www.linkassociates.org](http://www.linkassociates.org), or click on this link [https://www.linkassociates.org](https://www.linkassociates.org)

Under HOME you will see:
- Managed Care Information
- Delays and Closings
- a Quick Button for donations
- how to support Link with Amazon-smile

Under INFORMATION you will find:
- About Link
- Mission Vision and Values
- Link Videos
- Link Leadership. Board and Foundation
- Stakeholder Information
- Accreditation
- Leisure Hotline

Under SERVICES you will see:
- a summary of all services and admission criteria.

Under GET INVOLVED you will see:
- Volunteer and Intern information

Under NEWS & EVENTS you will find:
- Survey Outcomes
- Program Evaluation
- Newsletters
- Room Rental Information
- Events

Under JOIN OUR TEAM you will find:
- Current Openings
- Application
- Benefits

CHECK IT OUT!

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WE ARE HIRING!

You know your family member better than anyone else, you know what it takes to be a good caregiver, you know what you want in the area of kindness, caring and dedication…

If you know people you think would be great caregivers, please refer them to Link. We provide all of The training and will help them be successful, for themself as well as those we serve! They can check us out at [www.linkassociates.org/apply](http://www.linkassociates.org/apply) or call HR at 515-262-8888

HELP US FIND THE BEST FOLKS TO CARE FOR THE BEST!!

WE LOVE REFERRALS!
we say thank you for believing in us!
MISSION ~ VISION ~ VALUES

MISSION
PROVIDING PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES OPPORTUNITIES TO ACHIEVE THEIR PERSONAL GOALS

VISION
LINK ASSOCIATES WILL BE THE RECOGNIZED LEADER IN PROVIDING QUALITY SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

VALUES
DIGNITY AND RESPECT-QUALITY SERVICES-CARING ENVIRONMENTS PERSONAL CHOICE-LONG TERM COMMITMENT