



# achieve *Empowering People*

## Fargo Segregated School

by Rachel Hafner & Kirsten Dvorak

*An edited version of this letter to the editor appeared in the Fargo Forum.*

Education is universally accepted as a fundamental human right, and it lays the foundation for life-long inclusion. According to the United Nations, all people with disabilities have the right to full participation in all aspects of society.



When we have a culture where all diverse members of the community are included, and we remove the barriers and biases that limit opportunity, individual citizens as well as the entire community benefits.

We must invest in citizens when they are young to build an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable world.

The primary investor in our future as a society is our schools. They are tasked with the immense responsibility of preparing students to be responsible community members.

Equality is taught and learned from a young age, and therefore, it is imperative that schools create a culture of inclusion, where discrimination and segregation is not an option.

Research shows that inclusive education results in higher rates of academic performance and better social and behavioral outcomes for students of all abilities.

Students without disabilities make more significant academic gains when taught in the same setting as students with disabilities.

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## Adult Prom

**Channel your favorite decade!**

Join us for “Dance Through the Decades Adult Prom” on Saturday, September 21, 2019 from 7 - 11 PM at the Masonic Center in downtown Grand Forks.

Enjoy hors d’oeuvres by Ground Round and music by Backspin Productions.

Plus - Grand March, photo ops and other shenanigans!

Tickets are \$50 per person and can be purchased online (must be 21 or older to attend).

Visit our website at [www.thearcuppervalley.org](http://www.thearcuppervalley.org) for more details or call 772-6191.





**Rachel Hafner**  
**Executive Director**

Dear Friends,

What it is about back-to-school time that inspires an incredible sense of nostalgia in all of us? When we see those first few school supplies hit the store shelves, we are taken back to the memories of school buildings, teachers, classes, friends, and of course school supplies. (Trapper Keepers, anyone?) And for some of us, with the reboot of many television shows from the 80s and 90s, and with fashion being pretty much exactly what we wore in high school, it is easy to get drawn back into our childhood years.

If reading this has you thinking it would be fun to reminisce and relive some of your school days, we have got exciting news for you.

We invite you to join us on September 21st for our First Annual Arc Adult Prom. This year's theme is "Dance Through the Decades." We encourage you to pull out your prom dress from the back of the closet, or to dust off your ruffled shirt and matching tuxedo. Big hair, wing tipped shoes - be as creative as you want. Whatever your decade and whatever your style, we promise a night of fun nostalgia that will bring you back to your high school prom.

Having our fundraiser in the fall is timely because we address many educational concerns throughout the school year on both individual and systemic levels.

Your participation and support at The Arc Adult Prom will make a huge difference in the lives and education of the children in our community. We could not do the work that we do, to ensure that every child has equal access to an inclusive education, without your partnership.

Together we can ensure that all children have positive memories from their time in school.

Whether you are returning to school or just remembering your school days, I wish each of you a happy back-to-school season filled with many "bouquets of newly sharpened pencils." See you at The Arc Adult Prom!

Rachel Hafner



### achieve

is published by The Arc, Upper Valley located at 2500 DeMers Ave, Grand Forks, ND.

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#### Mission Statement:

The Arc, Upper Valley promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

**The Arc, Upper Valley      701.772.6191**

[thearcuppervalley.org](http://thearcuppervalley.org)

## Seeking Nominations



The Arc, Upper Valley's Annual Awards celebrate the best in contributions to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

We are seeking nominations in the following categories: Teacher of the Year, Employer of the Year, Professional of the Year, Volunteer of the Year and Excellence in Self-Advocacy.

Winners will be recognized at The Arc's 64th Annual Dinner Celebration on Thursday, November 7th at the Townhouse in Grand Forks.

Nomination forms and instructions are available on our website at [www.thearcuppervalley.org](http://www.thearcuppervalley.org) or you may call our office at 772-6191 to request that a form be mailed to you.

Nominations are due September 30, 2019.

### Mission Statement

*The Arc, Upper Valley promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.*

## Slow Down Back-to-School Means Sharing the Road

School days bring congestion: School buses are picking up their passengers, kids on bikes are hurrying to get to school before the bell rings, harried parents are trying to drop their kids off before work.

It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present - especially before and after school.

If you're driving behind a bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind a car. It will give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.

Never pass a bus from behind - or from either direction if you're on an undivided road - if it is stopped to load or unload children.

Be extra vigilant in school zones and residential neighborhoods. Watch for bikes coming from driveways or behind parked cars.

Share the road and be safe!

### Follow us on Social Media!

The Arc, Upper Valley, The Arc Thrift Store and True Colors can all be found on Facebook and Instagram.



Follow us to stay up-to-date on all the happenings!



(L to R): Summer interns Mickayla Hellyer and Bree Estrada.

## Summer Interns Thrive at The Arc

We have had a great time interning at The Arc, Upper Valley!

We have gained many meaningful educational and professional experiences throughout our time here that will better equip ourselves for our futures.

We have learned a lot about how a non-profit organization works, advocacy, and the importance of our own mental health in this

position.

It has been a lot of fun hanging out with Pam, Kate, and Rachel all day. We have enjoyed participating in community events and meeting new people in our community.

We are truly thankful for the experience and time we have had at The Arc!

-Mickayla & Bree



Left: Mickayla and Bree at The Arc's game booth at the Inter-Agency Picnic at Lincoln Park.

### Bree

Hello, my name is Bree Estrada. I am working on completing my Master's in Social Work.

After graduation I plan to work on getting licensed by the state and hopefully shortly after I can start working at an agency here in the community.

I am thankful for the opportunity to intern at The Arc, Upper Valley. I have learned a lot about the non-profit world, the importance and impact of advocacy, policy change, and most importantly I have gained meaningful educational experience working with such great population of individuals and I believe that "there is no greater disability in society, than the inability to see a person as more."

### Mickayla

Hi all! My name is Mickayla Hellyer and I have been one of The Arc's interns for the past couple months.

I will be getting my bachelor's degree in Rehabilitation and

Human Services through the University of North Dakota at the end of the summer.

I have worked with children with disabilities for the past four years and is the population I want to continue working with in any aspect.

## Fargo Segregated School

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They have increased awareness and comfortability around people who are different from themselves, often resulting in authentic relationships and friendships. They have higher social cognition and self-awareness, and they develop ethical principles that are rooted in empathy, awareness of others, and tolerance of differences.

Students who experience inclusion in school are better equipped as adults to engage with all people of diverse backgrounds as they become employers, landlords, medical professionals, coworkers, and adult peers.

Likewise, research provides evidence that students with disabilities who are educated with their peers in the classroom have better communication skills, including receptive and expressive language and literacy skills, as well as overall better academic performance.

They have a higher level of social engagement with peers, increased participation in extra-curricular activities and they develop genuine friendships.

Increased opportunities for social engagement in the classroom results in more social competence, fewer absences, and less disruptive behaviors. Students who receive instructional time in the classroom are more likely to live independently as adults, obtain



employment and have success as self-sufficient and contributing members of society.

If we are going to invest in our students and the future of our society, we must invest in our community schools. School leaders must prioritize school-wide systems that promote equality and inclusion in home schools and in individual classrooms.

Evidenced-based practices contend that for schools to be successful at educating all students, they should adequately train, prepare, compensate and support teachers and professional staff to provide differentiated instruction, using universal designs for learning, and implement school-wide positive behavioral supports that can be carried out in the classroom.

In a previous letter to the editor, The Arc of North Dakota

asserted and continues to assert that administrators, educators, and support staff often lack adequate training and knowledge needed to support students in the classroom.

When financial resources are not put directly into home schools, students suffer the consequences of poor administrative choices, resulting in low expectations, inappropriate disciplinary practices which include seclusion and restraint, segregated classrooms and segregated schools.

However, when schools funnel resources directly into home schools, all students benefit.

The Arc of North Dakota and The Arc of Cass County do not condone the actions of Fargo Public Schools to move forward with their plans to develop “a special education only facility.”

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## Fargo Segregated School

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Parents and advocates have spent the last year advocating for the rights of their students with disabilities to be educated with their peers in Fargo Public Schools.

We do a great disservice to students with disabilities by viewing them as “one group of people” who can all have their individual educational needs met in one place, out of view of the rest of their peers. Isolation and segregation of students diminish the capacity for academic achievement, social development and enrichment, and employment and life skills training.



In the article published on July 8, 2019 about Fargo Public School's plans to create a segregated facility for students with disabilities because they “need a separate environment and that is a separate school setting,” and that “disabilities can be triggered by being in traditional schools” is an outdated and condescending notion.

Moreover, it perpetuates assumptions that students who are isolated are unacceptable, can be discriminated against,

treated inhumanely, and are unworthy of participating in the community.

Special education is not a place but rather a configuration of supports and services as defined by a student's Individual Education Plan.

According to the National Council on Disabilities, special education is a “systematic approach to uniquely addressing student learning and social engagement with the same instructional frameworks and settings designed for the whole school community.”

Moorhead Public Schools and West Fargo Public Schools are being innovative in their approach to promoting equality and inclusion all of their students.

One such example is their implementation of Peer-to-Peer mentoring programs in their community schools. We encourage Fargo Public Schools to look to their neighboring districts for encouragement and guidance so they too can create a culture of inclusivity that benefits all their students.

As their mission statement says, “The mission of Fargo Public Schools is to achieve excellence by educating and empowering ALL students to succeed.”

Fargo Public Schools will not achieve excellence and students will not succeed until discriminatory practices such as segregation have ended.

## Be an Arc Angel

The winter holidays will be here before we know it!

For most, the holiday season is a magical time filled with celebrations of hope, joy, and giving.

So, what happens when adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, many of which live in institutional settings, have no family ties in the community? They oftentimes do not receive gifts for the holidays.

The Arc, Upper Valley works with community partners, like you, to enrich the lives of these individuals during the holiday season and throughout the year, through The Gus Kvalevog Memorial Arc Angel Project.

Named for Gus J. Kvalevog, a man who spent 75 years in an institution without any contact from his family, the program provides holiday gifts and friendship to adults with intellectual disabilities.

You can support this program by making a monetary donation or you can adopt an individual to shop for.

Another option is to engage your employer by requesting a list of suggested gifts and allowing your co-workers to choose a gift to purchase.

For more information, visit our website or call Pam at 772-3148.

[www.thearcuppervalley.org](http://www.thearcuppervalley.org)



## Get Involved and Make A Difference!

The Wall Street Journal calls Mental Health First Aid a “fast-growing program that trains people to understand and respond to people in distress.”

Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders in the community.

The Arc, Upper Valley has a certified instructor for courses aimed at dealing with both teens and adults.

CEUs are available!

For more information, to schedule a class at your place of business, or to inquire about an upcoming community course, contact Rachel Hafner at 701-772-6191 or by emailing [rhafner@arcuv.com](mailto:rhafner@arcuv.com).

## About the Course

- Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour course, and a person must complete all 8 hours to be certified.
- Class size requirements: 5-30 individuals per course.
- Booking fees for organizations: Businesses and organizations must pay the course fee to complete the booking process. This fee is 100% refundable if the class is cancelled at least 1 week prior to the first session. All remaining participant costs will be due on the first day of training.
- Booking fees for individuals: Individuals must pay the entire course fee upon registering for a class. This fee is 100% refundable if a participant cancels their registration at least 1 week prior to the first session.



## Mark Your Calendar!

The Arc, Upper Valley  
Annual Dinner Celebration

November 7, 2019  
6:15 - 8:30 PM

Muddy Rivers Ballroom  
at the Townhouse

**TICKETS \$25**  
(*\$35 after November 4th*)

**JOIN US!**

*Buffet dinner, Annual  
Awards, Door Prizes*



**The Arc.**

Upper Valley

2500 DeMers Ave Grand Forks ND 58201



  
**The Arc.**  
Thrift Store  
Service offered  
Monday - Saturday  
11:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
*No Appointment Necessary!*

### Fingerprinting Services

Do you need to be fingerprinted for employment, college or professional licensure?

**\$25** for up to 2 fingerprint cards

**\$5** for each additional card

*Government-issued photo ID required*

Located inside The Arc Thrift Store at  
2500 DeMers Ave in Grand Forks, ND

## FREE CLASS



**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID®**

### Adult Mental Health First Aid

August 22, 2019

7:30 AM - 5:30 PM

The Arc, Upper Valley

**CEUs available!** Call Rachel at 772-6191 for  
more information or to register.