Empowering

people to live meaningful and productive lives.

ARROWHEAD WEST Inc.

WINTER FOCUS 2025

OUR MISSION

The mission of Arrowhead West, Inc. is to empower people to live meaningful and productive lives.

VISION

The vision of Arrowhead West, Inc. is to provide outstanding service that leads to making informed choices about:

- Independence
- Employment
- Community Participation
- Healthy Lifestyles

2025 WINTER FOCUS

A publication from Arrowhead West, Inc.
Nadine Lampe, Development Manager.
Arrowhead West, Inc. is a non-profit organization serving children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

LOCATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
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620.227.8803

WESTERN KANSAS DIVISION
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620.225.4061

INFANT/TODDLER SERVICES
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Dodge City, KS 67801
620.225.5177

620 East Second Street
Pratt, KS 67124
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CENTRAL KANSAS DIVISION
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Wichita, KS 67212
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Pratt, KS 67124
620.933.2212

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Medicine Lodge, KS 67104
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Find us on

DISABILITY MENTORING DAY

Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) is a national program that promotes career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through job shadowing and hands-on career exploration. It is designed to empower students and job seekers with disabilities, promote a diverse workplace, and assist employers with recruiting new talent.

Arrowhead West recently hosted a DMD and invited students from area programs to explore options by touring several local businesses. Speakers discussed how they overcame barriers related to disabilities, and the availability of community programs, activities, and job opportunities. Vendors were present to highlight the resources available in our own community and assist in obtaining them. It was also an excellent opportunity for employers to gain an increased awareness that people with disabilities represent an overlooked talent pool.

A special thank you to UnitedHealthcare and National Beef for their support of this important event.

meet Huntlie

"Huntlie is a cheerful young girl who is about to turn three and has been such a joy to watch grow over the last year I have been working with her,"

said Heather Ludwick, Early Childhood Special Educator

Huntlie may seem a little reserved, but the twinkle in her eye tells an entirely different story.

When Huntlie was nearly one year old, she was referred by her local physician to the Arrowhead West Infant Toddler Services (AWI ITS) team for early intervention services due to a delay in gross motor skills development. Anita White, Physical Therapist, began services while focusing on rolling over, sitting, and crawling. Huntlie was referred to a neurologist due to concerns about her looking from the top of her eyes, and the test came back normal. She was then referred to a movement disorder specialist at Children's Mercy. At Huntlie's first birthday, it was determined that she was diagnosed with Benign paroxysmal tonic upward gaze of infancy with ataxia. This rare, benign neurological disorder begins in infancy and is characterized by episodes of upward eye deviation accompanied by unsteady gait and poor coordination.

This diagnosis led the team to Melissa Schlegel, a vision specialist with Kansas School for the Blind, to perform a functional assessment. Huntlie was then referred to an ophthalmologist and received glasses for diagnosis, vision, and alignment. With the help of glasses and the support of the team's focus on walking development, Huntlie took off. She began walking and navigating her environment quickly, becoming much more confident in her environment.

At age two, Huntlie's goals shifted to more communication since the gross motor goal had been met and was developmentally appropriate. In the last year, Huntlie has exploded from sounds to three- to four-word phrases. Huntlie loves daycare, and her providers have reported seeing more confidence in her. Her parents have also noticed significant growth in her overall development over the last six months. She is quickly meeting milestones and recently received a functional eye assessment that showed she is tracking well, and her gaze with glasses is aligned.

The AWI ITS team included Anita White, a Physical Therapist who provided fine and gross motor services, and Heather Ludwick, an Early Childhood Special Educator who provided speech communication services and family service coordination. Huntlie is currently in the transition process with AWI ITS and discussing options for when she turns three.

Huntlie's signature twinkle in her eye shows she is ready to take on the next chapter and show everyone all her skills, which she has honed in her own beautiful, quiet way.

If you or someone you know has concerns about a child's development, AWI ITS offers free developmental screenings. To learn more, contact our offices. Our team can provide resources and services to support your child's development.

"Thank you for everything you have done for Huntlie. What an awesome team,"
said Brittany, Huntlie's mother.

ARROWHEAD WEST PARTNERS WITH

EMPOWERED

HOSTED BY MEG RYAN

Arrowhead West is honored to be featured on the groundbreaking series Empowered, Hosted by Meg Ryan. The storyline, "Breaking Barriers-Making a Difference in the Lives of Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD)," will help educate millions as it airs on Public Television stations nationwide and will be distributed to approximately 60 million households.

The filming day was exciting for everyone as the production crew captured client activities and interviewed staff, family, and community members. It was an opportunity to share with everyone about our circle of support, which includes families, advocates, the community, and direct support professionals. We all work together to empower the individuals we support to increase their independence, gain employment, live a healthy lifestyle, actively participate in their communities, and help each individual achieve their dreams to live the best life possible.

The segment can be viewed on our website at arrowheadwest.org or on our Facebook page. You may also be one of the 60 million viewers who will see it on national television.

BONNIE GAINS INCREASED INDEPENDENCE

Bonnie is recognized as a diligent worker who consistently strives to achieve her goals. Increasing her independence, from living in a group living home to having her very own apartment, was always at the top of her list, and she succeeded.

To achieve her newfound independence, Bonnie worked on developing her budgeting skills, saving money for furniture, and acquiring independent cooking, cleaning, and shopping skills. She ultimately made it happen. She has made new friends and enjoys the community activities held at the apartment complex. Bonnie is very proud of her apartment and accomplishments.

Bonnie's hard work did not end with moving into her own apartment. She tried retirement but decided it wasn't for her, so she continues to shred, clean, prepare mailings, and provide laundry service as part of the work service program at Arrowhead West. Earning a paycheck gives her the financial means to do things she enjoys, such as shopping and eating out.

"Bonnie is self-motivated and excelling in her apartment. She has really grown, and we are proud of her drive for increased independence," said Lori Lacy, Residential Manager.

BROWN RECEIVES PRESIDENT'S AWARD

RITA BROWN

Rita Brown, Dodge City/Kinsley Case Manager, recently accepted the President's Award at InterHab's annual conference. She was chosen among her peers from across Kansas to receive this prestigious award.

InterHab is an industry association with a predominant voice in Kansas for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), their families, and the providers of services and supports, while educating lawmakers and communities about the benefits of community inclusivity.

Rita has been at Arrowhead West since it began and recently retired after 49 years of service. She refers to her employment as her 49-year education and feels her duty was to encourage, teach, and support the generations working today. They agreed and disagreed with what she had to say, but the end result was always to listen, respect, and do what was best for the clients.

Over the past 49 years, Rita has witnessed numerous changes, held various roles, and worked with an impressive number of clients, some for as long as 30 or 40 years, forming special bonds. Her career spanned roles from van driver and direct care provider to Case Manager, while witnessing handwritten plans evolving into digital formats. With her long tenure in the I/DD system, she has endured countless changes but always remained dedicated to prioritizing the best interests of those she served.

Rita has the utmost respect for the individuals she has served and their families, guardians, and support systems. Working as a case manager was not just Rita's job. It has been her lifelong passion to help individuals with I/DD overcome obstacles and achieve their goals. She did not hear the word "barrier" and give up. Instead, she focused on finding ways to ensure that individuals have every opportunity to be as independent as possible in their home and community.

Rita's 49 years of dedication, wisdom, and guidance have had a profound and lasting impact on the lives of so many. We are deeply grateful for the knowledge and experience she shared. She leaves a legacy that will continue to inspire and teach for generations. We are thankful she will continue to be present in our organization as a volunteer.

"Since I am very family-oriented, it is no surprise that I took my Arrowhead West coworkers to be my 'Work Family'. I treat them as my own and love them as if they were mine. When my family succeeds, their success is my success. This has been the journey of a lifetime. Receiving this award has been truly special and memorable," said Rita.

"After an extraordinary 49-year career dedicated to our mission, Rita has received one of the highest recognitions in our field. Her unwavering commitment, compassion, and leadership have shaped generations of care and inspired all of us who've had the honor to work alongside her," said Andrea Stegman, Western Kansas Division Manager.

DONORS SUPPORTING OUR MISSION

JUNE 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

DEDICATIONS AND MEMORIALS

Katie Barton Memorial
Norma Ackeret

Marge Brake Memorial
Theresa Brake

Roger Brake Memorial
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Terry Brake Memorial
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Amanda Stoddard
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Terry Woodward

Thank you
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

AWARDED **GRANTS**

Arrowhead West, Inc. has been awarded grants from the following organizations. We are thankful for these organizations and sincerely appreciate their generous support of our mission.

The Community Foundation of Southwest Kansas awarded us funds to purchase a new vision screener for our Infant-Toddler Services program. The screener will be used during screening clinics and home visits of children in our services to help detect vision disorders early. Early detection is key to effective treatment during the vital window of opportunity, preserving vision.

Cox Charities awarded a grant to support our Mid-Kansas Day Program in Pratt to purchase an Obie projector, an all-in-one cognitive trainer, for cognitive stimulation. It is a versatile tool for education, therapy, and entertainment.

Dodge City Festivals granted us funds to assist in purchasing supplies and marketing for our Gingerbread House Party held for the community.

The Community Foundation of South-Central Kansas provided funds to our Infant-Toddler Services program to purchase age-appropriate books to encourage early literacy for the children and the families that care for them.

Delta Dental of Kansas Foundation recently granted 400 toothbrush kits to Arrowhead West clients. The kits will be used to encourage good oral health habits.

Dodge City Women's Chamber awarded Arrowhead West funds to assist in purchasing supplies & marketing for our Gingerbread House Party held for the community.

Walmart Foundation (Dodge City and Pratt) provided funds to purchase outdoor furniture, a barbecue grill, and other supplies for clients in the day and residential programs.

The Ability Experience provided Arrowhead West with a grant from the funds they raised while bicycling across the United States, raising awareness for individuals with disabilities. The funds will help purchase activity supplies for our Wichita Day Program.

Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund to Russell Child Development - Professional development opportunities and other resources were made possible by funding through a Building Blocks Early Childhood block grant.

ARROWHEAD WEST Inc.
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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In loving memory of *Nancy*

This newsletter was labeled and sealed with pride by the persons served.

RETIREMENT

MARTI ABERSON

Marti Aberson, Dodge City Life Skills Instructor, recently retired from Arrowhead West.

"Marti will be missed here at the San Jose location. She was a hard worker and very reliable. She cared about the clients and was passionate about being good at her job," said Brett Post, Program Manager.

"I have loved working with the staff and clients at Arrowhead West and am honored and humbled that this is where I end my working life," said Marti.

We thank Marti for her dedication to those we serve.