



**NDAD**  
helping others to help themselves

# Insider

## Increasing Independence

*NDAD helps a Minot woman with a ramp for her home*

Deborah Triggs is a 59-year-old Minot resident who is unable to walk due to severe peripheral vascular disease and osteoarthritis. She uses an electric scooter to get around in her home and in the community. Deborah's mother and several caregivers assist Deborah with her activities of daily living, including cooking. According to Deborah, "Trying to cook is one of the most challenging parts of my daily life, because I have a difficult time maneuvering around the kitchen and have short arms so it is hard for me to reach things."

Activities of daily living weren't always this challenging. While living in Arizona, Deborah was employed for over 20 years working in adult foster care. She said her favorite part her work was "helping the elderly with their hair and make-up and getting them active in the community." Deborah said, "I would always try to make each individual feel special." In 2006, Deborah moved back to North Dakota to help take care of her mother.

Now, five years later, Deborah laughed and said, "The roles are now reversed and my mother is helping to take care of me." Due to her disability, Deborah started using an electric scooter. She was referred to NDAD for financial assistance with the cost of a ramp by several different people including her mother, her doctor and Independence, Inc., the local independent living center. NDAD collaborated with the Rehab Accessibility Program, also known as RAP, to assist Deborah with the cost of a ramp. RAP offers grant dollars for the renovation of properties occupied by lower-income North Dakotans



**Deborah Triggs with her daughter, Cindy Triggs.**

with physical disabilities. The assistance provided enables the qualifying tenants or homeowners to remove barriers

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### **NDAD MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of NDAD is to enhance the quality of lives of individuals facing health challenges.

# A Helping Hand

*NDAD Helps a Grafton man with new prosthetic eye*

Mark Votova is a self-employed carpenter who loves his work. In the fall of 1988 Mark was involved in a construction accident. A piece of metal on a project he was working on flew into his eye. As a result, Mark lost his eye and received a prosthetic eye.

Typically, an artificial eye lasts about five years before it needs to be replaced. Tissue changes in the socket, anatomical growth, and breakdown of the acrylic are the primary reasons for replacement. Mark's prosthetic eye was over 21 years old and was causing him significant discomfort.

Mark contacted NDAD for assistance in purchasing a replacement prosthetic eye. "I worked with Jeri in the Grand Fork's office and she was so nice and wonderful to work with," Mark said.

In the fall of 2010, NDAD helped Mark purchase his replacement prosthetic eye. Mark said, "My new eye is very comfortable and so appreciated." Mark added, "Without NDAD I wouldn't have been able to afford a new eye. I am so grateful to NDAD."

## Increasing Independence

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and turn a house into an accessible and comfortable home.

According to Deborah, she enjoys the independence her electric scooter provides her. She stated, "I can hardly wait for all this snow to melt so I can get out and about and really use the ramp." The thing she is looking forward to the most this spring is taking her dog, Brittany, for walks.

"Without NDAD's assistance, I would never have been able to get a ramp for my home. I am so thankful there is an agency out there that helps people with disabilities." said Deborah.

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## A GIFT OF LIFE

*A Fargo woman receives a liver transplant*

Laurie Janssen was the picture of health when she was a child. When she was in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade she suddenly began experiencing swollen ankles. She went through numerous medical tests and was eventually hospitalized as more symptoms appeared. She was diagnosed with Wilson's disease, an inherited disorder that causes too much copper to accumulate in the liver, often destroying the organ as it did in Laurie's case. Her diagnosis was made by a first year resident at Meritcare Hospital in Fargo, who had just studied the diseases of the liver. Laurie's health deteriorated quickly. Four weeks after her first symptom appeared she was airlifted to the University of Minnesota hospital and was placed at the top of the national transplant list. Two days later she began to hemorrhage, signifying that she was at the end stage of Wilson's disease. The next day a donor liver from Oklahoma became available and was successfully transplanted into Laurie.

A few years after her transplant, Laurie was contacted by the family of the organ donor. The family flew her to Oklahoma so they could meet. The donor was a 12 year old boy who had been accidentally run over by a go-cart driven by his grandfather. Laurie said the meeting was very cathartic for her and his family.

Laurie said, "Saying thank you seemed so inadequate given the loss they endured, but it was wonderful to be able to thank the family. Their unthinkable tragedy meant that several others, like me, were able to live."

Now age 35, Laurie's health has been good since her transplant. She has been able to work and live a fulfilling life. However, the high cost of her anti-rejection medication was causing a financial hardship for her. She contacted NDAD for assistance paying for her anti-rejection medication. For the past year, NDAD has paid for Laurie's anti-rejection medication. Laurie says, "I am so incredibly grateful to NDAD for all the help they have given me. I was at the end of my rope and could not find help anywhere until I found NDAD. It is such a blessing."

NDAD is the administrator for the North Dakota Organ Transplant Fund. The ND Organ Transplant Fund was established by the legislature in 1991 to help individuals alleviate demonstrated



**Laurie Janssen**

financial needs related to costs associated with transplant operations not normally covered by insurance. If you or someone you know needs or has had a transplant and need financial assistance for costs associated with a transplant, please contact NDAD.



# NDAD

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2660 South Columbia RD  
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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## **We're Working For You**

NDAD is a nonprofit, charitable organization founded by concerned citizens for the purpose of assisting the mentally and physically disadvantaged within our state, many of whom are not eligible for services from other agencies.

Often, disabling conditions can be very costly. NDAD believes people with disabilities can live more satisfying, productive lives if they have the opportunity. Many times, this requires the purchase of specialized equipment, medical treatment, or other services.

NDAD provides financial assistance through funds generated by the organization and through funds raised by community projects. NDAD also provides information and referral services to assist people in receiving help through other agencies whenever possible.

During its history, NDAD has helped thousands of people with disabilities live fuller, more independent lives. NDAD clients can tell of new found freedom after receiving services they desperately needed. If you would like more information on NDAD's services, please contact one of our offices nearest you.

**[www.ndad.org](http://www.ndad.org)**

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