

4TH QUARTER 2025

# THE WILS WAY

W-ILS.org

855-945-7929



## Magnifying Independence

Sometimes, a small change can make a big difference. Recently, Sandra and her daughter-in-law Kathy visited the WILS office to find a magnifier strong enough to help Sandra read the caller ID on her phone. With help from WILS staff, they tested several handheld magnifiers and found that models with built-in lights worked best. Staff also provided printed options designed for macular degeneration, giving Sandra and Kathy tools to review before ordering. In addition, Sandra received a large countertop magnifier, which will help her read recipes and other printed materials more easily.

Sandra shared her gratitude after the visit, saying: "Thank you so much for helping me find a magnifying glass that I can use. You were very helpful and I also was given a large counter top magnifier for reading magazine recipes or anything. I truly appreciate your helpfulness. Thank you very much!"

At WILS, we love moments like this—when the right assistive technology helps someone feel more confident, more capable, and more in control of their world.

## Your Right

At WILS, we believe that independent living is a choice, and we're here to offer the options you need to take control of your life. With the right support, you have the power to create change and live life on your own terms. Your goals and your future are in your hands — your life should be shaped by what you want, and we're here to help make that a reality. Together, we can guide you toward the independence you envision, empowering you to thrive in your home, your community, and beyond.

# Deb's Desk

## A NOTE FROM WILS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy New Year! As we welcome 2026, we want to take a moment to thank each and every one of you for being part of the WILS community.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our holiday parties. Our staff truly enjoyed celebrating the season with you and had a wonderful time serving you. The laughter, smiles, and shared moments made the events very special. As we begin the new year, we are excited to share our biggest news: all CDS Attendants will receive a pay increase. Effective January 1, 2026, CDS Attendants will now be paid \$15.00 per hour. We are proud to take this step in recognizing the important work our attendants do every day.

Thank you for your continued trust in WILS. We look forward to another great year ahead, filled with connection, support, and new opportunities. Warm wishes for a happy and healthy New Year,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb Hobson". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "D" and "H".



# Fall Fun

## COSTUMES, CRAFTS, AND COMMUNITY

This season, WILS consumers and staff came together for a special fall celebration filled with fun, laughter, and meaningful connection at both our Sedalia and Warrensburg locations. Consumers were encouraged to come in costume—and they delivered! From creative disguises to classic Halloween looks, the costumes brought extra excitement and plenty of smiles. Throughout the event, participants enjoyed snacks and refreshments, played games, and took part in painting and fall-themed activities that made the day feel festive and welcoming.

Beyond the treats and activities, the best part was the opportunity to simply connect. Events like these give consumers a chance to build friendships, enjoy time with peers, and create shared memories with the WILS team in a relaxed and inclusive space.

Thank you to everyone who participated and helped make these celebrations such a success in Sedalia and Warrensburg! We love seeing our consumers come together, have fun, and strengthen community—one festive event at a time.





## Hilton's Halloween Hover

### A UFO COSTUME ADVENTURE

This fall, Liz, WILS Independent Living Case Manager, helped one of our consumers turn a creative idea into an unforgettable Halloween experience. Liz and Hilton worked together to help fit a UFO costume to Hilton's wheelchair so he could cruise through the neighborhood in style. After making sure the costume fit comfortably and looked just right, Hilton and Liz agreed on a plan—Liz would return on Halloween to add any finishing touches Hilton wanted and help complete the final look for the big night. The results were out of this world. Hilton was excited to share that not only did the costume turn heads, but it also brought smiles to everyone who saw him rolling down the street in full UFO mode. Hilton's gratitude captured the heart of why these moments matter so much.

"I'm grateful to WILS for allowing Liz to help me do the UFO costume. I'm grateful to Liz for picking up the ball and running with it. It turned out amazing. As I was [going] down the streets, people said, 'man you look like a UFO and look like you're hovering down the block.' It was awesome. I feel blessed to have you. My little princess made the perfect little alien, all green, with a third eye on her forehead. I got a whole bunch of candy. It's the year of candy. I love it. I'm very thankful."

**At WILS, we believe independence includes the everyday joys — the moments that build confidence, connection, and community. Hilton's Halloween "hover" is a perfect reminder that support can look like creativity, celebration, and fun, too.**



# WILS-ebration

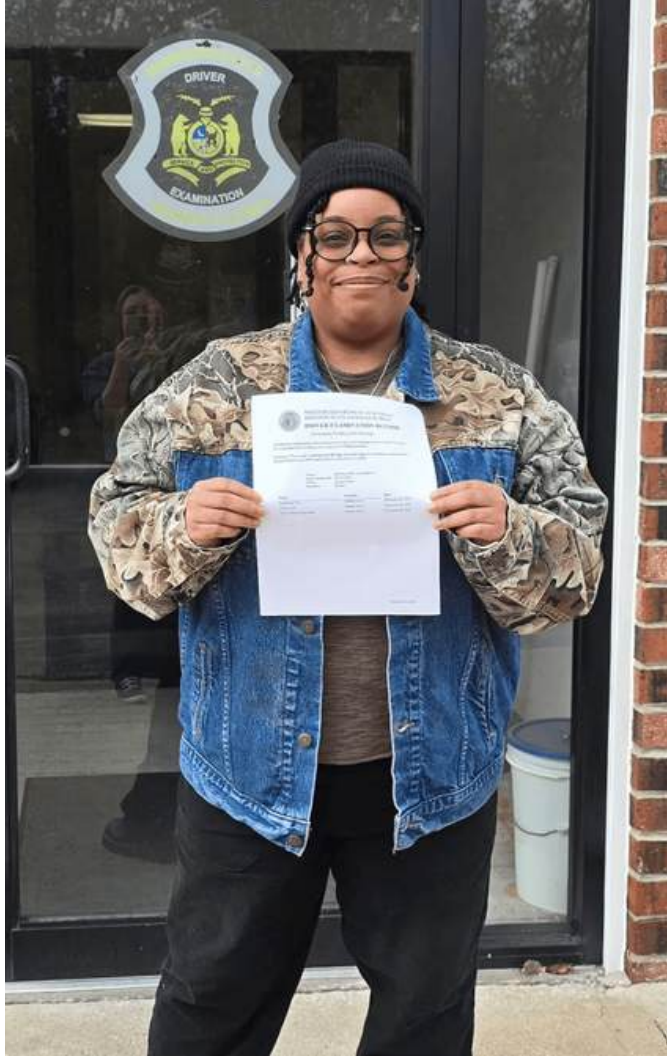
## A CELEBRATION OF TEAMWORK AND IMPACT

WILS staff came together for our annual WILS-ebration, a time set aside to celebrate the dedication, teamwork, and impact that made 2025 a year of meaningful progress for the people we serve. This year's celebration was especially powerful thanks to featured speakers Hope and Sharon, transportation riders and proud members of WILS. They shared their personal success stories and reflected on how WILS services have supported their independence, connection, and quality of life. Hearing directly from those we serve was a meaningful reminder of why our work matters and how every role at WILS contributes to real, life-changing outcomes.

From transportation and advocacy to independent living skills, peer support, and behind-the-scenes operations, the WILS-ebration recognized the collective effort it takes to remove barriers and build opportunity across our communities. Each success story shared was a reflection of the compassion, problem-solving, and commitment staff bring to their work every day.

As we look ahead, the WILS-ebration served as both a celebration of what we've accomplished together and a reminder of the continued impact we can make. Thank you to every staff member for your dedication, resilience, and belief in the mission of WILS. Together, we are creating pathways to independence—one story, one ride, and one connection at a time.





## Hope's Big Wins

At WILS, we're honored to walk alongside consumers as they take steps toward independence—and every so often, we get to witness a story that perfectly captures why this work matters. Hope's journey is one of those stories.

Hope has been a Transportation Member since December 2023, and in just the last few weeks she has reached two major milestones: Hope has been accepted to the University of Central Missouri (UCM) for classes, and WILS transportation took her to the DMV where she passed her permit test. But beyond the accomplishments themselves, what makes Hope's story so meaningful is the way she describes the impact of support, encouragement, and believing in yourself again.

When asked how completing these goals made her feel and what role WILS played in her accomplishments, Hope said: "Let me start off saying a lot of joy. WILS has been a godsend. It has gave me hope and my life back. The people have been the kindest people I have met. They have helped me believe in myself to the point I got into the University of Central Missouri for a digital media production major. I even got to get my permit to drive. They have been here for all of my big wins in life and thanks to them believing in me and taking me where I need to go has been a blessing. Thank you!"

Hope's next chapter is just beginning, and she's already thinking about how she can use her education and talent to lift up others. Hope wants to use her degree to tell stories—especially the stories of people who aren't often heard, people like those with WILS. Congratulations, Hope! We are proud of you, inspired by you, and thankful to be part of your journey.





## Celebrating Together

### WILS HOLIDAY PARTIES BRING JOY

The holiday season is a time for togetherness—and this year, WILS was proud to celebrate with the people who make our mission meaningful: our consumers, staff, and board members. Across our service areas, WILS holiday parties created a welcoming space for laughter, friendship, and festive cheer.

Each celebration offered more than just holiday fun. These gatherings were a chance for us to connect, enjoy a relaxing and inclusive environment, and take part in activities that support social engagement and community involvement. From shared meals and holiday treats to games, music, and seasonal activities, the parties were filled with joyful moments and meaningful connections.

Holiday parties like these give us a chance to come together, laugh, connect, and enjoy time with friends—new and old. We know the season isn't easy for everyone, and we're honored to offer a welcoming space where you can celebrate, feel supported, and create good memories with your WILS community.

We are also deeply grateful to everyone who helped make these events possible. Whether you supported behind the scenes, provided supplies, helped with set-up, or simply showed up to celebrate alongside others—your involvement helped make the season brighter. From all of us at WILS, thank you for being part of our community. We wish everyone a safe, peaceful, and joyful holiday season!







## Give Back Buckets

Thanks to the generosity of our community through the WILS Bucket Filler Fundraiser, we were able to share essential supply buckets with partner organizations across our service area. In Johnson County, buckets were provided to Serve, Journey Home, Survivor House, and Refuge on Ming. In Pettis County, buckets were delivered to Open Door and the Pettis County Community Partnership, and in Benton County, to Broken Vessels Ministries/Blessing Box and the Salvation Army.

## Buckets of Thanks

Congratulations to our Thanksgiving Bucket Winners! Thank you to everyone who participated—your support helps WILS continue filling buckets and spreading kindness throughout our communities. We're grateful for each donation that made them possible and for the heart that our community shows all year long.



## Community Care



Be on the lookout for Community Care Days coming to your county in 2026! These special days will be opportunities to come together, give back, and support local organizations and neighbors in need. Watch for dates, locations, and ways to get involved in upcoming newsletters and on our social media pages.





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# THE WILS WAY

W-ILS.org

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## Let's Chat

WILS is a consumer driven, non-residential, 501(c)3 nonprofit resource center that serves people with disabilities in Benton, Henry, Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis, and Saline counties.

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## Need a Ride?

WHERE THERE'S A WILS, THERE'S A WAY

Need a ride to a medical appointment? Medicaid medical trips must still be scheduled through MTM, not WILS. MTM assigns those trips to us through their portal. If you call WILS directly, we'll have to refer you back to MTM to complete the request.

To schedule your ride, call MTM at 1-866-269-5927 (TTY: 711) or visit [mtm.mtmlink.net](http://mtm.mtmlink.net) at least three days before your appointment.

When booking, be sure to request "**West-Central Independent Living Solutions**" as your preferred transportation provider! MTM will assign you to us if available.

