



**Contact**  
Erin Hockman  
Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority  
[ehockman@ridedart.com](mailto:ehockman@ridedart.com)  
515-499-3069

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## Six area organizations receive retired RideShare vans

Today, six area nonprofit organizations received retired RideShare vans through DART's van donation program. The 2021 recipients are [Art Force Iowa](#), [Bhutanese Community in Iowa](#), [Shalom Covenant Church](#), [Wilkie House](#), [Young Women's Resource Center](#) and the [Youth Justice Initiative](#).

Beginning in 2014, the DART Board of Commissioners instructed DART to distribute retired vans in central Iowa to help meet transportation needs in the community. The vans used for this donation program each year are set to be retired from DART's fleet.

"The van donation program is a unique way DART is able to give back to the community by supporting the work of our local nonprofits," explains Russ Trimble, Chair of the DART Board of Commissioners. "This program enhances the positive impact of local nonprofit organizations by helping them improve access to transportation beyond DART's transit network."

### About the Recipients

**Art Force Iowa** is an organization with a mission of transforming youth in need through art. Founded in 2012, all of its programs are based on three models: ArtForce, WorkForce and LifeForce. This model incorporates creative self-expression, work skills development and advocacy in a safe and supportive community.

**Bhutanese Community of Iowa** is a non-profit welfare organization founded in 2011 to serve the more than 800 Bhutanese community members living in Iowa. BCI provide services to promote self-sufficiency, cultural awareness, smooth integration into the mainstream culture.

**Shalom Covenant Church** was established in 2010 to bring together various refugee communities and unite them in worship in their native languages. Since then Shalom has helped provide services to refugees to navigate daily life and help individuals integrate through offering educational opportunities such as ESL classes and educational assistance to refugee youth who often have challenges with transportation as their parents work varied hours.

**Wilkie House** is a historically black nonprofit youth development center created in 1917, specifically to help African American families in Des Moines and focuses on providing evidence-based programming



*From left, DART Board of Commissioners Secretary Treasurer Josh Mandlebaum, Board Chair Russ Trimble, Commissioner Bridget Montgomery, Commissioner Angela Connolly (second from right) and DART CEO Elizabeth Presutti (right) stand with van recipient Kari Zimmerman, Executive Director of the Young Women's Resource Center (middle). [Click here to download more images from the DART Rideshare van donation event.](#)*

focusing on academics, social skill building, health and recreational activities through after school support, summer programming and mentorships.

**Young Women's Resource Center** is an agency that believes every girl deserves a life of possibilities and has a mission of empowering participants to be strong, self-confident and resilient. Founded in 1978, YWRC works towards its mission through various empowerment programs, including a young mom's program and a counseling and therapy program. All services are provided at no cost to the participants to reduce barriers to access.

**Youth Justice Initiative** is a West Des Moines based organization that provides services for youth ages 4-19 who are at risk and for those who have offended, many of which come from low-income, refugee, immigrant and/or minority families. Their mission is to develop and sustain restorative processes in our community to promote healing, accountability and provide support.

DART captured images of many of the organizations receiving their donated van on June 28. [Click here to view and download these images.](#)

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is Iowa's largest, and only, regional transit agency, providing service in and around Polk County. DART operates a family of transportation services, providing nearly 4.5 million annual rides that connect thousands of people every day to jobs, school, healthcare and other essential destinations. Twelve member governments make up DART's service area, where the agency carries out its mission to enrich lives, connect communities and expand opportunities for central Iowans. For more information about DART services, schedules, route changes, or directions to the nearest DART stop, visit the website at [ridedart.com](http://ridedart.com), download the free MyDART app or call 515-283-8100.

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