



Contact

Sarah Welch
Sr. Marketing & Communications Manager
swelch@ridedart.com
515-805-6866

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Thursday, February 20, 2025

DART Awards Vans to Two Local Nonprofit Organizations

Today, the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) awarded two retired vans to two local nonprofit organizations as part of DART's Van Award Program. The 2025 DART Van Award Program recipients are:

- Camp Fire Heart of Iowa
- Des Moines Refugee Support

"We are proud to award vans to these two great organizations that serve families and youth across Greater Des Moines," said Erin Hockman, Chief Strategy Officer at DART. "We hope the vans enhance the positive impact these organizations have in our community by ensuring people have transportation to access opportunities that support healthy, thriving lives."

15 area organizations applied for this year's Van Award Program.



CAPTION: Alison Hoeman from Des Moines Refugee Support (left) and Owen Ballard and Jenna Turner from Camp Fire Heart of Iowa (right) receiving van keys from DART CEO Amanda Wanke and Caravan Supervisor Victoria Henderson Weber.

About DART's Van Award Program

In 2014, the DART Commission adopted a policy allowing DART staff to award up to three retired vans per year to local nonprofit organizations to help address unmet transportation needs in central Iowa by enhancing an organization's ability to serve populations that are often underserved by existing transit services. The vans used for this award program are retired vehicles from DART's [Caravan](#) fleet. DART has awarded 23 vans to nearly 20 local nonprofit organizations since the Van Award program began.

Government agencies and nonprofit organizations in DART's service area are eligible to apply. Applicants must demonstrate how having a van will benefit the community and address transportation needs of central Iowans. New this year, recipients are responsible for covering the federal interest associated with the awarded van due to changes in the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

For more information about DART's Van Award Program, visit ridedart.com/van-award-program.

About the Recipients

[Camp Fire Heart of Iowa](#) is a youth development organization that connects kids with nature and helps them develop the skills needed for a happy, healthy life now and into the future. First established in 1919, Camp Fire Heart of Iowa serves about 1,500 youth per year, with a commitment to inclusivity, diversity and all abilities.

[Des Moines Refugee Support](#) is a nonprofit organization founded in 2016 to identify and bridge gaps for refugee families as they establish new lives in central Iowa. Des Moines Refugee Support connects refugee families and children to basic needs and essential services.

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 3.5 million annual rides that connect thousands of people every day to jobs, school, healthcare and other essential destinations. Twelve communities 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, download the free MyDART app or call 515-283-8100.

###