

# The DARTS News

September 2024

Creating Connections that Enrich Aging

Since 1974

Illustration by Kprecia Ambers.



## Celebrating the Aging Journey

There is a common perception that the older you are, the faster that time seems to move. As DARTS wraps up our year-long celebration of turning 50, the clock seems to be turning more rapidly than ever before.

In part, this feeling is fueled by the changes around us. The number of Minnesotans over age 65 continues to grow steadily, now over 1 million people representing just under 20% of the population. Minnesota's seniors are richer in diversity and experiencing higher rates of poverty than ever before.

DARTS anticipated this trend and established programs to help meet older adults' current needs. Spanish-speaking staff are building relationships with area Latine seniors. We continue to add social services staff to support those caring for an older adult because proportionally fewer working-age people means there are more caregiving responsibilities on family members and friends.

In this complex and changing environment, it is tempting to say, "Google it." Despite technology, we regularly talk to people needing the reassurance of our expert voice. As a person considers giving up their car keys, or you find yourself needing to have that conversation with a loved one, the expertise and guidance the DARTS team provides makes these life-changing situations a little easier.

**Together, we create connections that enrich aging.** You can help by volunteering as a Learning Buddy, becoming a Tech Buddy, or gathering a group to rake a yard. When you provide a financial gift and name DARTS in your estate plan, you provide a vital community asset for today and for future generations.

Thank you for celebrating the aging journey with us.

  
Ann Bailey, President



## Meet the Artist

My name is Kprecia Ambers, and I am an enthusiastic digital illustrator with a passion for amplifying stories and sharing encouragement through art, color, and movement. I am the owner of Kp Inspires and am based in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

My work combines portrait photography, movement, and vibrant color to evoke feelings of joy, hope, and confidence.

I love to capture the energy of people and celebrate diversity - at every age!

I believe it is through our differences that we become stronger. It's inspiring to see yourself reflected in the world. It is a reminder to viewers they are capable and seen as they are.



"I took a bet on myself, choosing to make a career out of my art, out of my gifts and talents. I had to learn to be okay with exploring what I can do even when I'm frustrated or tired, and it's been amazing to see my art inspire others."  
- Kprecia

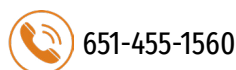
Want to see Kprecia's artwork in action?  
Scan the code and watch the magic happen.  
Look for the DARTS art bus in the community!



Video made with support from Flint Hills Resources.



Connect with us!



ALL ARE WELCOME HERE ♥

## Dare to Make a Wish: Raúl's Story

In January 2024, DARTS and Friends & Co began co-hosting a monthly Café y Conversaciones (Coffee and Conversations) group for Spanish-speaking older adults. The group serves as an opportunity to connect, socialize, and learn about community resources.

Through this program, couple Raúl and Luisa began coming to DARTS, building a wonderful connection.

In 1989, Raúl uprooted his wife and kids from Puerto Rico to start a new life in Minnesota, a difficult but necessary choice. In doing so, he left behind his siblings and parents. As the years passed, Raúl stayed in contact and managed some brief trips home to see his family. His last trip was almost five years ago.

A few years ago, Raúl's father passed away, leaving his mother alone to cope with dementia and depression. As his mother approaches her 99th birthday this October, Raúl's greatest wish is to find the means to visit her this year.

When Jessie, a DARTS social worker, heard Raúl's story, she told him about Wish of a Lifetime from AARP, which grants life-changing wishes to older adults. With Jessie's help, Raúl completed the application – and his wish was granted! With DARTS' support navigating resources, Raúl and Luisa can go to Puerto Rico later this year to visit his mom for a very anticipated reunion and to celebrate her birthday together.

"Todos crecimos en la misma casa. ¡Éramos 12 corriendo! Riente. Peleando... Ahora, está solita. Ella va a cumplir 99 años en octubre y la quiero ver."

"We all grew up in the same house. There were 12 of us running around! Laughing. Fighting... Now, it's just her, all alone. She's turning 99 in October and I want to see her."

- Raúl



## Fall Cleanup is Here!

Spend 1-2 hours volunteering with friends, family, or coworkers to clean up the yard of a senior in your community this fall!


### Flexible Scheduling!


Opportunities from October through mid-November. Find the date and time that work best!

### Lend a Hand!

Give an older homeowner yard help, community connections, and homeowner pride. You get team building, exercise, and a FUN time to be proud of!

To learn more, contact Lindy:

 651-234-2254

 volunteer@darts1.org



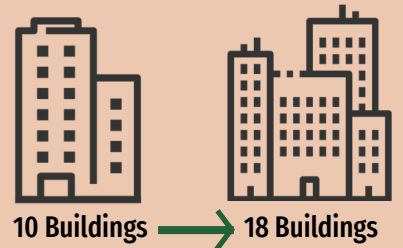
## Expansion and Adaptation

At the beginning of 2024, DARTS expanded our in-building aging guidance! Already in 10 buildings across 3 cities, we have now grown to 8 more buildings in 3 additional cities.

This part of DARTS specializes in connecting older adults in affordable senior housing throughout the southeast metro to the resources and support they need. Coordinators offer everything from a listening ear to resource connection. They create personalized connections, are there for every step of the process, and partner with you on your aging journey.

"I didn't know DARTS was in my building until I needed help with a situation with my Dad, and the coordinator at the time helped me tremendously. I appreciate how caring and helpful they are. There was a big hole before DARTS came into the building."


- Donna




"Learning Buddies allows me to work with kids in a school setting who need a bit more support in the learning process. It is great to support students and teachers, and give back to the community. I am also proud of the work I have done and continue to do for the LGBTQIA senior folks."

- Harry

To learn about Learning Buddies, contact Annie:

 651-234-2227

 volunteer@darts1.org



## Leave a Legacy with DARTS


Make a lasting impact by including DARTS in your will, trust, or estate plan and join our Heritage Society. Your gift will empower older adults to live independently and with dignity. It's a powerful way to ensure future generations have the support they need to thrive. Your values and commitment will uplift our community for years to come.



Scan to Learn More!

Already included us in your estate plan? Please let us know!

Questions? Contact Sarah:

 651-234-2229

 sarah.lindner@darts1.org



ALL ARE WELCOME HERE ❤️