

# 50 RISE YEARS REPORTER

1971-2021

SPRING 2022 VOL. 46, NO. 02



## COVER STORY

Kristen Carlson works to ship speciality plastics from Westfall Technik in New Richmond, Wis.  
*Read about the new employment partnership inside on page 2.*



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Happy Spring from Rise!

We have officially wrapped up the 2022 Minnesota Legislative Session. As this issue goes to press, we continue to wait to learn if lawmakers will convene in a special session.

The past few years have really demonstrated for all of us at Rise, the great support we have from our state and federal legislators. Without the pandemic-related relief over the past two years, many non-profit organizations, including Rise, would have not been able to continue to provide community supports. We are so grateful for the support.

Several bills in final negotiation at the Minnesota Capitol would have provided both short and longer-term relief to Rise, especially related to key workforce funding like retention bonuses to Direct Support Professionals. Also in the Senate, funding was included to bring the data used in Minnesota's Disability Waiver Rate Setting mechanism into alignment with economic data. However, the session ended with most Omnibus bills not passed into law, including the Health and Human Services Omnibus bill, which could have included disability services relief.

We are thrilled to be getting back to a new normal in terms of community engagement and expanded employment opportunities for the people we serve. We are making strides toward returning to full operations each day but have yet to get there. We have been putting significant resources and effort into hiring additional staff team members to meet the needs of people on waiting lists to return to services or to begin services. This is a priority for us, and we expect it to take most of the year. Meanwhile, I am grateful for our team's efforts and creative ideas to support as many people as we can each day. Enjoy the many articles in this issue and remember to connect with us on social media!

Lynn Noren  
Rise President & CEO

## WHO WE ARE

Rise unlocks potential and opens doors to success for people with disabilities or other challenges through creative solutions and customized support. We envision a progressive, supportive, and collaborative environment that fosters meaningful growth and provides opportunities to live a life filled with purpose.

## SUBMISSIONS

We love a good story. Share your photos and accomplishments with us! Your submission to [kbartnick@rise.org](mailto:kbartnick@rise.org) may appear in an upcoming Rise Reporter, be featured on Rise's social media sites or both! We can't wait to hear from you!



# FAMOUS BRUSH STROKES

## Rise Coon Rapids artists imitate notable painters

DID YOU KNOW that Warhol, Picasso, Van Gogh and Mondrian have made stops in Coon Rapids? Their work is part of an activity meant to showcase a variety of art styles as people explore their creative talents. The exercise allows painters to work on creative thinking, stress management, memory and recall, and motor skills. It also

builds communication skills like active listening, nonverbal communication, and emotional awareness. But most importantly, it is fun, engaging and entertaining. The most recent work centered around American expressionist painter Jackson Pollock, who is widely known for his “drip technique” of pouring or splashing

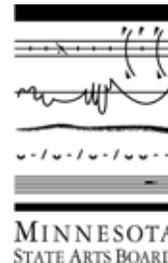
liquid household paint on horizontal surfaces. Rise’s artists begin each project by learning about the artist and their styles. As a bonus, Coon Rapids groups also go to the Minneapolis Institute of Art on community outings to learn more about art and attempt to recreate their favorite styles.



courtesy photos



Ashley Van Lewen (left) and Cory Frank (right) work to recreate Jackson Pollock art. The group paints in boxes to contain paint splatters.



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

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## STAFF

### Kathy Klang

Chair, Rise Board of Directors

### Lynn Noren

President & CEO

### Noel McCormick

Vice President of Advancement

### Kelly Bartnick

Communications and Volunteer Manager; Editor



## SWITCHING TO SITE WORK

### RISE TEAM GOES TO WESTFALL TECHNIK IN NEW RICHMOND.

THE PLASTIC pieces Kristen Carlson and a supported employment Rise team handle inside Westfall Technik eventually find their way to manufactured products worldwide. On this day, the group is working with parts that will make up the engine and mechanical components of Powersports and outdoor machines.

“They’ve been teaching me a lot lately,” Carlson said. “They’ve been trusting me to do more on my own, including weighing out boxes and setting

the scale. This way, I don’t have to ask for help anymore.”

Carlson is one of about 10 Rise workers on-site at Westfall Technik in New Richmond, Wisconsin. Westfall is a one-stop shop for manufacturers looking for suppliers to guide them through the process, including tooling, automation, molding, assembly, and shipping.

The team began working about a year ago during the COVID-19 pandemic as they transitioned to community-based employment from our

New Richmond production floor. They are now supporting the business five days per week.

“The arrangement we currently have with Rise is a new concept for both of our businesses,” said Westfall Technik General Manager Mark Fagerland. “For years we’ve had Rise do work for our company primarily at the Rise facility. But having the Rise crew come to our site makes for a more efficient and cost-effective production schedule.”

There’s a lot of work to do, and each day is different. Many days during the past year have been an experiment to learn which tasks the crew can take on. Fagerland says working with Rise to place the “right crew” for the job gives the team opportunities to excel at their jobs and grow. It also gives him confidence that the work is correct. “I’ve told many businesses about the relationship we have with Rise and highly suggest that they should reach out to Rise if they have a labor need,” Fagerland said.

John Brinkman, who spent years working with his hands on the farm, says the job is a natural fit. “We do different things every day. I like it. It keeps you busy!” Brinkman said.

He and the crew help manage the production output, which Fagerland says is essential as the company works to reach monthly sales goals. “The Rise



crew that comes to our facility daily is an integral part of our day-to-day operation,” he said.

“People enjoy my company and are nice to me, Carlson said. “They’re always willing to answer my questions and teach me a lot more than I expected. I feel very welcome here.” ▼

*Opposite Page: Kristen Carlson gets ready to measure out an order before shipping. Above: John Brinkman performs quality control.*



WORKING IN WISCONSIN



photos: Salex Samek

<< **HIRING EVENT**

Rise held our first hiring event and job fair in March at our Coon Rapids location. Team members visited with job seekers and provided same-day interviews to qualified candidates.

We must hire more than 60 full time positions to bring back those on our waiting list to return to services or come to Rise for first-time services.



FIND THESE STORIES AT [RISE.ORG/](http://RISE.ORG/)

**WCCO TV**  
**LOIS GEORGE & MARIE GEORGE TALK ABOUT THE WORKER SHORTAGE'S EFFECTS**

WCCO TV

**PIONEER PRESS**  
**REAGAN ANDERSON FEATURED IN A STORY ABOUT THE LYFT RIDESHARE SHORTAGE IN FOREST LAKE, MINN.**

TWIN CITIES PIONEER PRESS

**FOREST LAKE TIMES**  
**NANCY BRYANT FEATURED IN A STORY ABOUT A LYFT RIDESHARE SHORTAGE IN FOREST LAKE, MINN.**

FOREST LAKE TIMES



# VIRTUAL DISABILITY DAY AT THE CAPITOL



Minnesota's annual Disability Services Day at the Capitol was held virtually March 8, 2022. Rise locations in Anoka, Coon Rapids, and Cottage Grove joined the more than one thousand participants in advocating for disability rights via Zoom. The annual event raises awareness of issues affecting people with disabilities. Read more about the session page 15.



courtesy photos

*Pictured: A large group assembles at Cottage Grove (top left), Andy Scalzo in Coon Rapids smiles with a sign created for the event (top right), Marcus Williams and Rise Legislative Affairs Intern and team member Amanda Johnson take time out in Anoka during the virtual rally.*



## WE'VE MOVED CHECK OUT OUR OUR NEW LOCATIONS

**Rise - Cambridge**  
237 2nd Avenue SW  
Cambridge, Minnesota 55008  
Tel: 763-689-2093

**Rise - St. Cloud**  
3400 1st St. North Ste. 306  
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56303  
Tel: 320-656-5608

# FEELING AT HOME IN ST. CLOUD

## ARMHS SUPPORT CREATES A PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

CHEYENNE JOHNSON recently celebrated a milestone many of us take for granted. “I’ve been struggling and trying to survive,” he said. After more than a decade of searching, he now has his own place to call home.

A past criminal conviction created a barrier most landlords refused to look past. The 54-year-old lived in group homes because he was repeatedly rejected even after meeting all legal requirements. Each denial brought on new stress, and his mental health suffered. “It’s been a struggle,” Johnson said. “You can tell them, ‘Hey, I’m not that guy. I’m this guy now.’ They don’t listen,” he said.

“He had done probation. He’d done everything people asked of him,” said Johnson’s St. Cloud Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS) practitioner Angela Buisman. “He was offered a place, and they turned it down. We appealed, but they had already made up their mind. So, we had to find other avenues to get him his independence and a second shot.”

Buisman and Johnson worked together for more than three years to find a landlord willing to give him a chance.



*Cheyenne Johnson moved into his first home in early 2022. Our re-entry work is funded through the Otto Bremer Trust, the Initiative Foundation, the Benton Telecommunications Foundation, the Midco Foundation, and the Stearns Electric Trust.*

*In 2022-23 we will begin a pilot project to support incarcerated people before they leave jail thanks to funding from the Medica Foundation, the Initiative Foundation, and the Morgan Family Foundation.*

He finally moved in early this year. The new apartment allows Johnson the freedom to live as he likes in his own space.

“This is the first start. It is a brand new, fresh start. It establishes rental history and credit. It gives you opportunities.” Buisman said.

It has also freed up time and space in his life to focus on other important goals. Johnson is now working on getting his driver’s license again. He is also taking charge of his health, which includes a chronic lung disease.

A friend referred Johnson to Rise 11 years ago. Since then, he’s worked with ARMHS practitioners like Buisman to accomplish so many goals that he can’t even remember many of them. But finding a home is one he won’t forget.

“I consider Rise my main foundation. They have been awesome,” Johnson said. “They’ve helped me out through the years and have built me from the ground up.” ▼



## A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

### *Rise employment team boosts Federal Ammunition's workforce*

As Rise continues the celebration of our 50th Anniversary year, it's so important to recognize the successful relationships we've built in our communities. Our decades-long partnership with Federal Ammunition began in 1987. It has endured, and as Federal celebrates its centennial in 2022, we went inside the Anoka facility to look at how a Rise team there supports Federal's business.

Maria Nagle knows her way around a press. Much of the work she does each day, from assembling slugs to boxing cases of shells, is all done by hand. "We are still doing much of the same job. Before they had machines that would do some of the stuff, but we don't do that anymore. It's all pull-down," Nagle says with a laugh.

She's been at Federal for 25 years, making her one of the longest-tenured people Rise supports here. A group of about 15 people

works in an assembly area for about five hours each day. The meticulous crew performs each task by hand.

"We can't possibly pack as much as we have to pack, and your team is good and focused. We need someone to sort the defective pieces when we have quality issues. They find some of the hardest defects that most teams miss," said Scott Collier, the Anoka, Minn. shotshell manufacturing facility manager.

#### *Busier than ever*

The Federal team is running at total capacity. Collier says demand is at its highest in nearly 25 years working for the company and likely has not peaked. "Every plant in the company set a production record last year," Collier said.

The Rise team packs a wide variety of shells. Each product looks different from smaller, 410 shots to 20-, 12-, and 10-gauge,

so the team always knows the product. Their finished work supplies outdoor sports and shooting enthusiasts in the United States and worldwide.

Today Lynn Piphio is boxing 12-gauge shells. “10 boxes equal 250 per day!” she says. Piphio has worked at many other places but finds herself continuing to return to the team at Federal.

“It’s closer to home, which I like,” she says. “I do boxing and packaging and other stuff. It’s different every day.” And she can continue to work here, despite some recent mobility issues, which makes her happy.

### 100th anniversary

As one of our longest partnerships, it’s no surprise that Federal Ammunition is celebrating its own milestone. The company turned 100 in 2022. Collier says it’s more than just a company milestone.



“My family has been here since 1960. My grandma worked here, my dad worked here, and so many other family members. Federal has been the reason Anoka has been able to grow. It is huge for the community of Anoka and the people of Federal.”

The company’s humble Anoka beginnings eventually led to the development of thousands of specialized, high-quality shotshell, centerfire, and rimfire loads for hunters and shooters. Federal is among the most trusted ammunition due to quality control processes. Our Rise team’s quality control work contributes to their reputation.

Their work is important to them. But, the experiences and the relationships they’ve built with their teammates keep long-time workers like Maria Nagle coming back each day.

“I just like doing it. I like working here,” Nagle said. “I like the people, and I like my bosses.” ▼



*Left:  
Derrick Smith sorts  
hundreds of slugs each  
day for shipment to  
sports enthusiasts in  
the United States and  
around the world.*

*Top Right:  
Maria Nagle demon-  
strates her work at  
a slug press. She has  
worked at Federal in  
Anoka for more than 25  
years.*

*Opposite Page:  
The Federal Ammuni-  
tion team at work in  
Anoka, Minn.*

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

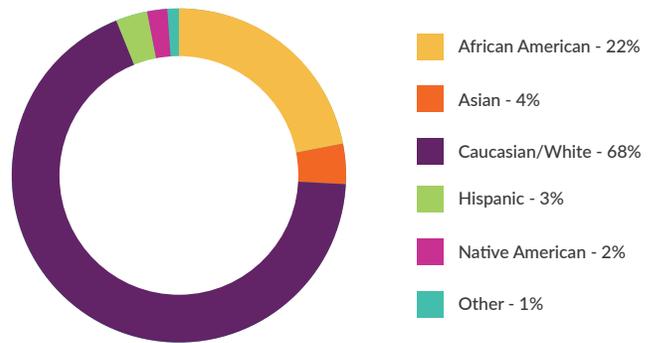
◀◀ 3,017 ▶▶

## PEOPLE SERVED BY RISE IN 2021

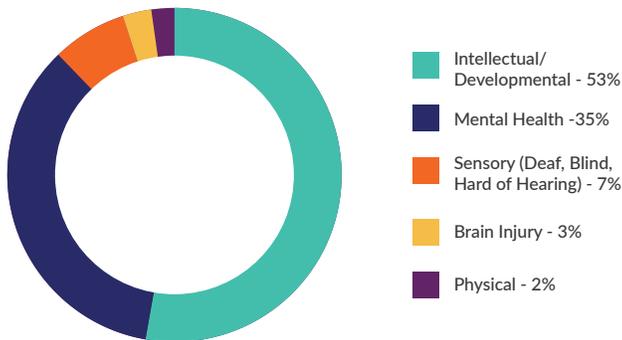
### AGE RANGE



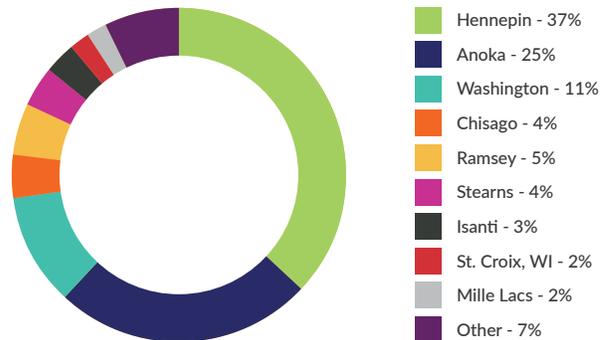
### RACE



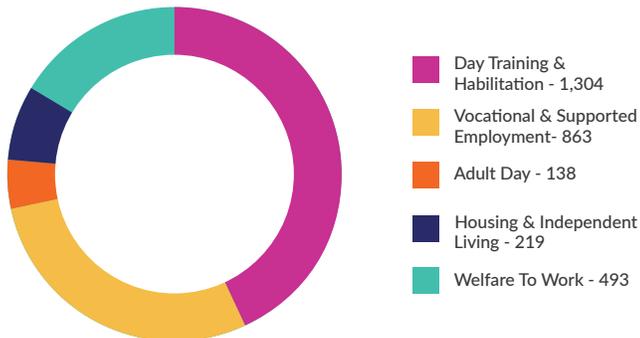
### DISABILITY TYPE



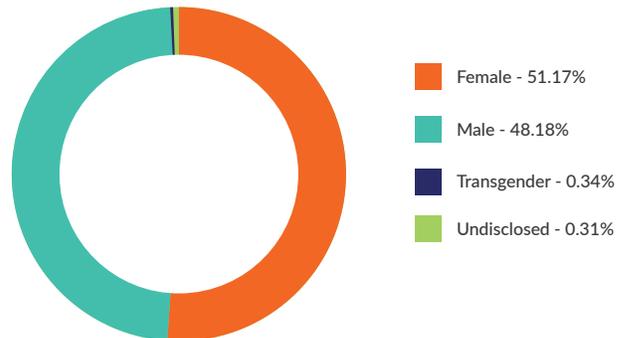
### COUNTY OF RESIDENCE



### SERVICE LINE



### GENDER





## STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

LYNN NOREN  
President and Chief Executive Officer

TIM DICKIE  
Chief Program Officer

TOM HAGLUND  
Chief Financial Officer

ERIN BRAATEN  
Vice President of Human Resources

NOEL MCCORMICK  
Vice President of Advancement

JUDY ANDERSEN  
Program Director

JODI BLUME  
Senior Director of Community Integration  
and Life Enrichment Programs

MIKE HARPER  
Director of Programs and Services, Central Minnesota

KEITH HOVLAND  
Director of CBTE and Supported Employment Teams

DAN MEYERS  
Director of Vocational Evaluation and Transition

MICHELE MORRIS  
Director of Industrial Services

RYAN NELSON  
Director of Transportation

LILIAN NGUNGKPAN  
Human Resources Manager

KRIS OBERG  
Program Director

ROBERT REEDY  
Senior Director of Vocational Services

BECKY ROTHER  
Director of Quality Assurance

JAMIE SMITH  
Director of Information Technology

JOHN WATTERS  
Director of Employment Services, New Richmond

NATALIE ZACHARIAS  
Program Director

## 2021 RISE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR: Kathy Klang, Minneapolis

VICE CHAIR: Kristin Hangebrauck, Saint Louis Park

SECRETARY: Rachael Smith, Champlin

TREASURER: Andrea Murphy, Champlin  
Mark Bergmann, Minneapolis

Blake Elliott, Minneapolis

Anne Holoch, Corcoran

Lauri Hopkins, Lino Lakes

Krishna Iyer, Saint Paul

Susan Langfeldt, Deer Park, Wis.

Sheila Minske, Minneapolis

Dan Newman, Aitkin

Cliff Rhoten, White Bear Lake

Kelly Steffens, Prior Lake

## INCOME STATEMENT

### INCOME

PROGRAM SERVICE FEES .....	\$10,803,000
PRODUCTION AND LABOR SALES TO PUBLIC .....	\$3,685,000
GRANTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS .....	\$3,821,000
TRANSPORTATION .....	\$4,328,000
DONATIONS / SPECIAL EVENTS / UNITED WAY.....	\$304,000
OTHER, INCLUDING UNREALIZED INVESTMENT GAINS .....	\$2,049,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME .....</b>	<b>\$24,990,000</b>

### EXPENSES

DAY TRAINING & HABILITATION PROGRAMS.....	\$14,195,000
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS .....	\$2,125,000
PRODUCTION .....	\$612,000
MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL.....	\$3,524,000
TRANSPORTATION .....	\$2,152,000
ADULT DAY PROGRAMS.....	\$889,000
WELFARE-TO-WORK PROGRAMS.....	\$459,000
HOUSING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS ....	\$476,000
FUNDRAISING .....	\$443,000
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$24,875,000</b>

## BALANCE SHEET

### ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS.....	\$25,264,000
NET LAND, BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT.....	\$8,391,000
OTHER ASSETS.....	\$955,000
<b>TOTAL ASSETS .....</b>	<b>\$34,610,000</b>

### LIABILITIES

CURRENT LIABILITIES.....	\$2,854,000
LONG-TERM DEBT .....	\$1,088,000
OTHER LIABILITIES .....	\$762,000
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES .....</b>	<b>\$4,704,000</b>

### NET ASSETS

NET ASSETS, UNRESTRICTED .....	\$29,288,000
NET ASSETS, RESTRICTED.....	\$618,000
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS.....</b>	<b>\$29,906,000</b>

## OUR MISSION

Rise unlocks potential and opens doors to success for people with disabilities or other challenges through creative solutions and customized support.

# SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, October 27, 2022 • 5:00-8:30 PM

Our 11th Annual Fundraising Gala

# CELEBRATE



Join us for a delicious meal, games, a live auction, moving stories, and more as we team up to reach our fundraising goals. More details to come!



**Available August 1**

Registration information will be available on our website at [rise.org](https://rise.org)

## REPORTING THE NEWS CONNECTING COTTAGE GROVE



courtesy photo

*The Grove Gazette is produced by Scott Schult, Sam McQuade, JoAllyn Camery, Kira Oden, Jill Tatge and team member Alicia Place.*

THE NEWS is good in Cottage Grove, and people attending day services and Rise team members make sure to share it.

After years of talking about sharing Rise Cottage Grove happenings, the group there has formed an editorial team to share news in the “Grove Gazette.”

“It’s new to us, and May was only our sixth issue,” said program supervisor Rachel Meyer. “It does take a whole team effort, and people we serve do most of the work, including the typing.” All the editorial ideas also come from people served at Cottage Grove.

The publication shares highlights from activities happening at Cottage Grove each month, including activity highlights, photos from recent outings in nature, museums, and volunteer activities. There are published movie reviews and social news, like bowling scorecards is also included. The group also highlights a person served each month as a “mentor of the month.”

The newsletter does more than keep people informed. It gives the team a sense of pride while helping them develop typing skills and computer knowledge along with language and social skills. And it deepens community connections too. “It’s been a great way to connect everyone and bring them together and show off the fun stuff we do here in Cottage Grove,” Meyer said. ▼



## CAPITOL CORNER

### MN Legislative session wrap-up with Rise Government Affairs Intern Amanda Johnson

**BY AMANDA JOHNSON,  
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS INTERN**

RISE IS FACING is an extreme shortage of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), who provide hands-on support for people with disabilities.

While this been an ongoing issue for several years, the COVID-19 pandemic created an even bigger problem. As many disability providers, including Rise, temporarily closed their doors, team members were furloughed. Many did not return. That has left day support providers with long waiting lists in a tight job market, as they attempt to hire enough workers. Rise has more than 360 people waiting to return to services or receive them for the first time. Statewide, the number of Minnesotans waiting to access support services is more than 3,500.

Because employment and day enrichment services are so important to the health and well-being of many individuals with disabilities, advocating for a solution to the DSP shortage issue has been a top priority for Rise. To encourage more people to join the DSP workforce, Rise has been advocating for increases in the wages and benefits of DSPs by updating the Disability Waver Rate System (DWRS). At present, DWRS uses wage data that is several years old, meaning the current wages of DSPs have fallen below competitive workforce

standards. With little pay incentives, many potential hires have instead chosen to work at higher paying entry-level jobs, such as those in fast-food and retail industries. But if the Minnesota Legislature passes the new DWRS updates, wages for DSPs will be updated every two years using current data, which will increase the hiring rate of this essential job. And with more working DSPs, Rise will be able to serve more people with disabilities.

This year, the Minnesota government has a \$9 billion surplus, meaning our legislators have a unique opportunity to make critical investments in our state's disability services, including the DWRS updates. The Senate included DWRS updates to their Health and Human Services Omnibus Bill, but the House did not.

The two sides did not pass a compromise bill before the session ended.

We are currently waiting to hear if Governor Tim Walz will meet with legislators in a special session. We will keep you posted throughout that process. There is still time to contact your legislators and let them now why it is so important to invest in disability services this year by updating DWRS and increasing the wages and benefits for DSPs. Find more at [rise.org/advocacy/](https://rise.org/advocacy/). ▼



*Amanda Johnson (right) poses with Spencer Sieber during MN Virtual Disability Services Day. In addition to her Government Affairs Internship, Johnson is also a Rise DSP.*



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Permit No. 94279  
TWIN CITIES, MN

A teal-colored graphic with various geometric shapes and patterns. At the top left are three vertical bars in purple, orange, and white. At the top right is a grid of light blue dots. The text "YOU'RE INVITED" is in pink. Below it, the word "ART" is written in large, stylized letters: "A" is purple, "R" is orange, and "T" is white. Below "ART" is the word "EXHIBITION" in white. At the bottom left is another grid of light blue dots. The text "AUGUST 09th 2022" is in white, followed by a vertical white line, then "4P.M-7P.M." and "RISE COON RAPIDS" in white. At the bottom center, there is pink text: "View art from our Art Speaks program AND check out our newly remodeled Coon Rapids facility!". At the bottom right is another grid of light blue dots.

**YOU'RE INVITED**

**ART**

**EXHIBITION**

**AUGUST 09th 2022** | **4P.M-7P.M.**  
**RISE COON RAPIDS**

**View art from our Art Speaks program  
AND check out our newly remodeled  
Coon Rapids facility!**