

GEM STATE NEWS



Summer 2026 EDITION (May - August) www.gsdccda.com



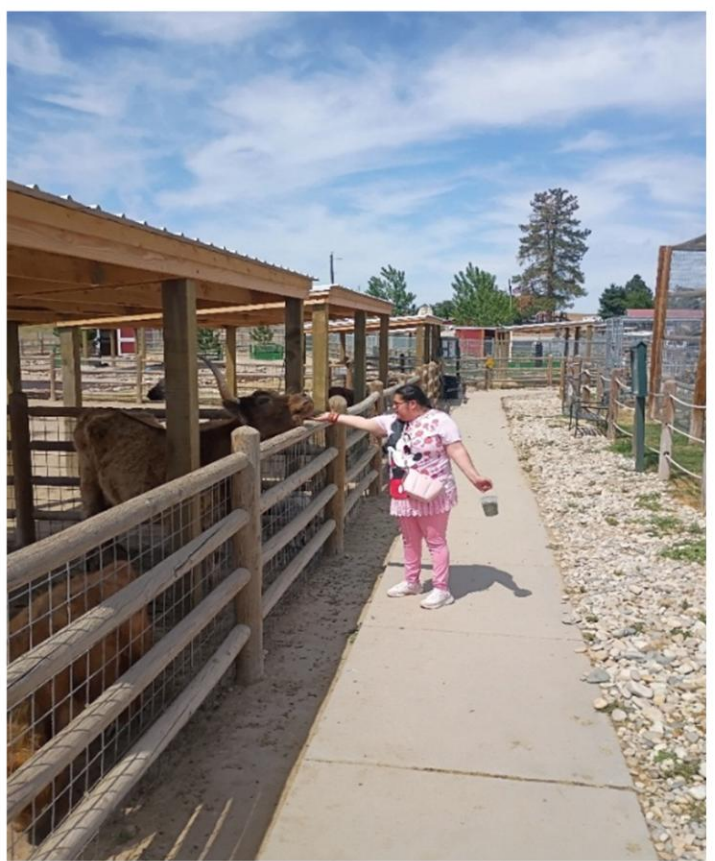
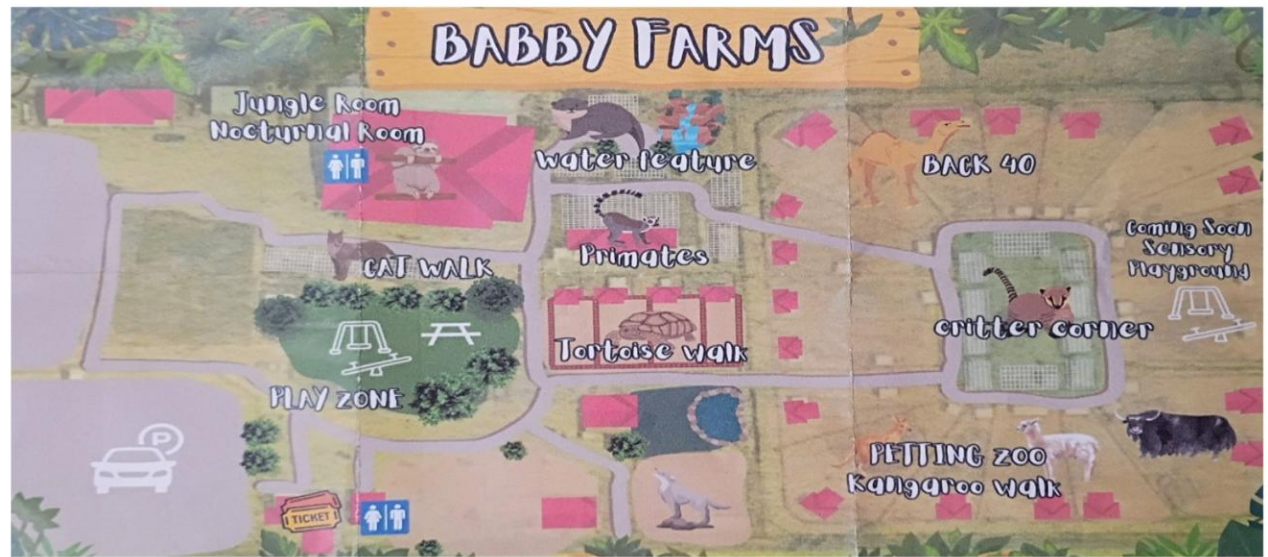
Photo by [Clay Elliot](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Table of Contents

A Trip to Baby Farms 2026	page 2-6
Together We Learn & Grow	page 7-8
A Perfect Time for Snow Cones	page 9
The Next Generation of Social Workers	page 10
Autumn Adventure Word Search	page 11
We're All Winners, In This Great Opportunity	page 12-14
Scavenger Hunt	page 15

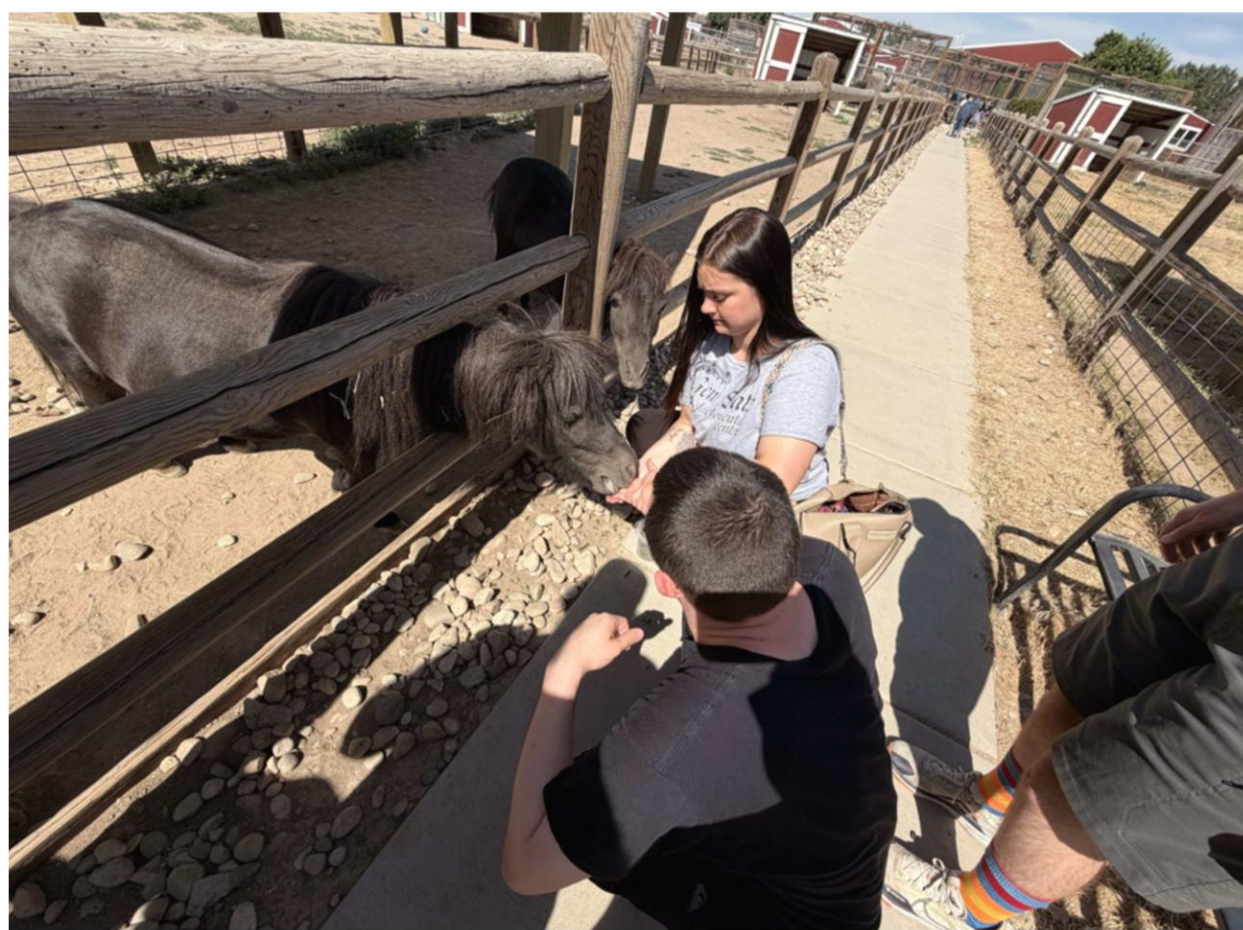
A Trip to Babby Farms 2026

A trip to Babby Farms is a great outing because it's calm, welcoming, and easy to enjoy without feeling overwhelmed. Being able to gently interact with animals, like feeding them or getting up close, makes the experience feel special and engaging. Here are some photos of our adventure.









Inside the barn, our participants struck a pose for the camera, showing their smiles and excitement during our Babby Farms outing. Moments like these give participants a chance to enjoy new experiences, practice social interaction, build confidence, and feel more connected to their community. Community engagement opportunities also support a greater sense of ownership, choice, and independence in our participants' personal lives.



Together We Learn & Grow

Each day is an opportunity for our participants to discover their talents, improve their social skills, and be present in the moment of their lives. We encourage each and every one of them to find their passions and creativity throughout the day. Here is a snapshot of our day.



Together We Learn & Grow, Cont'd



A Perfect Time for Snow Cones

Anytime is a good time for dessert. Our participants and staff like to discover new places for food and treats. Maybe you know some of these places. It's good to discover new things that bring joy into our days, and we love it when there are new stories to share.



The Next Generation of Social Workers

You may have already seen these new faces around our centers. If not, we are excited to introduce our amazing interns for the Summer 2026 – Spring 2027 program. Their presence brings fresh energy, curiosity, and a willingness to learn alongside our participants and staff. We are grateful to support their growth, encourage their goals, and welcome them to the GSDC team.

GSDC Roster for 2026 – 2027 Internship Program



Brandon L'Heureux (MSW Program, BSU)



Kourtney Floyd (MSW Program, BSU)



Bethany Caufield (MSW Program, NNU)



Ella Sust (BSW Program, BSU)



Sarah Kofoed (MSW Program, University of Kentucky)



Lily Uyeda (BSW Program, BSU)

Autumn Adventure Word Search



ACORN • APPLE • AUTUMN • BONFIRE • CHILLY • CORNMAZE • CRISP •
FEAST • FLANNEL • GOURD • HARVEST • HAYRIDE • LEAVES • MAPLE •
ORCHARD • PUMPKIN • RAKE • SCARF • SQUIRREL • THANKFUL

A	U	T	U	M	N	Q	L	R	A	K	E	S	P	M
C	R	I	S	P	O	R	C	H	A	R	D	L	E	A
O	B	F	L	A	N	N	E	L	T	H	A	N	K	F
R	O	N	F	I	R	E	W	A	R	M	G	O	U	R
N	N	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	S	C	A	R	F	E
M	F	E	A	S	T	Y	A	L	L	I	H	C	H	A
A	I	S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L	O	Y	N	R	S
P	R	I	H	C	H	I	L	L	Y	D	R	A	H	T
L	E	L	E	A	V	E	S	B	C	O	R	N	M	A
E	C	A	C	O	R	N	M	A	Z	E	A	P	E	H
H	A	Y	R	I	D	E	O	G	O	U	R	D	A	N
V	R	A	K	E	L	F	O	N	F	D	E	L	R	K
O	T	H	A	N	K	F	U	L	A	P	P	L	E	S
N	C	O	R	N	M	A	Z	E	F	C	S	C	A	R
S	B	O	N	F	I	R	E	M	A	P	L	E	Y	D

We're All Winners, In This Great Opportunity

Congratulations, Lori Jo Poole, for Woman-Owned Business of the Year!

*For more than four decades, Gem State Developmental Center has helped children and adults with developmental disabilities build skills, gain independence, and participate more fully in their communities. **Established in 1983 as Idaho's first privately owned and operated developmental disability agency**, the organization provides supportive and innovative developmental therapy through its centers in Meridian and Nampa.*

Under the leadership of owner and administrator Lori Jo Poole, a licensed clinical social worker, Gem State Developmental Center has assembled a compassionate team of professionals and paraprofessionals dedicated to providing individualized, respectful care. Its programs help participants strengthen communication, social interaction, daily living skills, self-direction, and community independence while providing families with the specialized support they need.



Lori Jo's commitment to inclusion extends beyond the organization's facilities. Gem State Developmental Center creates volunteer opportunities that allow participants to contribute to their communities, provides internships for college students entering the developmental-services field, and supports local events and charitable initiatives. Through these efforts, the organization helps create a community where individuals of all abilities are welcomed, valued, and empowered.

By combining professional excellence with compassion, purpose, and a deep commitment to those it serves, Gem State Developmental Center demonstrates the extraordinary impact a woman-owned business can make. It is our honor to recognize Lori Jo Poole and Gem State Developmental Center as the 2026 Woman-Owned Business of the Year.

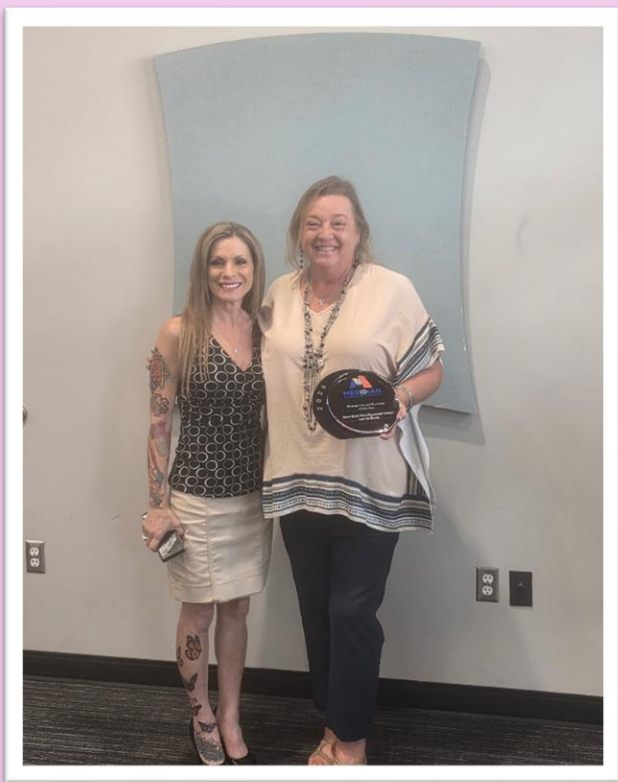




*The Meridian Chamber of Commerce staff team and Board Members proudly present Lori Jo with the **2026 Woman-Owned Small Business of the Year Award** on Thursday, August 27, 2026.*



*Meet a few of our rock stars! From left to right: **Julia, Krysty, Jamie, Lilibeth, Lori Jo, Tony, Rosalie, Cara, and Joni.***



We are grateful for the many allies who support GSDC and our commitment to helping participants and their families enjoy a better quality of life.

*Featured in the top left photo is **JoeAnne Santy-Greene**.*

*In the lower photo, from left to right, are **Mike and Betsy Munkers**.*

"The fight for equality is strongest when people choose courage over comfort and solidarity over silence. True allies understand that progress is not made by standing on the sidelines, but by standing together, challenging injustice, and helping create a future where every person can thrive."



Scavenger Hunt

Can you spot all the hidden items in this picture? Five are listed below, but two more that are not listed. Take a close look and let us know how many you found!

Acorn Butterfly Teapot Footprint Gnome ??? ???

