



Winter
2012

Friendship, Inc. is a private non-profit organization serving people with developmental disabilities. We provide individualized comprehensive supports to allow for full community participation and inclusion.

FRIENDSHIP *Connection*

News from Friendship, Inc.

CATHOLIC HEALTH
INITIATIVES

Friendship, Inc.

Gone Fishing by Dori Leslie, Chief Operating Officer

Dreams can come true for everyone, but for Ward, they really did. On August 9, Ward had a dream come true that he will always remember. On that Tuesday afternoon, he had the opportunity to spend time with some special people. Five sailors, dressed in their blue and gray Navy working uniforms, made a special visit to Ward's condominium to scrub, wax and vacuum his pride and joy: a 1979, baby-blue Larson boat. They also checked out the boat's 45 Mercury motor to make sure it was ship-shape. The sailors performed this community service as part of Fargo Navy Week, a weeklong event designed to raise awareness of that military branch and its contributions to the home front.

Throughout the afternoon, Ward was able to hang out with the sailors, show off his boat and practice casting his fishing rod. Ward's love of fishing and people in uniform may be a



Navy sailors visited with Ward and helped him with some boat maintenance during Fargo Navy Week.

remembrance of his late father, who served in the Navy during World War II and later worked for the Minnesota Highway Department.

When this opportunity was announced, staff members who work with Ward knew that he would love

to do this. They applied for the sailors to help Ward and once it was granted, the plans started to come together. Ward and staff arranged all the items that they would need, with the most important being a camera. Ward was so excited and proud to have help cleaning his boat, especially with these sailors.

This past summer, Ward was able to take the boat out on the lake a few times, including once for a friend's birthday party. When he can't be on his boat, he still fishes from the shore. To see Ward so happy and proud was very special to everyone involved. We are so blessed to have Ward and all the people we support in our lives. We continue to learn through this opportunity and many others that dreams really do come true. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of others and support them to make their dreams come true!

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Mission

The mission of Catholic Health Initiatives is to nurture the healing ministry of the Church by bringing it new life, energy and viability in the 21st century. Fidelity to the Gospel urges us to emphasize human dignity and social justice as we move toward the creation of healthier communities.

Vision

Friendship, Inc. is devoted to:

CATHOLIC: Living our mission and core values.

- Learning something new from each other every day.
- Focusing upon improving quality of life for all community members.
- Supporting people to achieve their hopes and dreams by valuing choice, self-determination and dignity of risk.

HEALTH: Improving the health of the people and communities we serve.

- Embracing a holistic approach to empower people to nurture their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.
- Working together to create a community that embraces a healthy spirit for all.

INITIATIVES: Pioneering models and systems of care to enhance care delivery.

- Pioneering creative service delivery that embodies quality and innovative opportunities for the people we support.
- Providing leadership through listening, learning and continuous improvement and exploration of promising practices.

Make a world of difference in the lives of people with disabilities

Friendship, Inc. is now hiring for entry-level Coordinator positions (full- and part-time). This position provides direct support/services to people with developmental disabilities to enhance their quality of life. No experience is necessary—we'll provide the training.

QUALIFICATIONS INCLUDE:

- Must be 18 years of age
- Must have a valid driver's license
- Access to a licensed vehicle and proof of motor vehicle liability insurance may be required.
- Must meet the requirements of a background check

SALARY/BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Starting salary is \$13.69/hour.
- Five percent certification pay is given after successful completion of module curriculum.
- A sign-on bonus is given after successfully completing six months.

Gina Neary Named 2011 Professional of the Year



Gina Neary, named 2011 Professional of the Year by The Arc of Cass County.

Congratulations to Gina Neary for being chosen as the 2011 Professional of the Year by The Arc of Cass County. The following letter was written by one of her coworkers, Tricia Larson. Congratulations to Gina, and well done, Tricia!

Dear The Arc of Cass County:

I am nominating Gina Neary (DSP-Manager) for the Professional of the Year for her devotion and commitment to the people she supports at Friendship, Inc.

Gina has been employed by Friendship, Inc., for the last six years. Gina shows kindness, respect and humanity on a daily basis to all the people she supports at Friendship. Gina has formed strong bonds with the people she supports and their families within the last six years. Many employees look to Gina for mentorship and leadership within the company on a daily basis because of her creative abilities and ideas. If Gina has an idea or solution to an issue, she will use her creative abilities and headstrong personality to ensure it is followed up on until completion.

Most recently, a person she supports was diagnosed with cancer for the third time. Knowing this person well and understanding his dreams, Gina was determined to make one big dream come true for this person before his treatment began. Gina, with the help of other Friendship employees, was able to raise enough money in roughly four days to send this person to Disney World in Florida for a weeklong vacation. Gina orchestrated fundraising, newspaper and radio interviews, and word-of-mouth donations to raise the money needed. He was able to fly first class, eat at the best restaurants and meet all the superheroes he has admired his entire life. This is a big example of the small gestures of compassion Gina shows every day through her work with the people she supports.

Gina goes out of her way to ensure the people she supports are living happily and to their fullest potential. This includes working long hours and completing job duties that are outside of her job description. Gina knows the people she supports well, inside and out. She digs deep into their lives to assist them in having everything they would need on a daily basis, as well as working toward their long-term goals.

Please consider Gina Neary for the Professional of the Year. In my years of employment I have worked with Gina as my supervisor, mentor, and most recently colleague. She is one of the amazing people that agencies like Friendship, Inc. are lucky to have. She truly cares about the people she supports, regardless of their abilities. Gina goes above and beyond in all aspects of her job—a prime example for others working with people with disabilities.

Tricia Larson

Employee Giving on the Rise!

This past spring, Friendship, Inc. employees were presented with a challenge to increase the amount of financial giving from employees to the organization. All Friendship employees now have the opportunity to contribute financially to Friendship's mission through automatic payroll deductions. Earlier this spring, 44 percent of Friendship employees gave monetarily in some way to the organization on at least an annual basis. Employee payroll deductions ranged from \$0.50 to \$15 per pay period. This level of giving by staff is a wonderful reflection of their belief in the organization's mission and vision. As of this fall, 69 percent of employees are now giving monetarily through

automatic payroll deductions, and the range of giving has increased to \$0.50 to \$25 per pay period!

What motivates staff to give monetarily to the organization? Results from the Employee Performance Culture Assessment (satisfaction survey) this April showed that 94.4 percent of our staff feel that they are proud to be part of this organization, and that 92 percent of employees are highly motivated to contribute to the organization's success.

An important motivating factor for staff is the understanding that 100 percent of their contributed dollars are being used directly to impact the people whom we serve. Friendship donations are used for covering costs

of unallowable items (as determined by the state), such as rent deposits, furniture, vacation assistance, medical devices not authorized by Medicaid/Medicare and more. Your donations truly make a difference in the lives of the people we support.

Another possible motivating factor was the announcement that any department that has 100 percent participation of employee giving will get to "pie" a senior management team member of its choice at the fall general staff meeting. This announcement led to much laughter and excitement. Stay tuned for pictures of this fun event in our next newsletter!

Making a Year-End Gift to Friendship, Inc.

Please consider making a generous year-end gift to Friendship, Inc. Why? The stories we feature in our newsletters are intended to give a clearer picture of how Friendship is fulfilling our mission and vision throughout eastern North Dakota. Our mission statement challenges us to demonstrate our fidelity to the Gospel by emphasizing human dignity and committing to the creation of healthier communities. When people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have a chance to become fully engaged members in our communities through activities like work and volunteerism, they have the opportunity to earn wages, pay taxes, support area businesses as



consumers and give back to their communities through volunteerism.

We are nearing the end of this tax year, and you can deduct your contributions only in the year that you actually make them, whether in cash or in property. One hundred percent of your gift will be used to directly support the people whom

we serve. Friendship donations are used for covering costs of unallowable items (as determined by the state) such as rent deposits, furniture, vacation assistance, medical devices not authorized by Medicaid/Medicare and more. Your donations truly make a difference in the lives of the people we support!

Assistive Technology a Key to Breaking Down Barriers

Assistive technology is any piece of equipment, item, product or system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. There are numerous examples of how assistive technology is used within Friendship, Inc., but one of the newer technologies that has received a lot of recent attention is the Apple iPad.

Apple currently reports that there are more than 350,000 applications that can be used with the iPad. Applications for people with disabilities cover a wide range of uses. For people with vision loss, there are magnifiers, programs that identify colors and currency, voice output and audio books. There are numerous communication applications for people unable to use their voice. Other applications are available for prompting, scheduling, medication reminders, etc. Applications such as Skype have become very popular and allow the user to have a video conversation with friends and family at a distance.

Friendship is committed to embracing the use of all technology (whether high- or low-tech) that may benefit the people we serve. Our goal is to partner with external expertise, such as the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology, as well as to educate our staff and build internal expertise. This will allow us to continue to support people and enhance their functional capacities to the greatest extent possible.



Stephanie Ault uses an application on the Apple iPad. Assistive technology devices, such as the iPad, are used to improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Show Your Support at West Acres Regional Shopping Center

Friendship, Inc. collaborates with many employers throughout eastern North Dakota to employ people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in community-based employment. One of Friendship's longest collaborations has been with the West Acres Regional Shopping Center in Fargo. One of the main reasons West Acres has been a significant employer for people with disabilities is Manager Rusty Papacek. Rusty understands what many business managers know: that a quality workforce is a diverse workforce.

Currently the mall and associated mall businesses are employing eight people supported by Friendship. People are employed in various capacities throughout the mall and at the food court. Employment opportunities, whether at West Acres or other businesses, allow people with disabilities to contribute to our economy by earning a wage, paying taxes and spending their discretionary income within our communities. We encourage all stakeholders of Friendship to show your support and appreciation for businesses that hire people with disabilities by giving them your business. Please show your support!

Friendship, Inc.

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Giving Back to the Community

Curtis has created a social role for himself by collecting pennies and donating the money to the Ronald McDonald House. He was interested in raising money for the Ronald McDonald House and wanted to educate people on the purpose and the importance of the organization.

This effort began in 2005 with one classroom of fourth graders. Curtis was referred to Mrs. Petersburg's fourth-grade class by a parent of one of the children in the class. Curtis brought information about the Ronald McDonald House to the class, and he and the students decided to collect pennies and donate the money to the local Ronald McDonald House.

Each September, Curtis meets the new fourth-grade class and visits each month for the entire school year. He shares everything he knows about Ronald McDonald House and collects pennies during his visit. When Curtis visits, they usually have something special planned, especially around the holidays. The children are very interested in hearing about the Ronald McDonald House and all the touching stories of the families who have benefited from the organization. Curtis has made many friends throughout the years, and each year he makes more new friends. He has also bonded with Mrs. Petersburg, who has enjoyed helping Curtis teach the children the value of a volunteer role and giving back to their community.

Curtis also collects pennies at local businesses. He goes from office to office to collect pennies from employees to donate. During the summer months when school is out, Curtis plans a trip to Fargo to bring the money to the



Curtis works with a local fourth-grade class, as well as area businesses, to collect pennies to donate to the Ronald McDonald House in Fargo, N.D.

Ronald McDonald House. He presents the money, visits with the staff at the house and takes lots of pictures. One hundred percent of the money collected goes directly to the local Ronald McDonald House in Fargo, N.D.