

LifePursuits

Spring 2020



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NUMBERS**

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Lifeworks

A nonprofit serving
people with disabilities

Lifeworks

A nonprofit serving
people with disabilities

Contact Us

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Pictured on cover: Cheyenne Kruse at
Snell Auto Wash in Mankato.

2019

LIFEWORKS IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

2,883
people served

176
new job
placements
92%
were directly
hired by
employers

715
people
received
employment
support

555
employer
partners
96
new employer
partners

70
people participated in
music programming

12,638
miles traveled through
Community Skill Building
services

3,565
Fiscal employees provided
2,895,220
hours of direct care to the people we serve

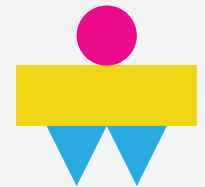
2020 LIFEWORKS ANNUAL AWARD HONOREES



Since 1986, Lifeworks has recognized the achievements and contributions of the people we serve and our community partners that champion diversity and inclusion. Lifeworks received 90 award nominations from family members, friends, employers, colleagues, and community members that were reviewed by an independent, impartial, volunteer committee who selected our five honorees.



PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT **JONDA DANSARE**



NOMINATORS:
CARYN ADDANTE AND JONDA DANSARE

Recently celebrating her 10-year anniversary at Ecolab, Jonda's come a long way in achieving her professional and personal goals. As a Lab Assistant in the Research, Development, and Engineering Microbiology and Analytical Department, she helps drive efficiency by prepping samples and maintaining equipment. Jonda is dedicated to her work and loves her job.

Her zest for life extends well beyond work. From weekly book club to bowling league and softball (her team won the championship last season), Jonda's wide range of interests and willingness to try something new has given her the opportunity to continually develop skills and build lasting friendships.

Jonda is also passionate about giving back to her community. She volunteers at church helping take care of children, walks for the Multiple Sclerosis Society each year in honor of her grandmother, and celebrates her birthday by donating time to Feed My Starving Children.

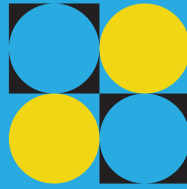
THANK YOU! **LIFEWORKS ANNUAL AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE**

We are grateful to our volunteers for their help in selecting this year's honorees.

- Jessica Diede – Senior Diversity and Inclusion Specialist at Ameriprise Financial
- Julie Endersbe – Work-Based Learning Coordinator at ISD 196
- Claire Jordan – Parent of a person served by Lifeworks
- Sara Lidstrom – Production Manager at Peace Coffee
- Patti Walsh – Development Director at CAIR-Minnesota
- Erin Woodward – Brand and Corporate Social Responsibility Manager at Uponor

ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR

RACH-AL-PACA FIBER PROCESSING



NOMINATORS:
PATRICK EISELE, JODI IVERSON, AND KAELENE KLEMICK

Rach-Al-Paca Fiber Processing uses a community-centric approach to diversify talent and create an inclusive environment. With open arms and high expectations, owner, Rachel Boucher, welcomes the people we serve, at-risk youth, and veterans.

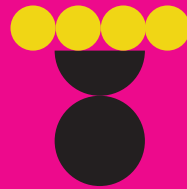
She concentrates on individual strengths, teaches life lessons, and develops skills – helping to ensure the future success of her employees. Her willingness to be flexible and adapt tasks as needed has improved accessibility for all.

As a champion of inclusion, Rach-Al-Paca invests in people and shows through example that we are better, together.



ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

AMY ANDREWS



NOMINATOR:
KELLY ANDERSON

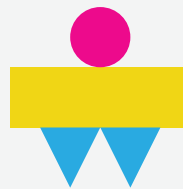
Adopting 15 children over the past 20 years – Amy provides a loving home and unwavering support for people with significant needs. Despite mountains of county paperwork and back-to-back appointments, she strives to understand each child, focusing on choice and giving the tools to foster their independence.

Amy understands the value of community engagement and the importance of advocating for resources that break down barriers to inclusion. Her children take part in Special Olympics and they donate time to the felines available for adoption at Fleugal's. From setting up therapy sessions and counseling services to managing in-home staff, Amy guarantees that a support structure will always be in place for her children.



PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

SEAN CARROLL



NOMINATORS:

SHERRY CAMPEAU AND PATTI CARROLL

Sean's focus on personal growth has led him to explore interests, set goals, and take action. Wanting to be on stage, Sean joined Interact Theater, a company of actors who challenge perceptions of disabilities through the creation of original work, and learned about acting and the behind-the-scenes efforts that go into creating performances.

Opportunity struck when the director of the Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company play, *O my God!*, sought authenticity for the role of Loir, a teenager with autism. Sean was offered the character and took it seriously – studying the script, attending every rehearsal, and even learning how to play the cello for the role.

His performance impacted viewers and received acclaim; “The most moving performance comes from Carroll,” read the *StarTribune's* review of the play. Sean plans to continue pursuing his acting career and is working on his next goal: traveling to other states on his own.



STAFF EXCELLENCE

FISCAL MANAGEMENT

SERVICES TRANSITION TEAM



NOMINATOR:

KIM MUELLER

In October 2018, the Minnesota Department of Human Services announced the need to transition to a new budget model, that would impact 904 Lifeworks participants who self-direct their services and their affiliated 2,150 employees. Lifeworks formed an internal transition team of service, administrative, human resources, payroll, and finance professionals who treated this announcement as an opportunity by providing a proactive, person-centered approach to help families confidently navigate this mandate.

Through April 2019, the team offered expert-led, individual meetings in-person and over the phone and held more than 60 educational summits. Early morning, late evening, and Saturday summit sessions were available with interpreter services. The personal commitment displayed by the team – despite working long days for weeks and weeks – ensured that each recipient had what they needed. The Fiscal Management Transition Team set an excellent example for Lifeworks and our industry in how to best support the people we serve with navigating complex regulatory changes.

Understanding Ableism in Today's World

Lifeworks knows that if we want tomorrow to be different, we have to change today. We are always learning so we can continue to advance conversations about inclusion. As an industry leader, Lifeworks invests in exploring concepts and practices that break down barriers and encourage a sense of belonging. One of the areas that we are working to raise awareness around is *ableism*.

This year, we are sharing our expertise about ableism with the business and non-profit communities through trainings, workshops, and presentations at local and national conferences. So far, Lifeworks has been selected to present at the Minnesota Social Service Association conference and the National Association of Professional Supporting Employment First conference.

WHAT IS ABLEISM?

Ableism is a system in which being nondisabled is treated as a standard of normal living. In other words, ableism promotes the belief that people with disabilities are inferior to those without disabilities.

WHY DOES ABLEISM OCCUR?

Ableism is a way of coping with differences and it occurs because our society does not value people equally. Having a disability is often incorrectly viewed as atypical – so the societal response to that misconception is to try and fix what is perceived as wrong. Ableism also occurs because people with disabilities are usually not in positions of power, meaning that their voice is rarely part of the decision-making process for workplaces and communities.

HOW DO I RECOGNIZE ABLEISM WHEN I SEE IT?

Recognizing ableism is not easy because it is so ingrained and normalized in our society, but there are ways to identify when it's happening. One useful tip is to think of the person you respect the most – your role model. Ask, "Would I talk to my role model that way? Would I make that assumption about them?"

HOW DOES ABLEISM INHIBIT COMMUNITY?

Humans are inherently different – and disability reflects that diversity. Accessibility and diversity enhance all lives, so by not encouraging all people to contribute, we hold communities back from what they could become. In other words, we miss opportunities to hear multiple perspectives that have not been considered before so we remain stagnate.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT ABLEISM AND PREVENTING IT?

Reading materials created by people with disabilities can provide a perspective of lived experiences. Books such as James Charlton's *Nothing About Us Without Us*, Susan Sygall's *No Ordinary Days*, or Keah Brown's *The Pretty One* are great resources for building an understanding about ableism and inclusion.





Self-Directed Services Provide Choice and Consistency

The Pathre family has been with Lifeworks Fiscal Management Services since 2009. Rijuta and Sadanand chose to self-direct services through Personal Support and Respite for their daughter, Minkakshi – or Minu for short.

Prior to managing their own support staff, the Pathres tried working with traditional service providers, but realized it was not a good fit for Minu.

“There were so many new people and lots of documentation. I was training their staff all the time. It was hard on Minu

to get used to new people and it was hard for the support professionals too. To understand a person, you need to work with them for a while. Read her cues and know what she is trying to express – there wasn’t a chance to develop that bond,” reflected Rijuta.

The Pathre’s decided to self-direct Minu’s care; they wanted to hire and manage their own staff. When in the market for a licensed provider of Personal Support and Respite, their social worker mentioned Lifeworks – and the rest is history.



Rijuta shared, “Now, since we are on a waiver, Lifeworks is our financial intermediary – and we like that much better. We chose the staff so Minu has a consistent person and can form that

and state requirements are met – leaving more time for enjoying everyday life. Minu loves being outdoors listening to the birds chirp and watching for airplanes. She enjoys horseback

“One of the things I noticed about working with other agencies is that they are focused on the bottom line. That is not the case with Lifeworks. Their main focus is to provide the services and ensure that changes do not adversely impact clients.

- Sadanand Pathre

bond of trust. Because we went this route, Minu has changed dramatically – much more relaxed and happier. It really helps to have consistency.”

riding and spending time with people. Rijuta explains, “In our community, everyone is attached to Minu. She’s part of it.”

For the Pathre family, the personalized service that Lifeworks provides has given them peace of mind that payroll for their staff is processed

Learn more about Lifeworks Fiscal Management Services:

lifeworks.org/fiscal-support | 651-454-2732

WORDS TO KNOW

Self-directed Services: the ability for a person with disabilities or their family to control and manage their personal care, support, and staff.

**BE YOUR
BEST SELF.
TAKE TIME TO
RECHARGE.**

Licensed provider of
Personal Support
and Respite Services.

Let us help.
lifeworks.org | 651-454-2732

Serving Minnesotans for 55 years

Lifeworks

A nonprofit serving
people with disabilities



HOW IT WORKS: Personal Support & Respite

Interested in self-directed services? Lifeworks developed an overview to walk you through the steps of getting started with Personal Support & Respite Services. As a licensed provider, Lifeworks is skilled at navigating complex situations and state requirements. We ensure that support professionals have what they need to work for you.



Complete a MnChoices assessment.

The process begins with an in-person visit from an assessor who learns about your needs, goals, and preferences; this information determines your eligibility and authorized amount of support.



Connect with a social worker.

After you are authorized to receive services, a social worker will use your input to create a Coordinated Services and Supports Plan (CSSP). This document is a summary of how you would like to receive support.



Choose a provider.

The social worker may share a list of providers that you can use to process services. Lifeworks is a licensed provider of Personal Support and Respite Services.



Find your support professional.

You may already have someone in mind to provide assistance; if not, you can search for support professionals by visiting the website: directsupportconnect.com.



Meet with your provider.

Now that you are authorized for services and have determined your needs, it's time to meet with your provider. They will share information about how the program works and together, you will create a strategy for providing services to meet your goals.



Your support professional completes requirements.

Before a person can begin working with you, they must fill out employment paperwork, including being fingerprinted, passing a background check, and successfully completing a competency training.



You manage the work.

As soon as the requirements are completed, contact your support professional to begin work. You will be in charge of managing their schedule and your authorized hours of service. Lifeworks ensures that the work has been performed and processes employee payroll.



Lifeworks will check in with you.

Within 60 days, we will reach out to you and make sure the plan is going well, noting any needed changes.



You're set.

Lifeworks will continue to be a resource for you and each year, we will formally check in to make sure everything is on track.

New Self-Directed Service to Replace Personal Care Assistance and Consumer Support Grant Programs

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is in the process of developing a new self-directed service named, Community First Services and Supports (CFSS) that will offer participants more control and choice over their care. CFSS will be for people living in the community who need help with day-to-day activities. This service will be available under Medical Assistance, waivers, and Alternative Care programs.

Importantly, CFSS will replace the Personal Care Assistant (PCA) service and the Consumer Support Grant (CSG) programs. It will have the same rules as PCA, specifically that a person must have an assessment to determine eligibility. With CFSS you will meet with a consultative service provider to establish a person-centered plan. Depending on the assessed needs and plan, CFSS participants will be able to buy goods that reduce the need for human assistance (adaptive equipment, technology, etc.).

Spouses and parents of minor CFSS participants can be paid to provide services. The CFSS worker's role is expanded, giving them the ability to help participants learn new skills and complete daily living activities. The CFSS process includes both budget and traditional agency models.

Participants of the budget model will act as an employer—they will recruit, hire, train, and supervise their support workers. As a Fiscal Management Service provider, Lifeworks will be there to help by ensuring compliance with labor laws, processing payroll, obtaining necessary insurances, and more.

State and federal approval are required to implement CFSS. To date, DHS has received legislative approval and has submitted an amendment to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Lifeworks will provide updates regarding CFSS as information is made available.

Summary

- Community First Services and Supports (CFSS) will replace Personal Care Assistance (PCA) and the Consumer Support Grant (CSG) programs.
- CFSS involves developing a plan with a consultative service provider.
- Depending on the assessed plan, CFSS participants will be able to buy goods that reduce the need for human assistance.
- Spouses and parents of minor CFSS participants can be paid to provide services.
- CFSS's projected implementation is July 2021.

For more information, the DHS has put together this short video: <https://bit.ly/37HkRjn>

Community Skill Building:

REINVENTING WHAT'S POSSIBLE



An interview with Lifeworks Regional Manager, Raquel Sidie-Wagner, pictured above.

Q: WHAT IS LIFEWORKS COMMUNITY SKILL BUILDING?

A: Community Skill Building (CSB) is an inclusive approach to advancing choice and building independence. The heart of CSB is providing opportunities for people to explore their interests and develop skills within their community – that can then be transferred to the rest of their lives.

Q: WHERE DOES LIFEWORKS OFFER CSB?

A: We are continually expanding our service area. Right now, Lifeworks CSB groups are located in: Apple Valley, Brooklyn Park, Golden Valley, Hastings, Mankato, Scott County, St. Paul, and West St. Paul.

Q: HOW MANY PEOPLE PARTICIPATE IN CSB?

A: Lifeworks currently serves approximately 100 people through CSB. Groups typically include anywhere from six to eight people with Lifeworks staff providing support in the community.

Q: WHO DECIDES WHAT GROUPS DO IN THE COMMUNITY?

A: CSB is designed with flexibility in mind so that the people served can lead the experience. CSB participants use an assessment tool to determine what skills they want to build. Groups are then formed based on identified, personal goals; they also come together to discuss what they would like to learn.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SKILLS THAT CSB HELPS PEOPLE DEVELOP?

A: In many situations outside of Lifeworks, people with disabilities tend not to be asked what they want and decisions are often made for them without their input. Self-advocacy through communication is a big focus for Lifeworks CSB. Essentially, learning how to say what you want and need.

Also, the population we serve is unfortunately accustomed to being in segregated environments, so some of the work is understanding how to engage and be successful in different places – both learning how to identify which ones are comfortable and navigating those that may have barriers.

Q: HOW DO GROUPS GET TO THE COMMUNITY?

A: To reduce reliance on Lifeworks and foster independence, we leverage public transportation such as Metro Mobility when possible because it offers more extensive geographic coverage and flexible times. Most Lifeworks CSB groups also have vehicles equipped to be accessible and ensure safety.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF CSB OUTINGS?

A: From navigating transportation – whether that be by bus or ride-sharing apps – to ordering food from a restaurant and money management, it all depends on what people want to explore in their community and the skills they want to develop. Many of the CSB groups choose to volunteer with organizations like Feed my Starving Children and VEAP.

WHAT MAKES LIFEWORKS CSB UNIQUE FROM OTHER DAY SERVICE OFFERINGS?

A: CSB at Lifeworks is 100 percent participant driven. We honor choice – listening, motivating, and encouraging everyone to reach their full potential. Our highly-skilled staff are dedicated to our mission and love what they do.

Q: HOW HAS CSB IMPACTED YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES?

A: Despite being the largest minority group, the people we serve are deeply underrepresented in the community – and we’re working to change that.

Studies show that a more inclusive workforce leads to greater outcomes, so bringing in people who can help businesses understand ways they can improve and welcome diverse populations is better for everyone.

We have also found that if a business has a staff person who champions inclusion — it can make all the difference. If someone there is passionate about advocating for the people we serve, it opens the door for us to build greater community.

Q: HOW CAN LOCAL BUSINESSES HELP SUPPORT CSB?

A: We are always in need of spaces for the group to learn and eat lunch – especially during the holidays when places such as libraries and community centers are closed. And we aren’t picky. The space just has to be accessible with a restroom.

Cost is often a barrier to access so another way local businesses have helped in the past is by sponsoring a group membership to local offerings such as the YMCA.

Support CSB by visiting:

lifeworks.org/donate and making a donation to help pay for local memberships for our groups.

Interested in learning more about CSB or requesting a group in your area?

Call us at 651-365-3773

SUPPORT ACCESS AND INCLUSION - DONATE A RIDE

For the people we support, one of the largest barriers to engaging with the community is transportation. The rides that Lifeworks gives are an investment in inclusion.

Help us continue providing this critical service.

MAKE YOUR GIFT, TODAY!

lifeworks.org | 651-365-3719

COMMUNITY SKILL BUILDING

12,638
MILES TRAVELLED
IN
2019



The Otto Bremer Trust Awards Grant to Lifeworks

The Otto Bremer Trust* recently awarded Lifeworks with a \$60,000 grant to provide skill building and career development opportunities for people with disabilities in the Twin Cities and Mankato areas.

“Lifeworks has done an excellent job developing a continuum of support for people with disabilities to help them find and succeed in a career of their choosing,” said Daniel Reardon, co-CEO and trustee, Otto Bremer Trust.

Lifeworks is grateful for this support. The generosity of the Otto Bremer Trust makes it possible for us to champion inclusion by providing services that offer choice, independence, and a sense of belonging. With this funding, Lifeworks will continue to develop a holistic, self-determined service model for the people we serve to explore interests and build skills entirely in the community while working towards their chosen career path. In conjunction with this effort, we will grow our network of employer partners while serving as a resource for them to build an inclusive workforce.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Minnesotans we serve, thank you Otto Bremer Trust for investing in Lifeworks and helping us encourage systematic change.

*The Otto Bremer Trust is a bank holding company and a private charitable trust based in Saint Paul. To learn more about them, visit: ottobremer.org

New Multi-Sensory Environment

Lifeworks Apple Valley has transformed a previously underutilized space into an engaging environment for the senses. The space includes a vibro-acoustic pit that simulates the feeling of floating; fiber optic carpets that create a calming experience; a solar projector that dances lights and soothing colors across the walls; and large-scale activity panels that create a wall of sensory learning opportunities. The environment offers consistency – whether that be a place to decompress, work through uneasiness, or reenergize.

Learn more about Lifeworks Day Services, visit: lifeworks.org/day-services



The multi-sensory environment was made possible through generous donations in memory of Connie Ho.

FIGURING OUT THE NEXT STEP: Cheyenne's Career Journey

From catching goldfish in the pond to crocheting booties for the local women's shelter and reading L.A. Meyer's novels, Cheyenne has always been one to dive into her passions and try new things.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services, a government program designed to help people with disabilities find meaningful careers, referred Cheyenne to Lifeworks Employment Services where she began exploring interests and developing skills through seasonal work. This approach led Cheyenne to build a resumé that reflected her talents.

Cheyenne's jobs have included being a ski-lift operator, a college apartment prep-painter, and a call-center representative. Her previous employer and one of Mankato's largest seasonal employers, Fun.com, was so impressed by Cheyenne's work that they welcomed her back for three years, steadily increasing her responsibilities to include handling escalated customer issues – a role where she excelled.



She reflects, "I know how to communicate with people a lot better now. When I worked in customer service at Fun.com, I assisted people who were frustrated. I know what it is like to be upset so I could relate to them and help find a solution."

In January 2019, Cheyenne was hired at Snell Auto Wash. She assists with cleaning and detailing as well as stocking materials to keep the business running

smoothly. Long-term, consistent employment led her to transition to Extended Employment Services where Lifeworks checks in regularly to support her career journey.

While Cheyenne enjoys working at the auto wash, she has her sights set on the future: "In the next

Lessons employment has taught Cheyenne:

"Always work hard and don't be afraid to ask questions."

five years, I want to become a vet tech and have one more cat, a horse, and a dog or two."

Cheyenne's desire to pursue veterinary school developed from her passion for taking care of animals at a human society: "I like animals. I volunteered at BENCHS [Blue Earth Nicollet County Humane Society] for a long time. I would go every day from 7:00 a.m. to close because I wanted to hang out with them."

When asked what her greatest accomplishment is so far, she replied, "Adopting my cat, Evelyn and taking care of her."

Are you looking to start or advance your career? From exploring your interests to continually building skills – we are here to offer guidance and support throughout your journey.

Learn more about Lifeworks Employment Services: lifeworks.org/employment | 651-365-3733

Lifeworks

Lifeworks Services Inc.
2965 Lone Oak Drive, Suite 160
Eagan, MN 55121

lifeworks.org | 651-454-2732

Since 1965, Lifeworks Services Inc. has been a champion for inclusion. Lifeworks was founded by families who recognized the importance of advocacy and breaking down barriers for people with disabilities to be part of the community.

Mission: to serve our community and people with disabilities as we live and work together.

Lifeworks is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and an Equal Opportunity Employer.

This information can be made available in an alternate format upon request.

Invest in Disability Inclusion

Opportunities Offered by Lifeworks:

- *Work/Life*[™] exhibit rental
- Organization-wide trainings
- One-to-one consultation

Learn more:

lifeworks.org/worklifemn
612-695-2289

