

LifePursuits

Winter 2020

**INTRODUCING OUR
NEW VALUES**

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**PINS, SPIKES,
AND PATCHES:
LOKI'S CUSTOM
JACKETS**

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Pictured on cover:
Loki, Lifeworks Pre-Employment
Transition Services participant



INTRODUCING OUR New Values

During the fourth quarter of 2019 – well before navigating the impact of COVID-19 – Lifeworks began a project to take a deep look at who we are with the intent of updating our values. Why did we do this? Because our values tell us what’s important. They set us apart, guide our decision making, and are the blueprint for our success.

To ensure that our values reflect Lifeworks, we took the time to connect with individuals served, their families, and our staff. In total, we interviewed 89 people, asking questions that sought to reveal truths about their experience with us, how they view our organization, and why they ultimately choose to be part of the Lifeworks community.

Their feedback served as the backbone for identifying key themes that reflect how we work together and how we carry out our mission.

From there, we asked tough questions and put words to paper – and reviewed again and again to ensure that Lifeworks values align with what we do and our beliefs.



**And now, we are excited to share
our values with you.**



You Lead the Way – We Listen

We honor choice and pursue opportunities with community at the heart of our work.



Together, We Break Down Barriers

We seek diverse perspectives, advance accessibility, and encourage a sense of belonging for all.



We Focus on Impact

We hold ourselves to the highest standards. We share expertise and collaborate to find solutions that address the whole picture.



We Reinvent What's Possible

We take chances and welcome the unknown. We learn from the past and lean into the future.



BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND GIVING BACK

Marilyn's Self-Determined Support

Marilyn and her late husband, Gary, started accessing Day Services from Lifeworks Mankato in 2010. Because of COVID-19, Marilyn's job cleaning for the local park system ended, so she worked with Lifeworks to determine her next steps. These days, Marilyn loves to connect with friends and crochet. She makes beautiful, cakepan-sized potholders and donates them to local thrift stores to sell as well as gives them away as gifts. "I enjoy my home and appreciate when people visit with me because otherwise, I'm lonesome."

Marilyn transitioned from group services in a Lifeworks facility to individual services that take place in the community. She now receives support from Lifeworks twice a week. Her Service Facilitator, Jacque Crouch, has worked with her for over a decade – and together, they have built a strong connection. Marilyn reflects, "I like being with Jacque. I really do. I consider her a good friend."

Wednesdays for Marilyn are generally spent running errands and working out. Jacque shares, “We do whatever Marilyn wants to do for the day. We’ve gone on walks, visited the craft store, and picked up groceries. I like spending time with her and making sure that everything is going good and that her needs are met.”

Fridays are reserved for volunteer work. Marilyn can often be found at The Salvation Army assisting with organizing clothes. As she will tell you, “I enjoy helping people. That’s my main goal.”

With winter approaching, Marilyn is looking forward to creating artwork at the local library and visiting VINE Adult Community Center to workout. Jacque explains, “To maintain Marilyn’s mobility, we make time for regular exercise. One of the good things about meeting one-to-one now – rather than traveling as a group on the bus – is that I can go straight to her door, offer my arm to assist her down the stairs – and when needed quickly shovel the walkway to make sure that she gets out.”

“I enjoy helping people. That’s my main goal.”

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WAIVER REIMAGINE:

STATE-LED CHANGES IMPACT LIFEWORKS

The Minnesota Department of Human Services' (DHS) Waiver Reimagine project seeks to simplify the waiver system and give more options to people with disabilities and their families. It was developed in response to a growing need for waived services and input from the community served.

Pending approval from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Waiver Reimagine phase I changes are anticipated to begin in January 1, 2021 and will be rolled out through the year. For people served by Lifeworks Fiscal and Day Services, Waiver Reimagine changes will occur at an individual's reassessment date or annual planning meeting. Outlined below are ways that Waiver Reimagine may impact Lifeworks customers.

DAY SERVICES

Under Waiver Reimagine, a person receiving Day Training and Habilitation Services (DT&H) will transition to receive Day Support Services (DSS). According to the published DHS definition, DSS are individualized services that provide opportunities for training and support so that people with disabilities can maintain essential life skills and fully access personally preferred activities in their community. Examples include mobility safety, skill development, decision making, problem solving, self-care, ADL support, and self-direction. Lifeworks understanding is while DT&H will phase out by the end of 2021, DSS will continue to provide an option for community and/or center services.

The way Lifeworks approaches individualized Day Services today is already aligned with the definition for DSS. Each person served directs their services, focusing on what they want to learn and explore; staff provide undivided, personalized support while increasing access to the community and fostering life skills.

FISCAL SERVICES

For customers who use Lifeworks as their Personal Support provider, their service under Waiver Reimagine will transition to Individualized Home Supports (IHS). This service will be licensed under 245D with the same rate, annual planning, and training requirements as Personal Support. It will continue to be delivered as a one-to-one service that is available to adults and children who reside in their own home, family's home, or in the community.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Lifeworks is here to navigate these DHS changes with you. We will continue to share updates as we learn more.

If you have questions about how Waiver Reimagine may impact you, please reach out to your Lifeworks contact or call: 651-365-3773.

Please note: This information was gathered using materials provided by DHS regarding Waiver Reimagine. Additional updates may occur as the project rolls out statewide. To find out more, visit: mn.gov/dhs/waiver-reimagine and disabilityhubmn.org



We're in a Good Spot – THE SAARI/KASHEF FAMILY'S SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT SYSTEM

The Saari/Kashefs are a close-knit family. They love to play games, put together puzzles, and watch movies. Two of their children, Lauren and Ryan, access Lifeworks Fiscal Management Services (FMS) for processing Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS) – authorized funding that covers staffing, goods, and services for families who want to manage their own care.

Lauren has an incredible memory; she can recite moments from movies with perfection, even matching inflections and accents. She loves old films (her favorite being, *Gone with the Wind*) and invests time in building her acting and singing skills. Each week, Lauren has a music class and a three-hour drama class where she creates one-person plays that are presented to her family and friends and sometimes at local nursing homes. To limit in-person contact during COVID-19, Lauren is working on

recording vignettes from the show *I Love Lucy* on Zoom and emailing them to people.

Lucky for Lauren, her brother Ryan, the family chef, makes her lunch each day. He enjoys spending time in the garden and searching for new recipes to try out. Ryan is also a go-getter. Since high school, he has always had a job – which has helped him not only grow his skillset, but has also given him the means to afford the latest trends, whether that be beard oils or the newest beverage.

Cynthia, Lauren and Ryan's mother, was on the planning committee for implementing CDCS in Dakota County, making her family one of the first to receive this type of support in 2004. They learned about Lifeworks more than a decade ago and over the years have formed a strong, trusting partnership with their Lifeworks Fiscal Service

Coordinator, Cindy Mooers. Cynthia reflects, "Cindy has held our hand through times of transition and helped us get everything done. There is no way that I could have ever done that on my own."

CDCS has given Cynthia the flexibility to truly focus on her children. She, along with her husband, Cyrus, older daughters, and stepson can assist Lauren and Ryan as paid staff. She shares, "If we didn't have this support, I'd have to find someone else to take care of my kids. I'm so grateful. It has allowed me to really be here for them. I am giving my children the life they want to live - and that's because it has freed up my time."

Lifeworks has given the Saari/Kashef family a peace of mind. Cynthia notes, "I'm no longer panicked when I receive a letter from the county. Lifeworks has always been super willing to sit down and figure it out with me. They dig deep, which has helped us build the relationship we have with them. I trust Lifeworks and because of them, we're in a good spot."

“If we didn’t have this support, I’d have to find someone else to take care of my kids. I’m so grateful. It has allowed me to really be here for them. I am giving my children the life they want to live – and that’s because it has freed up my time.”

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Consumer Directed Community Supports

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Saari/Kashefs are one of more than 800 families that selected Lifeworks as their service provider for processing Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS). Are you interested in self-direct support? Below are common questions we receive about CDCS.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICE (FMS) PROVIDERS?

Providers like Lifeworks take care of financial tasks and employer-related responsibilities for people who self-direct their services through CDCS. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Billing the Minnesota Department of Human Services and paying vendors or the participant's support staff for authorized goods and services.
- Ensuring what the participant spends their funds on follows the rules of the program and the lead agency's approved plan.
- Assisting with obtaining the Employer Identification Number.
- Documenting and reporting all spending related to program funds.
- Initiating background studies for the participant's support staff.
- Filing federal and state payroll taxes for support staff on the participant's behalf.

DOES LIFEWORKS PROVIDE SUPPORT STAFF FOR THE PARTICIPANT?

No, Lifeworks does not provide support staff for CDCS – but we are glad to assist you with hiring your family and friends! If you do not already have someone in mind, you can search for support professionals by visiting: directsupportconnect.com

HOW DO I HIRE MY SUPPORT STAFF?

Being hired through Lifeworks FMS is easy! We just need basic information about your support staff and verification of their I-9 and related documents. Your support staff must also complete their employment paperwork, including being fingerprinted and passing a background check.

DO MY SUPPORT STAFF NEED TO COMPLETE ANY TRAINING?

The support manager is responsible for providing orientation, annual, and ongoing training to their support staff. The support staff must also receive training on the participant's Community Support Plan and on any updates that are made.

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CHARGE OF YOUR OWN HOME CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES?

We can help! To learn more about Lifeworks Fiscal Services, contact:

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



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New Service:

SELF-DIRECTED RESOURCE NAVIGATION

Are you or a loved one transitioning from school to adulthood or approaching a new phase in life, but don't know where to start? Understanding the resources available for people with disabilities can feel overwhelming.

That's why Lifeworks is now offering Self-Directed Resource Navigation. Using a personalized approach, Lifeworks assists with exploring possibilities and then connects you with the resources to make your vision for the future a reality.

WHAT IS SELF-DIRECTED RESOURCE NAVIGATION?

Self-Directed Resource Navigation is a series of informational meetings designed to explore options and connect you to resources that align with your goals. This personalized approach gives you the tools to take the next step while developing self-advocacy skills. It starts with you – a conversation to understand your aspirations, challenges, and plans for the future. From there, we dig in to identify local resources, and with your feedback, build a roadmap to achieve your goals.

WHO CAN ACCESS THIS SERVICE?

Self-Directed Resource Navigation is available to anyone who is facing or planning a transition in their life. We are currently accepting new customers within the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area.

HOW CAN PEOPLE PAY FOR THIS SERVICE?

Licensed under 245D intensive services, Self-Directed Resource Navigation is funded through the Minnesota Department of Human Services' Family Counseling and Training and can be covered through the following waivers: Alternative Care (AC), Brain Injury (BI), Community Alternative Care (CAC), Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI), or Developmental Disabilities (DD). Lifeworks also accepts private pay for this service. The cost is \$80.00 per hour or \$40.00 per 30-minute session.

Interested in getting started with Lifeworks Self-Directed Resource Navigation? Schedule your first session: [651-365-3773](tel:651-365-3773) | referrals@lifeworks.org



**PINS, SPIKES,
AND PATCHES:**

Loki's Custom Jackets



Loki started customizing jackets when they were 14 years old. They were inspired after coming across a fellow classmate wearing crust pants, a punk-inspired, clothing style. Loki explains, “To make crust pants, you cut up jean fabric, sew it on a pair of pants, and kick the pants in the mud; then, after letting them soak up the mud for a bit, you smack the pants to remove the excess earth and set the look.”

Paired with Dr. Martens boots and a painted coat featuring spikes, pins, and band patches, the punk style of Loki’s friend sparked the idea for a new business venture.

Loki reflects, “I dug out one my old jackets from middle school and began working on it. Figuring practice makes perfect, when I finished my first jacket, I did another one – and it was a complete mess. The sleeves were too tight, so I cut them off – and so was the hem, which I ripped. In the end, only the back was left of it. I destroyed the jacket by accident.”

Over the next year, Loki continued to experiment, customizing several jackets for themselves and friends. They work with jean, leather, and cotton jackets – and have even used hoodies to design one-of-a-kind, wearable works of art that people can use to express themselves in their everyday lives.

Loki learned about Lifeworks Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) through school. Pre-ETS is offered through Minnesota’s Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). They provide counseling and training in job exploration, work-based learning, post-secondary education, workplace readiness, and self-advocacy. Susan Fox, a counselor with VRS, connected Lifeworks with Loki’s school.

After meeting with Lifeworks, Loki decided to move forward with Pre-ETS. They completed an assessment of their interests and goals for the future. They share, “I was skeptical at first. I thought, ‘Do these people think that I cannot find a job on my own? There is a view that people with

disabilities cannot do a lot on their own. And I don't like that stereotype.”

Right as the in-person, Pre-ETS meetings were scheduled to start, COVID-19 happened, resulting in transitioning to virtual, individual support with Lifeworks Career Placement Counselor, Iqra Rabbani. She explains, “When we connected, the purpose was to explore different fields. As I got to know Loki, it became clear that fashion was their passion. They are so creative. They were already making custom jackets, so I suggested that Loki develop their skillset by starting a business.”

They came up with a name: LokisPunkwear, created a brand with a logo, put together a professional portfolio, built an online shop through Etsy, and setup marketing channels, including Facebook and Instagram. As an online business owner herself and an expert in connecting people with careers that they love, Iqra was a great mentor for Loki. She shared free resources and passed on the knowledge she has gained over the years – all while focusing on developing lifelong skills and supporting Loki's goals.

Loki has been grateful for this experience. “Lifeworks has given me so many opportunities. Iqra has supported me a lot. I wouldn't have my business without her. I cannot stop thanking her.”

“I want to continue giving people another way to express themselves. It's not just about the money. I'm gaining skills and knowledge that will help me well into my future.”

When asked what's next for their business, Loki replies, “I want to continue giving people another way to express themselves. It's not just about the money. I'm gaining skills and knowledge that will help me well into my future.”

Interested in a custom jacket? Check out Loki's Esty shop: etsy.com/shop/LokisPunkwear

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN SCHOOL AND WORK

Pre-Employment Transition Services

- Job Exploration
- Work-Based Learning
- Post-Secondary Counseling
- Self-Advocacy Training

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HOW IT WORKS:

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

We know that the process for receiving support can be confusing – that’s why we put this overview together. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here for you.

651-365-3773 | lifeworks.org/employment



● **Connect with a Pre-ETS Representative.**

The process begins with reaching out to the Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services’ Pre-ETS representative in your area. Often a student’s school counselor, social worker, parent/guardian, or support staff complete this first step. The list of representatives can be found by visiting: bit.ly/2UFKgVx



● **Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) determines eligibility.**

VRS connects with interested parties (student, their support staff, school, etc.) to discuss the program, review eligibility requirements, and if applicable, authorize Pre-ETS service hours. In other words, VRS manages the program and approves the allotted support.



● **The student is referred to a Pre-ETS provider.**

If the student is eligible for services, VRS connects with a Pre-ETS provider, such as Lifeworks, to deliver support services, including counseling and training in job exploration, work-based learning, post-secondary education, workplace readiness, and self-advocacy.



● **Meet with the Pre-ETS provider.**

After the service is authorized, the provider schedules an introductory meeting to learn more about the student and discuss the intake process. They will share information about roles and responsibilities as well as review how the program works and its requirements.



● **Complete intake paperwork.**

Before a student can begin receiving services, intake paperwork must be completed. If the student is their own guardian, services can begin immediately. If the student is not their own guardian (under 18), intake paperwork must be sent to their guardian(s) and returned before services can begin.



● **You’re set.**

Lifeworks will deliver the authorized services and continue to be a resource for you, regularly checking in to make sure everything is on track. Service is completed once authorized hours are used. At that time, the provider will send a report to VRS staff who determine continuation or completion of Pre-ETS.



**NATIONAL DISABILITY
EMPLOYMENT
AWARENESS MONTH -**

Thank you!



Thank you to everyone who celebrated National Disability Employment Awareness Month with Lifeworks. To raise awareness, Lifeworks hosted an equity-focused webinar, *Advancing Disability Inclusion and Accessibility in the Workplace*, that provided practical steps for building an inclusive culture during COVID-19 and into the future.

Our free webinar took place on Monday, October 26 and was open to the public. We are grateful to our attendees who took time out of their day to learn about how people with disabilities are often perceived, and how to take action when recognizing barriers to inclusion. We had a great time hearing about your experiences and sharing resources.

By the Numbers

89%

of survey respondents said they have a greater understanding of advancing accessibility and disability inclusion

49

ATTENDEES



89%

survey respondents said the webinar gave them an idea that can be implemented in their workplace

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Virtual Music Therapy:

BUILDING TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Beth comes from a musical family. Her mom and dad both know how to play the piano. Her dad also used to play the guitar. Like her parents, she enjoys practicing instruments and learning new songs.

For the past three years, Beth's worked with Lifeworks Music Therapist, Sean Blum. They meet for thirty minutes each week and their sessions include checking in with one another, singing songs, and playing the keyboard.

In addition to developing musical and social skills, Beth is working on increasing speech production and speed along with coordination and self-advocacy. Sean explains, "Music Therapy is a collaborative effort. Many ideas and decisions about what we are working on are made by Beth. It's the Beth show, and I'm just along for the ride and to provide support."

While previously their sessions were in-person, they are now held virtually. Beth appreciates being able to keep some normalcy while continuing to build her skills. She shares,

“Music Therapy is fun. I like working with Sean and it has helped me with my vocal cords.”

One of her favorite songs is *Listen to Your Heart* by Swedish pop rock duo, Roxette. She also likes No Doubt and Celine Dion. Beth recently learned how to play and sing *My Heart Will Go On* from the film, *Titanic*, on her keyboard. When asked what's next, Beth eagerly offers, "I used to play the autoharp in high school and would like to take it up again."

Music Therapy is a proven and cutting-edge method for helping people further develop their sensory, social, emotional, cognitive abilities, and motor skills. Sean notes, "The skills that we work on are transferable and brought into our daily lives."





MORE ABOUT LIFEWORKS MUSIC THERAPIST, SEAN BLUM, MT-BC

Sean is a board-certified music therapist who graduated from Augsburg College in 2016 with bachelor’s degrees in music therapy and psychology. Since becoming board-certified, he has worked almost exclusively with adults who have disabilities. Sean’s approach provides an opportunity to build everyday skills through musical means. While his primary instrument is the guitar, he also enjoys singing and playing the keyboard, drum set, and electric bass. Sean was born and raised in Minnesota and he likes living in his home state.

How it Works

Music Therapy



Contact Lifeworks.

The process begins with you reaching out to our team: 651-365-3773 or referrals@lifeworks.org. They will learn more about what you are looking for, provide an overview, and connect with our Music Therapists to determine availability.



Meet with a Music Therapist for a free assessment.

A Lifeworks Music Therapist will contact you to schedule a free, 30-minute assessment where we will learn more about you, determine primary objectives, and make sure the service is a good fit.



Complete paperwork.

Paperwork needed to begin Music Therapy will be sent to you; it will include items such as payment methods, privacy policies, and more. You will need to complete the required paperwork and send it back to Lifeworks.



Start Music Therapy.

Once your paperwork is received by Lifeworks and your funding sources are secure, we can get started! A Lifeworks Music Therapist will contact you to schedule a regular session time that works for your schedule.



You’re Set.

Lifeworks Music Therapists will continue to assess progress towards meeting your objectives.

Are you interested in getting started with Lifeworks Music Therapy?

Learn more and schedule your complimentary assessment: 651-365-3773 | referrals@lifeworks.org



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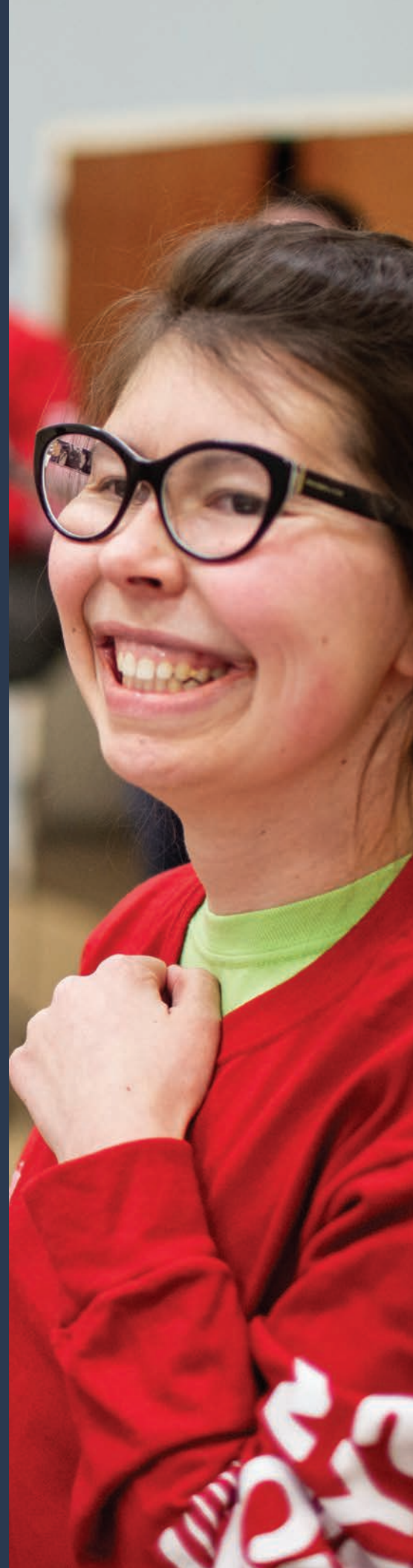
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QUESTIONS? We can help.
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**Thanks for
your support!**



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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.

We're Hiring!

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Lifeworks is an equal opportunity employer.

We are committed to providing culturally responsive services and understand the value of a diverse workforce. Lifeworks strongly encourages women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans to apply.

