

Dungarvin

2014 ANCOR Direct Support Professional of the Year Nomination



Timothy McGruder - Dungarvin California

nomination submitted by Doreen Khan, Program Director

Tim is very observant, insightful and attentive to each person's individual needs. Recently, a person in service was extremely pale, discolored and disoriented, and not responding normally. Tim quickly jumped into action, took her pulse and identified that it was an emergency situation and called 911. This individual was in need of a blood transfusion, as her white blood cell count was low. Another person unexpectedly slumped forward and began to lose consciousness and color. Tim performed CPR without hesitation, and without further incident the person fully recovered. He works with a third individual, J.M., who demonstrates inappropriate sexual behaviors, and is non-verbal. Tim has gone above and beyond to identify ways to communicate with this person. He draws pictures to communicate, writes in large fonts and uses sign language. He is persistent in his efforts until he has established a mutual understanding of expectations and choices with J.M. Tim has also worked with this person to achieve positive behaviors, allowing him increased opportunities to access and integrate in the community.

Tim has forged a close and productive relationship with J.M. Without hesitation, he goes directly to Tim if he has a question, need or request. He feels comfortable approaching Tim and is very evident that he has a deep trust in him. For example, J.M. readily pulls his wallet out and shows his money to Tim, along with a picture drawn to express his choice of purchase. Tim then makes every effort to meet this request before the end of the day. If they are not scheduled for a community outing that day, Tim advocates for J.M. and communicates with him the options available. If possible, J.M. and Tim will walk to stores near the day program to fulfill his requests. Tim respects and responds to J.M.'s choices.

Tim recognizes that a basic step in effecting change for the persons with whom he works involves facilitating their integration into the community. Tim takes every opportunity to involve J.M. in his community, and regularly takes him to movies, bowling, bingo games, parks, mall, library and a variety of stores, as he loves shopping. By opening up the community to J.M, Tim has provided him an incentive to learn alternative and more adaptive skills, so that he can develop friendships and successfully fulfill his needs.

Tim he considers that it is his heart's purpose to be with the individuals he supports. He certainly demonstrates the understanding and be compassion to connect to these persons. Tim feels that individuals supported accept you with their heart, and need DSPs who are committed, trustworthy and dependable. According to Tim, "this is truly important, because if you don't love what you do, it shows in everything you do." He feels obligated to strive to assist in every situation to the best of his ability; if he did not, he would feel he was not satisfactorily fulfilling the role of a Direct Support Professional.

Thinking "outside the box" when considering supports for individuals is a strength for Tim. He has developed various systems for alternative communication for the persons with whom he works. Where others may readily rely solely on the spoken word for communication, Tim understands that each person learns differently and has unique approaches to communication. Conceptually, he empowers others to find their voice to be heard, to get their needs met, and to achieve all that is possible. This may be accomplished through his connecting with others through pictures, icons, drawings, sign language or gestures. Tim's creativity in incorporating the unique characteristics of each person to his methods of communication has resulted in his ability to form meaningful relationships with each of the persons he supports.

Tim displays effective leadership skills on the job, and regularly provides assistance to all his peers. He not only works with individuals assigned to him, but readily offers his support to others. Tim has demonstrated a strong skill in identifying signs and symptoms of health risks and communicating this information appropriately with the Program Director and Coordinator. He has taught his peers proper lifting techniques, assisted the Coordinator with vehicle maintenance and repairs, and completed minor repairs at the program site. In times of crisis he functions as a leader and does his best to control the situation. He has proactively identified safety issues with individuals' wheelchairs, giving us the opportunity to address these problems and avoid compromising the health and safety of persons in service.