

Dungarvin

2014 ANCOR Direct Support Professional of the Year Nomination

--- MINNESOTA STATE WINNER! ---



Priscilla Spaeth – Dungarvin Minnesota

nomination submitted by Layne Schmitz, Program Director

JWH has a history of aggressive behaviors, has assaulted staff and housemates, and has had criminal charges pressed against him. As a result, JWH's team was considering moving him to a different service site to better manage his aggressive behaviors. Priscilla Spaeth assured that phone calls were placed to his probation officer. Priscilla also obtained a psychological evaluation to properly diagnose his conditions and to provide for his defense at court. Priscilla worked extra days to help JWH with his legal issues. When Priscilla discovered that some medications JWH was taking caused increased aggressive behavior, Priscilla assured the medications were adjusted in a hospital setting. As a result of Priscilla's dedication, JWH has been free from physical aggression towards others for the last seven months. JWH was not sentenced to jail time and was allowed to remain in the current placement. JWH was able to graduate from high school and achieve employment due to Priscilla's actions.

Priscilla has developed close relationships with the individuals she supports. Priscilla will assist other homes with covering open hours; however, she always assures that she spends time each week with the individuals at her primary location. Priscilla says that it is important to her to be available for the people at her primary location and she wants to keep up to date with the things happening in their lives. When Priscilla covers shifts at other locations, the people she serves ask the other staff where she is and when

she is going to be back. Priscilla will also call her primary home when working at other locations to check in with the individuals and see how their day is going. When the individuals plan 1:1 outings, GS always wants to go with Priscilla and GS will wait until Priscilla is working to complete his 1:1 outing for the week.

The home in which Priscilla works was being relocated three blocks away this summer. GS, a person living at the home, does not like change and his team did not want him to move. Priscilla spent hours talking with the guardians to work out a detailed time line and procedure to assure the move of the home had the least amount of impact on GS. Priscilla spent many days going to the new home with GS and they started a garden at the new home. GS and Priscilla were able to tell his team that he wanted to move to the new house and that he was excited for the move. As a result of Priscilla's proactivity, GS was able to move to the new house with his housemates this summer.

Over the summer, Priscilla was throwing a baby shower for her family member. The day before the baby shower, a storm knocked out power to thousands of people in the metro area, including Priscilla's personal home and the homes of the people she supports. Priscilla was late to the baby shower she was hosting as she went to assist individuals at a hotel to where they were relocated. Priscilla arrived at the hotel at 5:00am to help the individuals get ready for the day and to get transported back to their home. Priscilla did not leave work until all the individuals were settled at home and had all the items they needed to be comfortable.

GS has always hated to have team meetings. His meetings have historically caused him stress and increased anxiety, resulting in increased physical aggression towards others from GS. Priscilla worked with GS and his IDT to reframe his thinking and he no longer has team meetings. GS now has parties at his home where he invites all his IDT members to talk about how things are going. Each party is themed and GS provides food, music and a photo keepsake for all his IDT members. This year, GS had a Hawaiian-Top Gun themed party for his last IDT. Priscilla has helped GS focus on the positive planning of his party so he now looks forward to hosting his IDT members for all his meetings.

Priscilla is the leader of her primary work location and assists other locations as well. Priscilla trains all new staff at her location and has assisted with training new staff at other locations as well. She also goes to other locations to assist other people with learning new job skills. Priscilla manages the schedule of the house, she schedules all medical appointments for the individuals she supports and manages the budget for her home. Priscilla makes herself available to her coworkers to answer questions and assist them with learning new tasks.