

# Dungarvin

2014 ANCOR Direct Support Professional of the Year Nomination

**--- NEVADA STATE WINNER! ---**



**Iva Ross – Dungarvin Nevada**

*nomination submitted by Keith Groteluschen, Program Director*

Iva Ross was promoted from Program Counselor to Program Coordinator soon after joining the Dungarvin Nevada team in 2010. Nevada Desert Regional Center Service Coordinators encouraged Dungarvin Nevada's Director to promote Ms. Ross because their experience with her was so positive and they were thoroughly impressed by her supports for the individuals in service. Following her promotion, Ms. Ross immediately set a standard of excellence for the staff by encouraging staff to support the individuals in cooking healthy meals from scratch, reducing calorie and sodium content which accomplished weight loss for three out of the four individuals in the home. Ms. Ross increased the number of outings the individuals enjoyed every week. She found a second-hand video/music store where individuals purchased classic movies and CD's for a fraction of the usual cost. Ms. Ross was instrumental in retaining staff by encouraging them to come to her with any concerns and being a great listener. Ms. Ross accomplished resolution of all conflicts between staff to ensure the best supports for individuals by all staff.

Ms. Ross is always welcomed with smiles and several heart-felt, "Hi, Iva. How are you?" comments from the individuals in services. They look forward to talking with her about their personal issues and concerns, making plans for birthday parties, holidays and new and exciting outings, plus learning something new every day. The individuals supported are reassured by Ms. Ross' attention to what's important in their lives, such as medications, administration procedures and doctor visits. The individuals appreciate the extra time she takes to explain the reasons for each doctor visit, each medication and each change requested by the doctors. Ms. Ross assures each person is never without necessities and assists the individuals so they can make a special purchase or enjoy a special event several times each month. For example, one of the individuals has his own cell phone, but he occasionally misplaces it. Ms. Ross made sure each time the phone was lost it was replaced as soon as possible. Ms. Ross always retains a professional relationship with the gentlemen in services and they would love to have her supporting them every day of the week if possible.

Ms. Ross surpasses most of her colleagues in her on-going attempts to assure the individuals she serves receive the best supports. Ms. Ross works with guardians, service coordinators, doctors and other service professionals, with the objective to have the least amount of restrictions and medications, have competitive, community-based employment and have all opportunities available to individuals compared to any other member of the community. In fact, Ms. Ross has advocated for one individual to have his medications reviewed by a second doctor, due to how long the individual had been taking the medications and the strength of medications. DRC's Human Rights Committee agreed with Ms. Ross in advocating for the medication review, which encouraged her to continue her education efforts with parents who have resisted any and all changes to medications which the individual has taken for more than 20 years.

Ms. Ross is always available to provide supports to the individuals. She may be working early doctor appointments one day and on the next, caring for an individual who is waiting for hours in the hospital hallway on a gurney outside the emergency room. In that case, Ms. Ross completed her annual renewal training during the morning and afternoon, arrived at the home to learn that individual needed to see his doctor. He was then sent to hospital for additional testing. Ms. Ross insisted on staying with the individual and his guardian to ensure the best quality of care was provided and went way beyond anyone's expectations to support this person. Ms. Ross never complains about adjusting her schedule to meet the needs of the individuals. She works all shifts, occasionally with very little notice. Ms. Ross also supports an aging parent and she puts her mother's needs before her own.

Ms. Ross constantly looks for new experiences which the individuals she supports will enjoy. She asks staff, relatives and members of the community for suggestions for new activities and conducts research on the Internet. Ms. Ross assures that staffing allows for one or more individuals to attend the activities they choose and make appropriate choices when budgeting for these activities. Ms. Ross encourages individuals to choose their decorations for their home for all holidays, items to decorate their rooms, and making personalized T-shirts for the company picnic. Ms. Ross found a store where individuals picked a ceramic tile, painted the tile, then had it fired in an oven. They took their tiles home and hung them in their rooms.

Ms. Ross is often called upon to assist new Program Coordinators with completing documentation, learning company policy and offering advice to colleagues when questions arise on how best to support individuals. Ms. Ross' work is always very accurate, professionally prepared and submitted on time. Ms. Ross has the respect of the staff at the home where she works, retains their confidence in her ability to handle any situation which may arise and imparts her standards of excellence by demonstrating exemplary quality in everything she does on a daily basis. Ms. Ross would never ask a coworker to do anything she had not already done herself. Recently when training a new staff, Ms. Ross demonstrated each task to be completed by the overnight staff to ensure that the home was thoroughly cleaned each night and documentation was accurate. She also ensured that the new staff passed medication only after he felt comfortable with names and purposes of all medications and knew exactly how best to support each of the four individuals with their medication administration.