

Dungarvin

2014 ANCOR Direct Support Professional of the Year Nomination



Barb Mann – Dungarvin Minnesota

nomination submitted by Hoeun Xiong, Case Manager

Barb has worked in the human service field as a Direct Support Staff for about 21 years. As a Community Support staff for Dungarvin Minnesota's Independent Living Skills program, Barb teaches skills in the areas of financial management, housing, problem solving, paperwork completion, health care maintenance, shopping, errands, and appointment management to help the individuals remain living independently in the community. More specifically, she has helped individuals with completing a monthly budget, grocery shopping lists, menus, attending various medical appointments, and completing housing recertification documentation. Barb is a successful advocate for her individuals by requesting for additional support services such as homemaking, PCA, or skilled nursing. In addition to positively impacting the lives of the individuals, Barb has engaged in building effective relationships with the individuals' team members through effective communication and motivated them to do the same, so they can effectively be the driving forces behind their own services.

Barb has established a positive, honest, open, and trusting relationship with the individuals served, while maintaining her professional boundaries. She has worked with many challenging individuals who have not had open or trusting relationships with other staff and/or people; however, Barb has been able to use her professionalism and rapport building skills to create a safe, respectful, open, and welcoming environment for the individuals based on mutual trust. Barb has also worked to maintain her scheduled appointments with the individuals when possible, as she also understands that maintaining structure and consistency for the individuals is also conducive to maintaining a positive working relationship with them. Barb has taught her individuals to track and maintain appointment calendars, so that they are able to successfully maintain their ILS appointments with her and be successful with services.

Barb has advocated for the individuals in the areas of medical, financial, housing and personal safety. Barb has supported the individuals to understand their options, consequences, and to express their rights and responsibilities when it comes to their physical, emotional, health, and well-being. Barb has

supported the individuals to obtain access to needed medical treatments, such as surgery to address a serious medical condition related to diabetes. As a mandated reporter, Barb has reported situations of abuse to the appropriate entities, when she felt that the individual's physical and emotional safety was at risk. Barb has also worked with the individuals to address various home maintenance and housekeeping issues, by communicating with the individuals' landlords and team members to help the individuals obtain the needed services and supports. Recently, she was able to get city inspectors to investigate a maintenance issue at an apartment where one of her individuals lives.

Barb understands the individuals she serves come first, and that her role as direct support requires flexibility and commitment. Barb may work eight plus hours a day and on weekends, so that she can be there to support the individuals with important tasks or appointments. Barb also demonstrates the willingness to take on and continue working with challenging individuals, because she understands that her primary role is to serve the individuals and be a positive support to them. Barb has maintained her professionalism and boundaries and has even had to put her own needs and feelings aside, when confronted with her individuals' mental health issues, or when she has had to work in unpleasant environments such as: cluttered, unsanitary, or cigarette smoke-filled homes.

Barb has been creative in addressing concerns, implementing program incentives, and creating tools to efficiently and effectively carry out her job duties. Barb independently brainstorms ideas, options, and solutions when working to problem solve issues with the individuals and their team members. Barb has creative ways of encouraging the individuals to help them to work on their goals and to utilize their service hours, by implementing program incentives, such as birthday recognitions, and by encouraging the individuals to view personal responsibility and achievement of their programming goals as a an objective towards autonomy. In addition, Barb has taken the lead to create new staff forms to assist staff to effectively track their utilization of service hours and to complete their required job tasks, such as documentation, phone communications, and program implementation.

Barb is an outstanding support staff for our program, as well as an outstanding role model for her peers. She has displayed pride and integrity in her work and has strived to provide only quality services and programming to all of her individuals. Her proficiency in her job position is displayed in the positive changes and growth of the individuals and the positive feedback that her supervisors have received from the individuals' team members. Barb has practiced responsible work habits; she accurately records her work hours and puts out quality work. As a coordinator, Barb has demonstrated exceptional skills in program writing and documentation, has successfully led team meetings, and has also taken the lead to implement new staff forms that would make job processes more efficient for all staff. Overall, Barb has been successful in her position and has the potential to grow within our company.