

# MILESTONES

1st Edition  
2025

Giving Hearts Day  
February 13th



## INSIDE THIS EDITION

---

Giving Hearts Day

---

DSP Week

---

Department Spotlight

---

On The Minds of  
People We Support

---



*Nurturing abilities, achieving dreams.*

# Greetings FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year, everyone! I want to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for making 2024 yet another remarkable year for Friendship. The success of Friendship and each person we support is built on the dedication from all of you including staff, parents and guardians, board members, team members, community members, business partners, donors, and friends.

- As we started the New Year in 2024, many Friendship employees and people supported gave back by volunteering with the Feed My Starving Children FargoPack event. Once again, Friendship participated in our seventh Giving Hearts Day fundraiser, which was a huge success. We hosted our first ever Winter Wonderland dance, and employees were recognized in a variety of ways including celebrating National Maintenance Day, National Employee Appreciation Day, National Social Work month, etc. I also introduced the inaugural President's Award to recognize employees who demonstrate Friendship's values and mission while going above and beyond on a regular basis.
- Moving into the spring we welcomed the Presentation Sisters to Friendship for a luncheon to celebrate our ongoing relationship and support from the sisters. While lunch was being prepared we talked about the mission at Friendship and how we continue to follow in the footsteps of Nano Nagle each and every day. Throughout the year we welcomed many leaders from CommonSpirit Health as they traveled to Friendship to learn more about our ministry and the services we provide. In June, we hosted our third annual Friendship Formal with an 80's theme.
- Summer was fast and furious as the people we support and the organization were as busy as ever. Many people had the opportunity to travel to Minneapolis to take in a Twins game, the Friendship Fireants participated in their 12th softball season, people supported spent time with family and friends enjoying the outdoors, and countless vacations were taken. We welcomed back Tom Pomeranz, a nationally recognized trainer and consultant in the field of developmental disabilities, to provide continuing education to leaders and DSPs from both cities on the importance of active supports and promoting independence. We held our annual Family Day Picnics in both Grafton and Fargo - aloha, everyone!
- As fall approached, we celebrated national DSP Week recognizing all of our frontline employees who devote their lives to making a difference serving as a friend, teacher, nurse, etc., to the people we support. We continued our day program fundraising efforts by participating in a variety of events such as the Chipotle fundraiser, Pizza Ranch fundraiser, and selling the blue Preferred Savings Guide coupon books.

To end the year, we celebrated a successful Oktoberfest fundraiser which allowed us to purchase Christmas gifts for each person we support. People supported took to the polls to exercise their right to vote in the Presidential election, and we completed our 18-month check-in call with The Council on Quality and Leadership and developed the long-term plans that we will focus on over the next 36 months. Many people supported and employees enjoyed spending time with family and friends during the holiday season.

Together we will identify ways to positively impact our ability to provide services of the highest quality. The presence of outcomes for the people we support will remain our focus. We will continue the good work that began so many years ago.

Thank you wholeheartedly for being a part of our mission at Friendship. I look forward to what lies ahead in 2025!

Dori Leslie  
Friendship President



# Giving Hearts Day

2025



KENNY CAPOUCH, GIVING HEARTS DAY CHAIRMAN  
DEVON UMLAUF, GIVING HEARTS DAY AMBASSADOR

## GIVING HEARTS DAY IS BACK!

On February 13, 2025, you can make a difference for someone at CHI Friendship by participating in Giving Hearts Day. Giving Hearts Day is a one-day online giving event for area nonprofits and has been very important over the years to our mission at Friendship.

Simply stated, all Giving Hearts Day donations let people supported at Friendship better nurture their abilities and achieve their dreams. All of our donations help cover the cost for things like new clothing for people in need, community participation, wellness events, emergency rent expenses, health equipment, and self-advocacy efforts. Last year, Friendship even sponsored our third Friendship Formal event and assisted many people on multiple trips to Target Field to cheer on the Minnesota Twins!

We are excited by the possibilities of Giving Hearts Day 2025. Will you join Friendship in our 2025 Giving Hearts Day Campaign? Every dollar raised helps the people we support at Friendship.

**Don't forget, you're invited to our events in Fargo and Grafton on February 13, 2025!**

**Fargo - Chili Feed from 11:00am-1:00pm**

**Grafton - Mexican Food Feed from 11:00am-1:00pm**



## How To Donate

### ONLINE (early giving or day of giving)

Visit the website [givingheartsday.org](http://givingheartsday.org) starting on January 13, 2025 or donate on Giving Hearts Day. Click the "Donate" button, search for CHI Friendship, and follow the online instructions to make a contribution.

### IN PERSON OR BY MAIL

All written checks that are received prior to Giving Hearts Day and dated February 13, 2025 will be accepted toward our Giving Hearts Day goal. You can drop off a check at our administrative office in Fargo or Grafton. You can also mail a check that arrives before February 13, 2025, and is dated February 13, 2025.

Fargo office - 801 Page Drive Fargo, ND 58103

Grafton office - 554 West 12 St. Grafton, ND 58237

### PHONE

You can call our administrative office at (701) 235-8217 for assistance with your donation.

Scan here  
to donate  
today!



# The Council on Quality and Leadership Short-Term Plan

Friendship has benefited from a strong relationship over the years with our accrediting agency, The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). CQL goes beyond mere accreditation as they are a partner in project collaboration, networking, and quality enhancement. CQL is always encouraging agencies to find ways to provide better services.

After Friendship received its four-year accreditation in 2023, Person-Centered Excellence plans were developed through the framework of CQL's What Really Matters initiatives. After receiving insight from people supported, staff, parents, and guardians, Friendship chose to focus on improving in the areas of workforce, person-centered planning, and community connections. Here are some of the main highlights of these initiatives!

## Community Connection:

Friendship embraces all things community and understands the importance of being active and visible within our local communities.

- Friendship organized/participated in eight recurring community events. This gives visibility to both Friendship and people with disabilities. Having strong community connections is often the starting point for strong relationships.
- Friendship expanded their newsletter audience by 5%.

## Person-Centered Planning:

Friendship understands that people need to direct their own lives, and this was addressed through the following areas:

- Friendship created a campaign across the organization to reinforce that people are in charge of their own plan. This campaign made posters affirming that people make their own choices and encouraged staff to affirm this narrative.
- Friendship defined the role of a personal advocate, asked people if they wanted a personal advocate, and gave choices for a personal advocate. As a result, more people now have a personal advocate.
- Challenging the norm of team meetings being held in administrative offices, this group encouraged people to choose the location of their team meetings. This initiative doubled the amount of team meetings being held outside of the office.



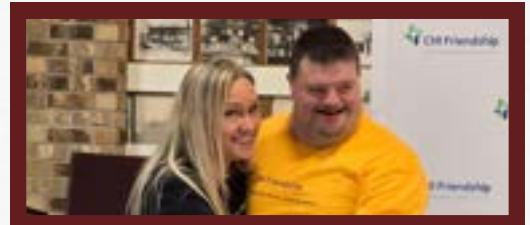
## Workforce:

Friendship encourages people supported to be involved in making the staffing decisions that will affect them. This involvement can bring trust and build relationships. In addition, Friendship is always looking for ways to strengthen their workforce by gathering feedback from staff to continuously learn and grow.

- Friendship strengthened the level of involvement from people supported in the hiring and evaluation processes and in choosing their support staff. This was achieved by creating awareness, training, and providing more resources on site.
- Friendship reconsidered their scheduling practices by surveying staff and other organizations. Some department-wide and site-specific adjustments were made. Follow-up discussions confirmed that staff appreciated these changes without affecting quality of support.

Friendship continues to monitor the Short-Term Plans to ensure they remain embedded and are running effectively through all aspects of our organization. We look forward to developing our next round of Person-Centered Excellence plans in 2025 to continue to raise the bar at Friendship.

# 1st annual Baked Potato FUNRAISER



For the past several years Friendship leaders have wanted to host an annual fundraiser in Grafton. With the help of Associated Potato Growers, Inc. (Grafton, Drayton, and Grand Forks) our first annual Baked Potato Fundraiser was held on November 19, 2024 at Heritage Village in Grafton.

Proceeds from the fundraiser were earmarked for Friendship's local recycling program that services Grafton and the surrounding communities. Friendship's recycling program, which employs 10 people supported, has serviced Grafton, Park River, and surrounding communities for over 40 years! Each year Friendship's recycling program hosts local elementary students on Earth Day to teach them about how important it is to reduce, reuse and recycle.

The attendees of the fundraiser had a choice of a Plain Jane potato (cheese, sour cream, butter, bacon, and green onions), Tex Mex (taco meat, cheese, sour cream, butter, and pico), or Cowboy (pulled pork, cheese, sour cream, butter, and pico).

The Baked Potato Fundraiser garnered a lot of attention, people from all over Walsh County attended the festivities. The fundraiser proved how valuable the recycling program is to the community. Due to the generosity of community members, Friendship sold 362 potato meals!

A special thank you to Associated Potato Growers, Inc. and the community who made this event a smashing success! We look forward to this annual event that will make it possible for the recycling program to remain strong for the community.

# DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

# Oaks



It's been a while since there's been a dull moment at the Oaks department in Fargo. The past few months have been filled with the adventures of pet ownership, road trips, and new living spaces.

In April, Barb Goodwin went on a trip to Hawaii. It was Barb's first time traveling solo. "I had a blast," Barb exclaimed when talking about the trip that included enjoying the warm weather and seeing animals under the water. "It's a long plane ride though."

In September, Barb became a pet owner when she adopted her cat, Bella. "I like her a lot," Barb said. "It's my job to take care of her every day." Bella is a black cat who enjoys the finer things in life. "I've got her spoiled on tuna," Barb said.

This summer, Barb kept busy by playing Special Olympics bocce ball with her sister and cheering on the Fireants while on the Friendship Cheer Team with her roommate, Jill Oland.

Jill's big trip this summer was to De Smet, South Dakota with her sister to see the historical sites of the TV show, Little House on the Prairie. "It's my favorite TV show," Jill said. "My sister got me all of the books, and I've read through them."

Closer to home, Randi Mohn was able to go camping for the second consecutive summer at Brewer Lake in Erie, North Dakota. Randi's roommate, Paula Gagelin, was able to go water skiing in Bismarck, ND.

As the temperature began to cool off and the leaves began to change colors, the Oaks department remained in motion. Kelly Aamold moved across town to be closer to the other members of the department. "It's going good," Kelly said of her move from South Fargo to West Fargo. "My favorite part has been being close to my church."

Kelly also got a new job working at the FargoDome with her first shift being on Halloween. "I work as a ticket taker," Kelly said when talking about her new job. When not working at the admission gate, Kelly is still busy helping people, "I direct them to where they need to go," she said. Kelly said that she's looking forward to working future events at the FargoDome and seeing the variety of crowds they bring in. "I enjoy seeing different people," she said.

# On the Minds of People We Support

We asked the people we support their thoughts and they answered!

## Who is your favorite cartoon character?

"John Cena." - Kelly A.

"Scooby Doo." -  
Chuck M.

"SpongeBob  
Squarepants." - Devon U.

"Mickey Mouse." - Erin M.

"SpongeBob." - Evan G.

"SpongeBob  
Squarepants."  
- Ashley E.

"Sonic the Hedgehog  
and Halo Master  
Chief." - Michael M.

"Jimmy Timmy from  
Jimmy Neutron."  
- Shane A.

"Scooby Doo."  
- Viola R.

"Genie from Aladdin."  
- Zach D.



## Julie's Journal

By Julie Gustafson

My birthday was in November on Thanksgiving. The office was closed that day. My sister Jennifer will also have a birthday and she was born on a Thursday. My father had to rush my mother to the hospital in Grand Forks. My family members usually come up to see us from Seattle, Washington and from out west. My sister and her twin brother have their birthday on the day before Halloween every year.

My teams have been winning some games of who I pick for the teams that I like to watch. UND used to be The Fighting Sioux and they are now the Fighting Hawks. NDSU is my other favorite team when UND isn't on the television.



# FRIENDSHIP HAPPENINGS

## Oktoberfest

Each year, Friendship holds our Oktoberfest raffle and we are blessed beyond measure from the outpouring of support from friends, family, and surrounding communities. This year, Friendship set out with the goal of selling 16,000 raffle tickets to ensure we could purchase Christmas gifts for each person we support. With the help of all employees, parents and guardians, and friends of Friendship, we sold every last ticket! The raffle was held on October 11th and participants had the opportunity to win up to 20 VISA gift cards valued from \$50 to \$500.

Friendship strives to live its mission in all aspects of services delivered. We value each person we support and want to ensure their holidays are as special as possible. The money raised through the Oktoberfest fundraiser ensures that we can enrich the holidays for the people who matter most. Thank you for helping us make this holiday season so special.

## The Arc of Cass County Awards

The Arc Of Cass County held their annual banquet on October 15th. Friendship was proud to nominate Hogue Diesel for the 2024 Arc Employer of the Year award. Hogue Diesel is owned by Bob (pictured to the right), and James Hogue. They employ two people supported by Friendship and were recipients of the award at the banquet.



*Congrats*

Kelly, pictured to the right, nominated Gina Hogue for the 2024 Professional of the Year award. Gina was nominated by Kelly for her compassion and was a recipient of the award at the banquet.



## Trunk or Treat

The parking lot in Grafton was filled with local community members, people supported, and staff eager to attend the second annual Trunk-or-Treat event on October 10th. Attendees dressed as ghosts, goblins, monsters, and more as they made their way through the parking lot filled with over 25 decorated trunks. The event was a smashing success with about 400 people in attendance. It was a beautiful afternoon for people to trick or treat and participate in a variety of games available at the event. If you would like to be added to the list to host a trunk next year, give us a call at 701-352-0060. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year!

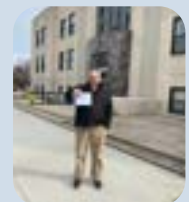


## Voting

One of the best ways to help people gain control in their lives is to assist them to exercise their rights.

Staff at Friendship are constantly looking for new ways to assist people to exercise rights. One right so seldom comes around that Friendship has special educational tools and trainings whenever it does: the right to vote! Once every four years a person can exercise the right to vote for a president. This election season, the civic duty of voting was encouraged more than ever.

Friendship saw one out of every three people supported choose to exercise their right to vote and be a voice!

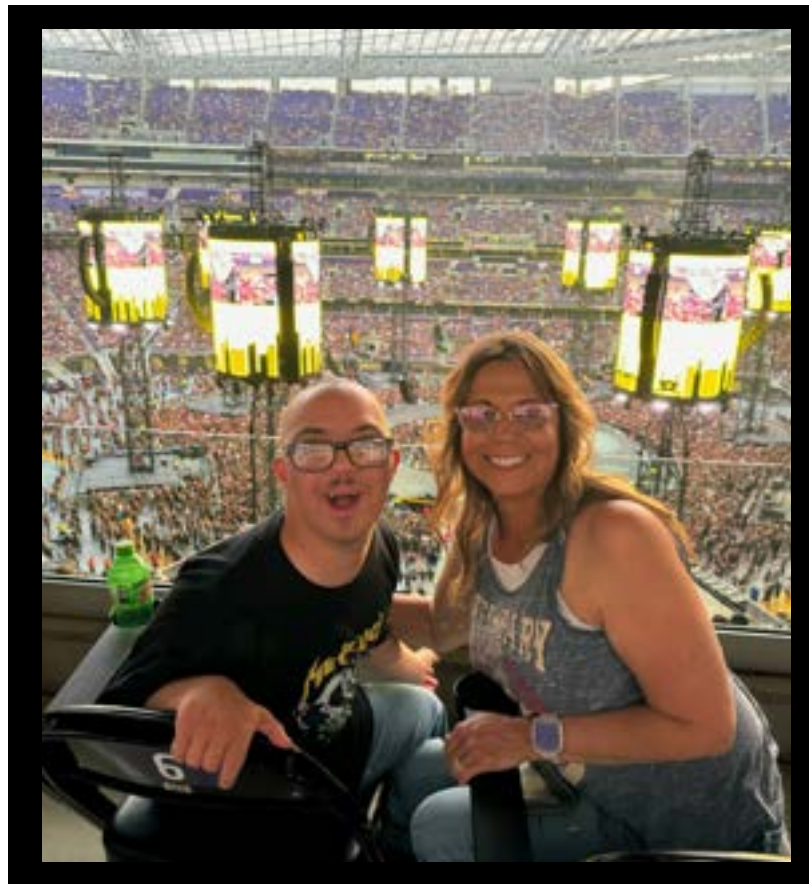




# CONCERTS OF A Lifetime

Devon and Alex are music fanatics and both recently had the opportunity to see their favorite performers live in concert.

If you meet Devon, it won't take long to understand his love of music, especially Metallica. Devon showed his dedication and admiration for Metallica by attending not one, but TWO concerts on a Friday and Saturday in Minneapolis, MN. Devon said the best parts were "Enter Sandman," "very loud music," and "James Hetfield".



Alex received the surprise of a lifetime when his team hosted a reveal party that he would be attending a George Strait concert with a VIP experience. Alex was in the fourth row amongst 65,000 people in Ames, Iowa. Alex shared that his favorite song was "Amarillo by Morning." Alex drew quite the crowd himself and quickly became a band favorite. Alex was given the drumsticks from both opening bands, Chris Stapleton and Little Big Town.

Finally, the star attraction came on and Alex could not control his excitement when he was allowed to go to the front of the middle aisle to sing and dance his heart out. Alex's love for George Strait was so evident he was even given the guitar pick and playlist from the band's manager.

# DSP Week 2024

September 8-14, 2024



For all 24 hours of the day, all seven days of the week, and all 365 days of the year, there is a Direct Support Professional (DSP) at Friendship putting others first while serving as a teacher, student, chef, nurse, friend, and encourager.

However, for one week in September by proclamation of North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum, DSPs are put in the forefront and recognized for all the hard work they do. This year Friendship celebrated DSP Week with daily door prizes, food trucks, and an award presentation.

DSPs arriving to work on Monday were greeted with uplifting and encouraging messages written in sidewalk chalk outside of their departments. Various posts on Friendship's Facebook page showcased people we support showing appreciation for their favorite DSPs as well.

On Tuesday, the Management team was in Grafton, ND serving up root beer floats to everyone. On Wednesday, DSPs in both cities were treated to a free lunch at a food truck, and on Thursday DSPs in Grafton were invited to a free movie at the local movie theater.

All of the events during the week slowly built up to the culmination of the week in the annual Lee Johnson Award presentation on Friday.

The award is named after the late Lee Johnson who worked at Friendship as a DSP until his passing in 2018. Each year's winners are selected by Lee's family.

This year 20 exceptionally compassionate DSPs from across the company were nominated by their coworkers. Annita Sirman was recognized as the winner from Grafton, and Praise Lacky was recognized as the winner from Fargo.



Pictured left to right:  
Praise Lacky (Fargo winner), Carol Johnson and LuAnn Casler (Lee's sisters), and Annita Sirman (Grafton winner).





**February 13, 2025**  
Giving Hearts Day

**June 13, 2025**  
Friendship Formal

**July 10, 2025**  
Grafton Family Picnic

**July 31, 2025**  
Fargo Family Picnic

**Friendship Newsletter Committee:**

Dori Leslie, Garret Miller, Gina Hogue, Grant Fogel, Julie Gustafson,  
Justin Marquette, Katelyn Miller, and Tricia Larson



## Our Vision

A healthier future for all – inspired by faith, driven by innovation, and powered by our humanity.

## Our Mission

As CommonSpirit Health, we make the healing presence of God known in our world by improving the health of the people we serve, especially those who are vulnerable, while we advance social justice for all.

## Our Values

Compassion  
Excellence  
Inclusion  
Collaboration  
Integrity

### Friendship Board of Directors

Kathy Hogan, Brian Arett, Jim Dusek, AnnaLisa Nash, Jim Nyhof, Denise Kolpack, Adele Page, Jeff Pederson, Mary Schneider, Jay Sorum, David Jones, Sr. Mary Margaret Mooney, Ron Guggisberg, and Brenton Nesemeier

## Make a Difference



Friendship is looking for applicants committed to delivering quality direct supports. Openings for Direct Support Professionals include full-time, part-time, and PRN positions. These positions provide direct supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to enhance their lives. No experience is necessary and training is provided.

## Get Involved

Do you have an idea of how Friendship could help out our communities? Would you like to volunteer with Friendship? To share your ideas and for more information on volunteering, please contact us by visiting [chifriendship.com](http://chifriendship.com).

## Donate



Friendship accepts in-kind donations to meet a wide range of needs, especially active support needs. Donations of new items such as puzzles, exercise equipment, garden seeds/supplies, gift cards, cooking/food items, and arts and craft items are always appreciated.

Friendship also accepts donations online by visiting <https://app.givingheartsday.org/#/charity/759>



Visit us on Facebook!  
[Facebook.com/CHIFriendship](https://www.facebook.com/CHIFriendship)