

MILESTONES

2nd Edition
2025



INSIDE THIS EDITION

Self-Employment Businesses

North Dakota Disability
Awareness Day

Department Spotlight

On The Minds of
People We Support

Outcomes in Action

Natural Supports In The Workplace

The Personal Outcome Measures help Friendship evaluate a person's quality of life by looking at 21 specific areas, or "Outcomes," ranging from health and safety to goals and relationships. These Outcomes help Friendship determine how satisfied people are with the supports in place and identify supports that require attention or adjustment.

Five of the 21 Outcomes focus on relationships:

- People Are Connected to Natural Support Networks
- People Have Friends
- People Have Intimate Relationships
- People Decide When to Share Personal Information
- People Perform Different Social Roles



"People Are Connected to Natural Support Networks" means that a person has a network of people that he or she can rely on apart from paid supports. Natural supports are dependable, long-lasting, and take time to develop. Natural supports include significant others, family members, friends, neighbors, church members, coworkers, etc.

Friendship understands the impact that natural supports have on quality of life. Having natural supports means that the person has more people to trust, talk to, and spend time with. Friendship embraces the responsibility to help people to connect and establish new relationships, help people to reconnect and rekindle past relationships, and help people to maintain current relationships. All three of these are essential to the ability to enjoy meaningful connections, or natural supports. Looking for someone who knows the value of strong natural supports? Look no further than Barb Goodwin.

Barb works at Mezzaluna, a fine dining restaurant in Fargo. Barb has a great team of coworkers and supervisors at Mezzaluna, Barb's natural supports in the workplace. When Barb has a question or concern, she goes directly to her coworkers or supervisors. Barb relies on them, and they rely on her.

Previously, Barb had worked at Maxwells Restaurant in West Fargo, where she also had great natural supports in place. When the chef at Maxwells decided to open up his own restaurant, he and Barb had developed such a great working relationship that he decided to ask her to follow him to his new restaurant. Recognizing her own value and this trusted partnership, Barb decided to make the change and follow the chef to Mezzaluna.

Barb has now celebrated 15 years at Mezzaluna and continues to enjoy her strong relationships with her coworkers. She says her favorite parts about working at Mezzaluna are the work itself, her coworkers, and the holiday parties!

EMPLOYEE AWARDS

2024 President's Awards

Friendship is happy to announce the Second Annual President's Award recipients. The President's Award recognizes Friendship employees who exemplify Friendship's Values and Mission regardless of their position or title. All Friendship employees were eligible to receive the President's Award. Friendship employees were encouraged to nominate their co-workers to be recognized for their outstanding work and dedication. Dori Leslie, President of Friendship, faced a tough decision after receiving 27 nominations for awards in the following categories:

- Grafton Direct Care
- Fargo Direct Care
- Grafton Administration/Support Staff
- Fargo Administration/Support Staff

Congratulations to the winners!

2024 Stacey Herman Awards

This year, in addition to the President's Award, Friendship created the Stacey Herman Award in memory of a tenured staff who passed away. This award recognizes a Friendship employee who serves with the same qualities that Stacey had: positivity, teamwork, and kindness. An award winner was selected from both Fargo and Grafton. Congratulations to the Stacey Herman Award recipients!



Christine Sickels – DSP
17 years of Service – Fargo



Ryan Johnston – DSP
5 years of Service – Grafton



Sierra Brolin – DSP
4 years of service – Fargo



Alicia Kalgard – DSP Manager
9 years of service – Grafton



Valerie Dalbey – Office Coordinator
2 years of service – Grafton



Heidi Schumacher – QIDP
10 years of service – Fargo

Humankindness Award

In November, CommonSpirit Health recognized 760 out of 5,000 employees nominated by their colleagues to receive the CSH Humankindness Award. Our very own Debbie Prien, Employment Specialist, was recognized for her servant leadership. Each day Debbie ensures that people supported are happy, safe, healthy, and respected. Debbie has worked for Friendship for nine years and has been a great advocate for the people we support. Congratulations, Debbie!



Debbie Prien
Employment Specialist
9 Years of Service – Grafton

GIVING HEARTS DAY 2025



Friendship celebrates a record-breaking Giving Hearts Day!

We are beyond thrilled to announce that Giving Hearts Day 2025 was our best year ever! Thanks to the incredible generosity and support of our community, we were able to raise over \$95,000 with over 400 people donating to Friendship – a truly remarkable achievement that will directly benefit the people we support. From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU! Your kindness and dedication make a real difference in people's lives, and we are honored to have you as a part of our Friendship family.

We are blessed by our communities

Our success would not have been possible without the enthusiastic participation of so many businesses and members of the community. We had record attendance in both our special GHD events – the Fargo chili feed and the Grafton Mexican food feed – we are beyond blessed by all of this support. Additionally, so many of you helped spread the word by sharing our mission with friends and family, handing out flyers, and encouraging others to give. This incredible teamwork was a huge factor in our success! A special thank you also goes out to our 28 Executive Sponsor level donors (pictured on next page), each contributing a donation of \$1,000 or more. Please reciprocate the support to these businesses or say thank you to these individuals as we deeply appreciate their commitment to Friendship's mission.

Looking ahead

We cannot express enough how much your support means to us. Your generosity is not just about numbers – it's about real people whose lives are improved because of your kindness. We are excited to update all of our donors in the coming months with stories that showcase the real impact of your contributions.

If you missed Giving Hearts Day this year, don't worry! You can still donate to Friendship by visiting this weblink: <https://app.givingheartsday.org/#/charity/759>

Once again, THANK YOU for making this our most successful Giving Hearts Day ever. Together, we are changing lives, and we can't wait to see what we can accomplish in the future!



2025 EXECUTIVE SPONSORS AND MAJOR DONORS

AMERICAN CRYSTAL SUGAR COMPANY

CASEY 90'S CATERING INC.

CHOICE BANK

DARIN MILBRATH

DAVID AND JAN MCNAIR

DAVID & KATHLEEN DROVDAL

DRAYTON CURLING CLUB

ENCHANTASYS PARTNERS 3 LLC

G.S. TRUCK & TRAILER REPAIR LLC

HOGUE DIESEL SERVICE LLC

JSM WOODWORKS

JUSTIN AND CASSIE SYRSTAD

KATHY & DENNIS HOGAN

KEITH & RENNAE MILLETTE

LINDA MARKET

LOREN AND KIM MEHLHOFF

LYNG FAMILY FARM LLP

LYNN AND CONNIE JOHNSON

MARY SCHNEIDER

NORTHWEST BLINDS

OFFICE EXPERTS

OFFUTT FAMILY FOUNDATION

RORY AND CASSANDRA MCCORMICK

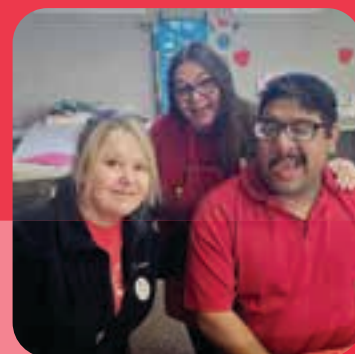
STEVEN & MATTHEW RUDNIK FARMS

TOM LANDOWSKI MEMORIAL FUND

UNITY MEDICAL CENTER

VAN DAM FINANCIAL GROUP

WEST ACRES DEVELOPMENT LLP



Human Rights

Friendship advocates for the rights of all people.

Human Rights Award

On January 20, 2025, Friendship was honored to receive a human rights award from the City of Fargo Human Rights Commission. Karla Spitzer, Renae Howe, Jon Opgrand, Rebekah Kilde, Heidi Schumacher, Tiffany Ash, Dori Leslie, and Kristine Christensen accepted the award on Martin Luther King Jr. Day at the Umoja 56 MLK Celebration.

The City of Fargo selected Friendship because, "CHI Friendship advocates for the rights of individuals with disabilities. The Fargo-based nonprofit organization works to challenge stigma, restore personal freedoms and foster independence. CHI Friendship has successfully reinstated the rights of hundreds of clients and, in many cases, helped them find paid employment. The organization strives to create a more inclusive, respectful community where people with disabilities are empowered and viewed as contributors to society." Thank you to the City of Fargo for recognizing Friendship's efforts in advocating for people's rights!



Disability Awareness Day

On January 29, 2025, people supported from Friendship joined self-advocates from across the state in traveling to Bismarck, ND, for Disability Awareness Day. Every two years the North Dakota Legislative Assembly is held. Disability Awareness Day coincides with the legislature to bring a strong, united effort advocating at the state level for people with disabilities.

Eleven people supported from Friendship joined North Dakota's disability advocacy group on January 28th to discuss what advocacy efforts are being presented at the capitol. People also wrote letters to their legislators as well as speeches to possibly be presented during the legislative session.

The following morning, on Disability Awareness Day, the first item on the itinerary was to tour the North Dakota state capitol building. After learning about the capitol's Art-Deco architecture and history, the self-advocates were able to tour the Senate Chamber and House of Representatives Chamber. The tour finished with a view of Bismarck from the top of the 21-story building.

Once the afternoon arrived, so did the action. Self-advocates were able to join their legislators and participate on the Senate floor, while others watched from the stands. This legislative session brought disability awareness to the forefront of the minds of the legislators.

Self-advocates from Friendship brought disability awareness to the state-level - a day well spent!

On the Minds of People We Support

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

If you could bring three things with you to a deserted island, what three things would you bring?

"Tylor, Food, and Topher." - Erin M.

"Food, clothes, and ladies."
- Preston S.

"Siri, that's all." - Margaret G.

"Jessie, Terri, and swim trunks/towel." - Devon U.

"My best friend Gina, a blanket, and a cup."
- Ashley V.

"Coke, Tim, and a Sorry game." - Peter S.

"Wanda (walker), Keith Urban, and a swimsuit."
- Kathie K.

"Water, food, and a van." - Evan G.



Julie's Journal

By Julie Gustafson



My favorite pets are dogs, specifically Cocker/Springer Spaniels and Golden Doodles. I've had pets all my life ever since my family had a dog when I was growing up as a young girl.

I had a friend from Esmond, North Dakota for two and a half years. My father was a teacher as well as a principal at Central Valley with a Valiant for the mascot. Our school song was The Minnesota Rouser at Central Valley. I was also a Central Valley Valiant when I went to school there.



DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT



Finance



Achala Apte

What is your role in the finance department? I track and reconcile expense accounts, track and report bank transactions and process month-end closing activities. I am an Accountant for the Friendship finance department. I work on several reporting projects such as sales tax, community benefits, donations and contributions and process client payroll.

How long have you worked for Friendship? Close to 20 years

What do you like most about working for Friendship? Very friendly people.

What do you like to do outside of work? I like to cook.



Carissa Mowry

What is your role in the finance department? I review and enter PCard purchases and submit and monitor accounts payable.

How long have you worked for Friendship? 15 years

What do you like most about working for Friendship? Visiting with people that I have known throughout my career with Friendship. I love to hear how they are and what has happened in their lives that they want to share with me. Sometimes it is just a hug and other times it includes trips or visits from loved ones. I love that we all are role models to the community of how to interact with someone possibly labeled as "different." We all show them (the community) that "different" is only surface deep and on the inside we all have similar wants, needs, and interests. We pave the way for inclusion and I love that.

What do you like to do outside of work? Spend time with my daughter. Travel to the lakes and the woods for weekends of relaxation.



Kristine Christensen

What is your role in the finance department? I am the Controller, meaning I oversee and direct the fiscal activities of our company. This includes all the normal accounting activities such as Accounts Payable (including PCards), Accounts Receivable, general ledger, financial reporting, budget, tax return and cost report. It also includes non-traditional functions such as directing our Rep Payee activities, ensuring we function within the reimbursement rules of Medicaid for DD Services, and being available to people we support who want a little financial instruction or guidance. Finance is a support function, so to quote the movie *Jerry Maguire*, "Help me ... help you!"

How long have you worked for Friendship? 15 years

What do you like most about working for Friendship? Day in and day out, I am amazed by the staff at all levels of the organization. I have never worked anywhere I can see the shared commitment to the mission of the company more than I do here. We all work together as one strong, dedicated unit for the benefit of the people we support. This is truly a family.

What do you like to do outside of work? I like to spend summer weekends at the lake, play games or do puzzles with my extended family, search for the best butcher shops or small town bakeries, balance my checkbook, and have as much fun as possible!



Rendy Randash

What is your role in the finance department? My current duties in the finance department include assisting the people supported to balance their checkbooks. I also work closely with Social Security and the county, doing income reporting and monthly updates of job changes. This helps to ensure people supported are able to maintain their benefits. I also work closely with guardians, providing financial reports for yearly reporting. I assist my coworkers by updating attendance reports and recipient liability reports on a monthly basis.

How long have you worked for Friendship? A little over 15 years

What do you like most about working for Friendship? The reason I enjoy working at Friendship is because I believe in their mission; helping to ensure the people we support are able to live their best lives. I also enjoy my coworkers and the friendships I have made here.

What do you like to do outside of work? When I'm not on the job, I enjoy spending time with my kids and grandkids, watching them participate in their many activities. I also enjoy spending time at our lake home, fishing and relaxing with family and friends. Most days you will find me with my nose in a good book.



Teri Horsley

What is your role in the finance department? I am an accountant that is responsible for billing NDDHS for the services provided, ensuring accurate coding of any/all payments for all Accounts Receivable.

How long have you worked for Friendship? 18 years

What do you like most about working for Friendship? I love that the Accounting work that I do has a positive impact on the people we support.

What do you like to do outside of work? Spend time with my grandkids and traveling.

Volunteerism

The people we support at Friendship as well as our employees are always looking at ways to give back to the great communities that support us. We appreciate the value of community involvement and our Vocational Habilitation program is always seeking new opportunities. Currently, two of the organizations that Friendship volunteers at are Churches United in Fargo and Kids' Alley in Grafton. This is what they had to say about our work at their organizations:

Churches United

Volunteers from Friendship go to Churches United every Thursday from 1-3pm. Tasks they complete are to separate donations such as clothing (men, women, children), toys, bedding and hygiene supplies. December and January are very busy months as it is generally a big time of year for people giving donations.

Maverick Cashman, Community Outreach Director of Churches United, said, "Having people from Friendship there keeps other people there active and using the basement area of the facilities. The work they do allows for easy access to items needed making things more quick and efficient. Friendship has been integral in helping them get organized and make items accessible."

Kids' Alley

Volunteers open Kids' Alley and check that all lights are on, papers are ready at the desk and all structures and equipment are in safe, working order. Once patrons begin to enter, our volunteers check in the groups, collect entrance fees and direct shoes to be taken off. As kids are playing, a volunteer may walk around Kids' Alley to check on safe play and adherence to rules. At the end of play, volunteers ensure things are picked up and, after turning off the lights, take out the garbage and are on with their day!

Department Spotlight Vocational Habilitation



If you know of a volunteer opportunity in the community, please call Friendship at 701-235-8217.



Kids' Alley
Volunteer Site

Churches United
Volunteer Site



SELF-EMPLOYMENT BUSINESSES



The Monday to Friday 8am-5pm job isn't for everyone. Friendship recognizes that some people are born with an entrepreneurial spirit, including those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Friendship currently assists 10 people to operate and manage their own small businesses in the Fargo and Grafton areas.



DIRK'S VENDING

Dirk Gedrose started his own vending machine business in January 2009. He currently operates multiple vending machines in the Fargo area that offer soda and snacks. Dirk enjoys the process of refilling his machines on a regular basis.

PETER'S VENDING

Peter Sinner started his Fargo-based vending machine business in 2006. He manages a soda fridge and a table-top candy machine. Peter's vending machines are in south Fargo.



JIM'S VENDING

Jim Schmidt started his vending machine business in January 2012. Jim specializes in the smaller quarter-crank candy machines. Jim enjoys taking care of his machines on a regular basis and is always looking for locations in Fargo that he can place his machines.

MARY NOTES

Mary Ann Scheveck started Mary Notes in 2000 by selling notepads and business cards in the Grafton community. Since then, Mary Notes has transitioned to selling candy bags. Mary packages candy bags for holidays and events.



THE POPCORN SHOP

In 2005 Viola Reckard was gifted a popcorn machine and started popping popcorn and selling it to her coworkers. That idea expanded to her taking the popcorn machine to local businesses and popping popcorn there. Over time, The Popcorn Shop evolved into a process of popping the popcorn, boxing the popcorn up, and taking it to local businesses and selling it. In 2021 Viola expanded her entrepreneurial pursuits by adding a vending machine to her business and selling candy, chips, and other snacks.



JAY'S CANDY CREATIONS

Jay Sorum started his candy bouquet business in 2010. Since its inception, Jay's Candy Creations has grown to be popular throughout the Fargo community. Jay sells candy bouquets at local vendor shows and by word of mouth.

DEAN'S VENDING

Dean Jacobson started his vending machine business in June 2012. Dean got the idea to start his own vending machine business while filling machines with a peer, and liked the idea of being able to make his own schedule. Dean's Vending also serves the Fargo area, and is looking to expand by purchasing a larger machine.



TRACEY'S GOURMET DOG BISCUITS

Founded in 2022 Tracey's Gourmet Dog Biscuits have been Grafton and Park River's go-to for dipped dog treats. The idea started when Tracey Olason decided she needed a change of pace where she could be her own boss.

If you would like to purchase any of these products or know of a location where these products could be sold, please call Friendship at 701-235-8217.



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.

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