MILESTONES

3rd Edition
2026



CHI Friendship™

A member of CommonSpirit

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Friendship Formal

Once again, Friendship hosted the Friendship Formal, a dinner and dance in June for the people supported. This year marks the fifth annual Friendship Formal where attendees came dressed to the nines and shining like the stars they are.

This event is a momentous occasion for many of the people we support who simply love to get glammed up and have a great time with friends and family. Friendship hosted formals in both Fargo and Grafton to ensure everyone was able to join in the fun!

Elegant women were styled in gorgeous gowns alongside their handsome dates who were dressed impeccably as they made their way down the runway to the cheers of their family and friends. After the grand march and pictures were complete, many family members sat down to a delicious dinner with the people they came to support.

Then it was time to let loose and get down! Family departed and the guests made their way to the dance floor to show off their moves.

The music kept the energy high, fueling even more laughter and dancing. As the dance floor finally cleared, the vibrant spirit of this June evening left a lasting impression, building anticipation for next year's celebration.































Annual Sisters Luncheon



June 9th, 2026 was a historic day for Friendship.

The Presentation Sisters (Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary) visited Friendship in Fargo to gather for food, fellowship, and celebration. The aptly-named Sisters Luncheon celebrated the 250th anniversary of the Presentation Sisters.

Started by Nano Nagel in 1775 in Ireland, the Presentation Sisters work to bring education, healing, and love to society's most marginalized. The Presentation Sisters helped start Friendship Village in 1972. With the passion of Nano Nagel behind them, the Sisters helped develop Friendship into what it is today, an organization that makes dreams come true for those of us who may need a little extra help from time to time. The Sisters originally worked with families of people with disabilities to help get Friendship started, then donated buildings for Friendship's group homes and vocational centers.

The Presentation Sisters are still part of the backbone of Friendship to this day, using their wisdom and faith to guide Friendship into the future. Friendship puts Nano Nagel and the Presentation Sisters at the forefront of what it means to be a servant leader. Nano's determination and courage has been a beacon of light guiding Friendship to serve since its inception.

The celebration luncheon provided opportunities to share wonderful stories and laughter among the Presentation Sisters, Friendship leaders, and members of Friendship's Board. Spirited conversation concluded with Friendship's President, Dori Leslie, paying tribute to Nano Nagel and the Presentation Sisters before heading to Friendship's lawn for final recognition.

To commemorate the Presentation Sisters 250th Anniversary, Friendship planted a tree in their honor. The Sisters and Friendship's leaders poured a cup of dirt on the roots of the tree, symbolizing the contribution of all of the Sisters current and past, dating back to 1775 and Nano Nagel. The memorial tree will forever serve as a reminder of Friendship's roots with the Presentation Sisters.

Nano Nagel was a light for the marginalized in 1775 and continues to be a light for Friendship moving forward. Friendship looks forward to continued support and collaboration with the Presentation Sisters to help people live meaningful and fulfilled lives. Congratulations to the Presentation Sisters for celebrating 250 years of service!





DREAM COME TRUE

Friendship secures funding to begin building new day program building.



It is with great pleasure that we announce Friendship has been awarded a $5 million Mission & Ministry Grant. These funds will support the construction of a new day program facility in Fargo. We extend our sincere gratitude to CommonSpirit Health's Mission & Ministry program for their generous support. This investment will significantly enhance our capacity to deliver vital services to the individuals and community we serve.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

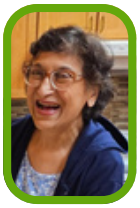
AT FRIENDSHIP



VOTING

Voting is a fundamental right that Friendship takes very seriously. Each voting season, Friendship supplies a variety of supports to help people understand the ins-and-outs of voting. Friendship is looking forward to a great turnout in the November General Election.





RETIREMENTS

Congratulations to Achala Apte and Sue Lehman on their 2026 retirements!

Sue Lehman (left)
39 Years of Service

Achala Apte (right)
20 Years of Service



VALUES TRAINING

Compassion, Inclusion, Excellence, Integrity, and Collaboration are the Friendship Values trained on throughout each year to give staff the best possible opportunity for success. In May, all Friendship team members were trained on Values through a creative basketball-themed training session.



ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT EXPO

Friendship hosted Adaptive Equipment Expos in Fargo on May 5 and Grafton on May 7. Friendship staff worked together to make these events successful. The expos were held to introduce people to adaptive equipment items that people may not be aware are available.



MYVOICE SURVEY

Earlier this year, all team members were asked to complete an employee satisfaction survey called MyVoice. We recently received our results. Overall, Friendship did extremely well in our survey and our participation was 100%!

ANNUAL FAMILY PICNICS

Friendship hosted its annual Family Day Picnic in both Grafton and Fargo this year. This year marks the 11th annual picnic for Friendship. This day allows us to reflect on the year and spend cherished time with friends and family. Friendship honored America's 250th birthday with American themed-picnics.

Both cities enjoyed delicious burgers and hot dogs while taking part in fellowship. In Grafton, attendees took part in a variety of activities and entertainment for all ages. As always, there was Bingo! This is consistently a crowd favorite. Other fun activities were ladder golf, soccer darts, rock painting, and even a popular carousel in Grafton!

A little rain and thunder couldn't stop the fun in Fargo! Although the weather forced a last-minute change of plans, team members, picnic guests, and the people we support quickly adapted to make the best of it. Friendship pivoted to host the Fargo picnic from the main office and within the homes of the people supported. Many individuals welcomed friends and family into their spaces, including one group home in Fargo that hosted more than 14 guests! For those unable to attend in person, meals were delivered directly to them so everyone could join in the celebration.

The Friendship Picnic is more than just an event; it is a beloved summer tradition and the crown jewel of our calendar. At Friendship, we hold this gathering close to our hearts, as it creates many lasting memories with truly wonderful people. Our deepest gratitude goes out to the individuals we support, their families, our friends, and our dedicated staff. Your unwavering support makes this magic possible; we truly appreciate you!


















AMERICA


USA


YOU'RE KILLIN'


IT STARTS


Standards of Conduct









QUALITY STANDARDS

To evaluate performance, Friendship tracks over 100 quality indicators.

Quality is defined as "the degree of excellence which something possesses." At Friendship, quality is specifically defined as "the degree of excellence our organization demonstrates in providing services and support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities." The evaluation of quality within our organization relies on a comprehensive measurement framework.

Friendship utilizes more than 100 quality indicators to evaluate performance. Central to this effort are the 21 Personal Outcome Measures established by our accrediting body, The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL).
Additionally, Friendship incorporates annual surveys mandated by Title XIX of the Social Security Act across all seven group home facilities, alongside Waiver evaluations conducted by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services. These evaluations measure quality of services, ensuring adherence to applicable federal and state regulations while facilitating continuous enhancement of person-centered support systems.

Furthermore, organizational quality is monitored through an integrated Score Card, which compiles performance data across multiple operational domains, including formal grievances, educational programming, rights restoration, meaningful day activities, safety protocols, fiscal metrics, health indicators, community benefit initiatives, and philanthropy.

Quality is evaluated annually with the Person Supported Satisfaction Survey. The organization targets a benchmark score of at least 4.0 on a 5.0 scale, with a rating of 4.0 denoting "Very Good" performance. Participation is requested from all individuals receiving services, as well as their family members or legal guardians. For the eighth consecutive year, survey results fell within the range of "Very Good" (4.0) to "Excellent" (5.0), achieving an overall satisfaction rating of 4.21.

Other quality measures include financial audits, corporate compliance audits, Life Safety Code measures, employee satisfaction surveys, strategic plans, and the smiles on people’s faces.

A suggestion box is available for all stakeholders to offer recommendations on how we can improve our services. This partners with our Quality Contribution forms and our formal grievance policy.

At Friendship, we are committed to leveraging these quality metrics to engage the entire organization in evaluating, designing, and executing processes dedicated to the continuous enhancement of quality outcomes for all stakeholders.

FINDING HER VOICE AND INDEPENDENCE







Amanda is very clever, funny, independent, determined, and protective of those she cares about. She enjoys listening to music, especially Kenny Chesney, playing games like UNO, visiting friends, and watching classic TV shows such as The Andy Griffith Show and Leave it to Beaver. Like many of her peers, Amanda does not like when people do things for her that she is able to do for herself. She enjoys going out to celebrate with a good steak and her favorite soda, Mountain Dew.

Amanda began receiving services with Friendship in December 2024. Since starting with Friendship, the accomplishments she is most proud of are finally finding her voice to speak freely and advocate for herself and others, feeling more independent and confident, working to earn a paycheck and being able to keep and spend her earnings, and volunteering. Amanda's greatest accomplishment was finally moving from a group home into her own apartment in March 2026. Amanda has the freedom and independence that she has been waiting for.

Since beginning services with Friendship, Amanda has participated in several community events. Her favorite things to do in the Fargo area include going to the Red River Valley Fair and the Fargo Street Fair. She had a good time participating in Friendship's Annual Talent Show singing a Kenny Chesney song. Amanda also recently took a day trip to Valley City, ND to visit friends. She had a wonderful time and is planning several more trips in the future. She volunteers at Peace Academy as an Ambassador, working with children, and Churches United sorting donations. She was invited to Peace Academy's Appreciation dinner and received an Ambassador Award.

When asked if the supports she receives with Friendship have improved her self-esteem and self-image, a large smile spread across Amanda's face as she emphatically nodded her head and exclaimed, "YES!"

Amanda continues to achieve dreams that she never thought were possible. Congratulations, Amanda!

Assessments



Friendship completes a variety of assessments with people supported, depending on the services they receive. Assessment results inform interdisciplinary teams on what people know, what people can do independently, what they still need to learn, and how well programs work.

Friendship works in concert with the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services to provide a comprehensive Overall Service Plan (OSP) for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The OSP is an investment in the person's life and is driven by each person supported. It ecompasses what is important to them as designed through outcomes identified in each of the assessments we complete. The assessments that are completed with people depend on the type of service they are receiving.

Self-Assessment

Friendship uses the Self-Assessment tool to learn about each person's musts, likes, and dislikes. Through this assessment, Friendship also learns about people's favorite activities, foods, and interests. This assessment gives the team a snapshot of people's view on the quality of their life.

Residential Assessment

Friendship uses the Residential Assessment tool to evaluate both the strengths and the support needs of people within the home and community environments. It assesses skill areas such as: personal hygiene, money management, recreation/leisure, the ability to recognize and respond to emergencies, and completing household tasks. It also assesses the supervision levels people need in their home and community.

Rights Assessment

Friendship uses the Rights Assessment tool to ensure the law NDCC 25-01.2 is being upheld and ensures people with developmental disabilities have constitutional, civil, and legal rights. It assesses a person's legal representative status such as guardianship or power of attorney, rights that have been restricted through the courts, rights that a person maintains, and rights that have been restricted as defined by a person's interdisciplinary team. All people supported are afforded due process for any rights that are restricted. All rights restrictions must be approved by a Human Rights Committee.

Friendship is committed to protecting and promoting people's rights. Every right that is restricted must have a plan put in place to assist the person with learning the skills necessary to regain that right. Friendship has a policy in place that aligns with the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights is posted in all environments.

Outcome Interview

Friendship uses the Outcome Interview tool to discover the dreams, desires, and needs of each person we support addressing questions like: Does the person have friends and family connections? Is the person being supported with health needs? Is the person respected? The Council on Quality and Leadership's 21 Personal Outcome Measures are used to complete this interview with the person supported, and if needed, others who know the person best. The Outcome Interview is then shared with the person's interdisciplinary team and becomes the driving force behind the development of the person's support plan.

Vocational Assessment

Friendship uses the Vocational Assessment to assess people's desire for employment and how they want to spend their day. From this assessment, the person's interdisciplinary team discovers the person's work and volunteer goals, highlights from the previous year, learning opportunities, and support needs. The team uses the assessment to review the person's schedule and ensure the person has a meaningful day. For people approaching retirement age, this assessment also addresses plans to assist in the transition to a different lifestyle, schedule, and social opportunities.

Financial Assessment

The Financial Assessment is a tool Friendship uses to assess how well people understand their finances. It assesses a person's basic skills with identifying denominations of money, rank coins/bills, or count change from a dollar, etc. It also assesses more advanced skills such as the ability to independently use traveler's checks, understand concepts such as "to owe" or "to save," make a budget, use/manage a credit card, etc. Friendship also created a tool to guide people who are interested in opening a second bank account to bypass restrictions related to oversight by a rep. payee.

Health Care Report

Friendship's nursing department completes an individualized health care report on a quarterly basis. This report assesses many areas of people's health, such as: vitals, allergies, lung and skin condition, vision, teeth, hearing, neurology, and much more. This assessment helps to ensure medical appointments are being scheduled, physician recommendations are being followed, etc.

Medication Assessment

The Medication Assessment is a tool Friendship uses to assess people's understanding about the medications they have been prescribed. It assesses areas such as the ability to recognize and name medications being taken, understand why they are taking medications, recognizing possible side effects of the medications, when and how to take the medications, etc. Based on the results of this assessment, supports are put into place to assist people with learning to be as independent as possible with their medication administration.

Nutrition/Dietary Assessment

Friendship's licensed dietitian completes the Nutrition and Dietary Assessment. This assessment covers areas such as: weight, modified diets, gastrointestinal, choking or chewing concerns, hydration, diabetes, etc. These specific supports are included in each person's plan and implemented according to recommendations. Supports are continually monitored through mealtime observations by the dietitian to ensure consistency and effectiveness of the plan.

Risk Assessment

Friendship uses the Risk Assessment tool to assess risk areas throughout a person's day. It assesses all the major risk areas in a person's life, including: daily living, behavioral/psychiatric, medical and physiological, environmental, financial, and community living. It also assesses the level of supervision needed across all environments to keep the person safe.

In order to address and minimize the risks each person faces, the interdisciplinary team discusses various supports (formal written supports, informal supports, natural supports, etc.) in order to help the person have the safest and best quality of life possible.

Other Assessments

In addition to the standard assessments listed above, Friendship may complete others as dictated by life circumstances: The Spirituality Assessment, for example, may be used to assess people's spirituality needs. Friendship recognizes that each person embraces spirituality at different levels and in different ways. Identified supports may include attending church, praying, following religious customs/ceremonies, spending quiet time in nature, etc. Friendship may also gather information based on personal needs through assessments focused on speech, PT/OT, intimacy and sexuality, and initial social history for people beginning services.



STRATEGIC PLAN

FISCAL YEAR 2026 HIGHLIGHTS

Friendship achieved significant success across multiple Strategic Plan initiatives. The organization has accomplished many goals that will directly enhance the services provided to the people we support at Friendship. Below are the highlights to celebrate.

TEACHER MINDSET

Provide training and oversight for all employees to be teachers to people supported (active supports). Friendship achieved this initiative by training our Leadership team on the fundamentals of active supports. This was an organization-wide effort, with all employees participating in numerous trainings across all levels. To ensure accountability, an agency goal was implemented requiring each employee to apply three active support strategies within their respective departments. A variety of resources were developed, including inspirational videos, games, music, and newsletter articles to assist departments in training staff on the importance of these supports. The topic of active supports will remain a primary focus of our organization as we continue to ensure quality services for the people we support.

MEANINGFUL INTEGRATION

Friendship will maximize opportunities for people to engage in community activities, specifically on evenings and weekends (active supports). Through teamwork, shared ideas, and training on awareness and meaningful integration this initiative was achieved. To support these efforts, Managers received regular reminders and the importance of community participation was discussed at every staff meeting. Activity calendars and a “National Day Of” calendar was developed to assist staff in identifying local opportunities. Moving forward, active supports will be tracked on the Agency Score Card to ensure departmental accountability.

ORGANIZATION OF EXCELLENCE

Create and implement a “Do it Well” employee campaign to foster a culture of high performance. Friendship launched the “Do it Well” campaign in May of 2026 to recognize employees for successfully completing their core job duties. Five core concepts were identified as part of the campaign including the following: 1. Do it right the first time, 2. Create solutions instead of barriers, 3. Use your resources, 4. Communication is key, 5. Assist people to be happy. To support this initiative, reference posters featuring the five core concepts were distributed to all departments. To help recognize employees performing their job duties well, custom wooden tokens with Friendship’s logo and the saying “Do it Well” were created for the organization. Members of leadership received small bags of tokens to award to employees they observe doing their basic job duties well. Moving forward Friendship will remain committed to promoting ongoing discussion about the importance of completing basic job duties.

CULTURE OF BELONGING

Implement CommonSpirit’s New Connections program designed to welcome all new employees. Friendship successfully implemented CommonSpirit’s New Connections program, designed to create a welcoming environment for all employees, specifically those within their first year of employment. To ensure new hires feel integrated to the Friendship team, the program provides hands-on onboarding assistance, connection to the employee’s direct supervisor, a welcome packet prior to orientation, and a welcome bag with branded items upon completion of orientation. Throughout the first year, employees receive regular communication with their supervisor, a 90-day survey, and a performance evaluation to address any concerns and celebrate areas of success. In addition to the New Connections program, Friendship implemented Stay Interviews directed towards first-year employees. The interviews serve as a vital touchpoint to build relationships with leadership and identify key areas of focus for employee retention.

ADAPTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Assess and implement innovative technology to promote independence. Building upon the success of the 2025 Strategic Plan, Friendship continued to implement innovative technology to promote independence and empowerment. Throughout the year, the people we support actively assessed, trialed, and purchased various pieces of adaptive equipment. Notably, Friendship purchased approximately 20 new adaptive items for trial during the 2026 Adaptive Equipment Expo held in Fargo and Grafton. This interactive event allowed participants to test devices for functionality and usability firsthand. The Adaptive Equipment Expos were well attended by 82 people supported, 84 Friendship staff, and 17 community members. Friendship remains committed to enhancing independence through assistive technology.

FISCAL YEAR 2027

STRATEGIC PLAN

Friendship's daily goal is to nurture each person's abilities, talents, and interests in order to assist people to achieve personal goals and dreams. The Strategic Plan initiatives will help establish the organizational direction and identify goals to create opportunities to enhance quality for each person who receives our services.

Friendship's Strategic Plan of the fiscal year 2027 focuses on initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life for people supported by Friendship. Each initiative is detailed below, along with the Executive Sponsor(s) responsible for leading the implementation of each initiative.







DSP LEAD TRAINING

Provide DSP Lead position-specific training to guarantee consistent engagement of people supported across every department.
Executive Sponsor: Ryan Orcutt

MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

Through exposure and discovery, continue to expand employment opportunities for people supported.
Executive Sponsor: Beth Maesse

OVERALL SERVICE PLAN TRAINING

Identify and implement creative ways to provide meaningful training on people's plans.
Executive Sponsor: Karla Spitzer

CULTURE OF THE TEAM

Deliver leadership training designed to intentionally cultivate an inclusive, positive, and values-based team dynamic.
Executive Sponsor: Garret Miller

DAY PROGRAM BUILDING

Construct a brand new facility in Fargo for the Day Program to offer enhanced accessibility and adequate space.
Executive Sponsors: Kristine Christensen, Steve Ouren, Dave Odegaard, Dori Leslie

PEOPLE CHOOSE SERVICES

Achieve a 4-year Accreditation and then implement Person Centered Excellence (PCE) action plans as required.
Executive Sponsor: Operational Team

On the Minds of People We Support

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

What are you most proud of?

"Having more than one job." – Greg A.

"I am a good artist." – Veronica C.

"My powerchair." – Kelly A.

"My relationship with my dad and my son." – Roxane H.

Julie's Journal



By Julie Gustafson

Baseball season was very fun. I enjoyed watching it with my mom and sister sometimes. I went to the Fireants games a couple of times. I enjoyed the food there but the weather was so hot. I wish one day Fireants games will be on TV; that would be fun to watch all my friends on TV. I also watched a couple of soccer games during the World Cup. This was my first time watching soccer on TV. I didn't understand the game, even though my staff explained it to me but I still can't understand it. Also, I'm very excited for football season to start. I am rooting for the Seakhawks and the Vikings.

"Being a part of a great organization." – Michael M.

"My cat, Victoria." – Kevin M.

"My game (softball)." – Eric F.

"Playing on the Fireants." – Aaron B.

"Going to three Twins games." – Evan G.

Weathering The Storm

ONE GAME AT A TIME



Living in North Dakota means understanding that weather often plays a major role in shaping our daily activities year round. This year, the Fireants adaptive softball team experienced that firsthand, as changing weather conditions limited the team to four complete regular-season games and two shortened games.

Despite the challenges, the weather could not dampen the enthusiasm and dedication of the players, cheer team, coaches, and fans. The Fireants finished the season with an impressive 5-1 record while creating countless memorable moments both on and off the field. A favorite weekly tradition continued with team tailgating, bringing together approximately 50 players, families, and supporters to celebrate friendship, inclusion, and community.

The team was once again guided by the outstanding leadership of dedicated coaches Dave Schmidt and Lacey Bayne, whose commitment and encouragement helped make the season a success.

In the midst of the softball season, many of the people supported by Friendship were able to enjoy Minnesota Twins baseball games. Whether cheering from the dugout as a Fireant or from the grandstands as a baseball fan, the same excitement, energy, and love of the game could be felt throughout the experience.

For many, summer ballgames are a cherished tradition, and the Fireants are already looking forward to another season filled with teamwork, laughter, and unforgettable memories.











SAVE THE DATE

October 9, 2026
Oktoberfest Raffle Drawing

February 11, 2027
Giving Hearts Day

Friendship Newsletter Committee:
Amy Hieb, Dori Leslie, Garret Miller, Gina Hogue,
Julie Gustafson, Katelyn Miller, Sarah Lowe, 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, Jim Nyhof, Denise Kolpack, Adele Page, Jeff Pederson, Mary Schneider, Jay Sorum, David Jones, Sr. Mary Margaret Mooney, Ron Guggisberg, Sr. Katherine Fennel, Mark DuBord, Dr. Mary Jo Lewis, 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

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Facebook.com/CHIFriendship