

ARRM Cares Nomination: Laurie Case
Chaparral House
Years of Service: 35

Professional Integrity: Explain how the individual has supported persons served while maintaining high standards to benefit persons served, co-workers, and the organization

Laurie is an excellent worker, keeping the house clean and organized every day, and is always willing to do more than is expected of her for no recognition or praise. She is always willing to cover a shift if her coworkers are feeling sick or have a conflict.

Laurie goes out of her way to buy arts and crafts and create activities for the individuals she works with. She's always showing up to work with presents and surprises for them, keeping them entertained and happy; this recently included a stuffed animal reindeer, a paint-a-snowman art project, a light-up electric toy, a candy cane cooking project, and many more fun activities and gifts.

All the folks she works with look forward to her coming in every day, so much so that they tend to argue about who will receive the first bath from her that evening. Everyone loves her! She's built such strong bonds with the families and her coworkers always speak highly of her! The Program Manager has not heard one negative comment about Laurie in all her years working here.

Networking Supports: Explain how the individual has advocated to connect persons served with natural support systems. Explain techniques the DSP has used to connect persons served with natural supports

Laurie is so thoughtful and passionate when advocating for those she works with. Our organization participates in a 5K walk every fall to raise awareness and support for individuals with disabilities. We join with six other disability organizations to help plan this event.

Unfortunately, we've had to cancel the in-person event due to COVID for the last two years. However, this didn't set Laurie back! She took matters into her own hands and started a kayaking fundraiser instead—all to support those in the home she works at! She started a Facebook fundraising page, shared it with her friends and family, and then hit the lake!

"The guys at Chaparral are very special to me and everyone who works at the house, so I wanted to do this to bless their lives," said Laurie. And it's been successful ever since! Thanks to her, the guys she worked with received the new garden bed they had been asking for!

"Laurie continuously works to enrich the lives of others," said Program Manager Kim Guderjan. "This act just puts her a step above her everyday intentions. Laurie is a model caregiver, and we are so blessed to have her at Chaparral House."

Creative, Innovative, Person-Centered Approaches to Services: Explain how the individual has personalized services for persons served and how they have demonstrated an ability to develop and implement new person-centered approaches while demonstrating successful results.

Laurie is so creative and excels at providing innovative, person-centered approaches into her work. Throughout the pandemic, Laurie continually found new ideas and outings out in the community, but ones that also kept the guys she supported safe.

For example, one time she brought all four of the individuals she works with to a Back to the 50s Car Show in Eagan. But before they attended, Laurie worked with the guys to make handmade cards with photos of each of their cars on the front. Inside was a thank you message from the guys. These cards were given to the owners when they visited the event. It's the small but generous gestures like this that make her standout!