

## **HH 2026 Annual Friends & Family Picnic**

**Hello HH Team,**

I want to personally invite you, each one of our HH Team Members, and your family members to our 2026 Annual Friends and Family Picnic on August 25<sup>th</sup>.

This year we are celebrating 50 years of providing support to people living with disabilities in our community! Our picnic theme is dress in your favorite 70's clothing and/or birthday celebration attire.

We will be starting our HH Picnic at 4:30 pm with a short program at 5:30 pm to celebrate our 2026 ARRM Care Nominees, and we will be playing Bingo until 6:30 pm. I hope to see you there!

### **HH rides the waves with SkiDox**

I want to say **THANK YOU** to all of our HH Team Members who assisted five individuals we support with attending this year's SkiDox adaptive water-skiing event. It was a beautiful, hot summer day filled with a lot of splashes and smiles! Thanks for making this day possible!



**Hiawatha Homes**  
**Friends & Family Picnic**

**August 25, 2026**  
**Autumn Ridge Church**  
**3611 Salem Rd. SW**  
**Rochester, MN 55902**

**Dinner: 4:30 - 6:30 PM**  
**Program: 5:30 PM**  
**Bingo: 6 PM**

**Join us to wish Hiawatha Homes**  
**happy 50th birthday**  
**in your best 70s gear!**



**ENJOY THE REST OF YOUR SUMMER!!!**

## **Have YOUR Voice Heard: Legislator Round Table Set for August 26th**

One of Hiawatha Homes' core values is Advocacy – we believe education and advocacy bring about the social change needed to create inclusive communities.

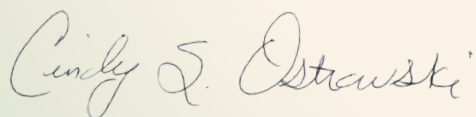
**On August 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am** we have an opportunity to meet with ARRM (Area Residential Resources in Minnesota) staff members to help set the upcoming 2027 ARRM legislative agenda. **This is YOUR opportunity to have YOUR voice heard.**

**I invite you and the individuals we support to participate in both the ARRM listening session from 11:00 am to Noon and the Noon to 1:00 pm District 24 and District 25 candidate round table discussion/candidate forum.**

We must continue to advocate for the individuals we support and for long-term funding for Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). The HCBS waiver provides funding to pay for daily support services which includes a reimbursement rate to pay for direct support professionals. This rate needs to be reviewed adjusted through the state legislature.

Another important resource for people living with disabilities in our community is funding for their Housing and Support Services. This monthly housing benefit provides funds for rent, utilities, and other home/rent related expenses. This benefit has not kept up with inflationary increases, and it needs to be addressed by our legislators. They need to study and real cost associated with rent/housing expenses and adjust this benefit accordingly.

*"ARRM is a nonprofit association of nearly 200 provider organizations, businesses and advocates dedicated to leading the advancement of home and community-based services supporting people living with disabilities in their pursuit of meaningful lives. Founded in 1970, ARRM continues to lead advocacy and training for positive industry reforms that support Minnesotans with disabilities."*



Cindy Ostrowski, CEO

**Date: August 26th**

**Location: Mount Olive Lutheran Church (2830 18<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW, Rochester, MN 55901)**

**Time: 11 AM - 12 PM - Meet with ARRM Staff to provide input for the upcoming legislative session  
12 - 1 PM - District 24 & District 25 Round Table Discussion/Candidate Forum**

# HIAWATHA HEROES

***August 2026***



**DeAnna Nichols**

**DSP at Forest Knoll**

DeAnna has been working at Forest Knoll House since Dec. 2025. She came in and immediately people felt at ease with her. She earned everyone's trust and worked hard. DeAnna takes time to listen, show respect to everyone around her, and spends quality time with each and every person she supports. She is thorough with following plans and making sure her care is consistent so that people know what to expect when being supported. She also encourages independence. She is open minded to people's opinions, while focusing on teaching skills. She not only gives great support to people, but she also makes sure the environment is clean and documents thoroughly. The following statements have been used to describe DeAnna: easy-going, fun, good-hearted, kindhearted, and helpful. DeAnna is a well-rounded staff who demonstrates self-motivation, reliability, kindness, and genuineness. DeAnna is a joy to be around and a blessing.

## ***August Anniversaries***

**Connie Walker - 39 years**

**Sidney Frye II - 9 years**

**Rebecca Civil - 8 years**

**Ariat Oboya - 3 years**

**Efren Sanchez - 3 years**

**Salwa Abukar - 3 years**

**Ashley Millard - 2 years**

**Jonell Sam - 2 years**

**Ellen Heydon - 1 year**

**Kaitlyn Pickens - 1 year**

**Maryam Omar - 1 year**

**McKenna Meyers - 1 year**

**Michelle Myers - 1 year**

**Naimo Abdinoor - 1 year**

**Tesloch Kuey - 1 year**

# ≡Welcome≡



**Brenden Postier**, Hiring & Training Coordinator, joined the Hiawatha Homes administrative team in July. Originally from Byron, Brenden had no idea what he wanted to do until he signed up for a CNA class in high school and began working at a nursing home. That's where he developed a passion for the healthcare field and long-term care. After high school, Brenden played Junior Hockey for a year before going to college at Winona State for Healthcare Administration. Over the last year, he worked as the House Coordinator at Abe's Place, where he really enjoyed getting to know the individuals and staff. If you ever have any questions regarding training please don't hesitate to reach out to Brenden!

## New Team Members

*Welcome to Hiawatha Homes!*

Abdi Hassan  
Benjamin Kelley  
Daizie Johnson

Esther Fischer  
Gregory Israel  
Hannah Campeau

Jessica Whitehead  
Kenzie Egger  
Mercedes Milliken

Saredo Ali  
Yonis Mahamed

**NOMINATIONS**

***Did you know?***

**REFER A**

**FRIEND**

Nominate a Hiawatha Hero by visiting  
[hiawathahomes.org/employee-login](http://hiawathahomes.org/employee-login)

Refer an Employee by visiting  
[hiawathahomes.org/employee-login](http://hiawathahomes.org/employee-login)

## **Hiawatha Homes Foundation - Request for Special Funds**

Hiawatha Homes Foundation raises funds to support the needs of Hiawatha Homes Inc. Our goal is to raise funds that are unrestricted, meaning we can apply them to the greatest need at any time without restrictions on how they can be used.

However, we have generous donors that want to ensure aspects of our mission are met and they support restricted funds. These funds may look like

- specialized equipment and assistive support
- specialized medical needs/health and wellness support
- social, community and recreational support
- disability awareness
- sensory support
- and more

Hiawatha Homes Foundation has created an internal grants process that you are able to request funds from to support the individuals and program needs of Hiawatha Homes. **Please note, all requests must have a supervisor signature. Request forms can be found at the Foundation Office, or you can email the Foundation Director for the request form.**

### **The Johnson Family Helping Hands Fund**

The Helping Hands fund was created to support individuals in opportunities that are cost prohibitive. The fund was created for the following needs:

- basic needs and daily living
- medical health and wellness
- home support and accessibility
- community and recreation
- education and skill development

Each year, Hiawatha Homes Foundation will have \$5,000 to support individuals.



These funds are through a grant process and will be reviewed internally by the Helping Hands Fund Committee. **The fund will have two cycles each year with the following due dates: September 20 and February 20. Decisions will be made by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month.**

For more information, reach out to Ellen Heydon, Foundation Director, for grant application and guidelines.