



50 Years of Hiawatha Homes Celebrating Spirit Week

February 2026

Our story begins with home.

It takes a team of dedicated people for Hiawatha Homes to provide individualized support in a safe, stable, home environment. Hiawatha Homes has a team of 240 employees, providing a home for 72 individuals in 19 community residential homes, and in-home family support services and respite services to another 10 individuals.

The dedication of the team members at Hiawatha Homes is best illustrated by considering a few of their many responsibilities. Our maintenance team is kept busy with home repairs, inspections, and landscaping. The nursing team provides on-site care and evaluations, and coordinates care with therapists and providers. The program director, program managers, and house coordinators develop comprehensive care plans, and coordinate services between the individuals we serve, county case managers, and guardians and family. Our administrative and management team members work behind the scenes to support Hiawatha Homes through implementation of personnel policies, administration of payroll and benefits, strategic planning, and assuring compliance with Minnesota 245D licensing rules and regulations. All team members contribute to our ability to provide person-centered services. And everyone pitches in to help with fun activities such as the annual picnic and our Festival of Trees fundraiser.



Perhaps the most critical team members are the direct support professionals (DSPs); those team members who support individuals with daily living skills such as bathing, dressing, and specialized medical support needs. Hiawatha Homes currently has approximately 180 DSPs serving in this valued role. Additionally, they clean, do the laundry, shop for groceries, and prepare the meals. They read stories, sing songs, and decorate for the holidays. They do manicures and trim beards. They drive the individuals we support to

medical appointments, day programs and recreational activities. They are a shoulder to cry on and a friend with whom to share accomplishments. Their emotional support is especially valued by individuals who no longer have close family and friends.

To honor our team and recognize their important roles in the lives of individuals we support, Hiawatha Homes holds **Spirit Week** every February. This year the week was full of activities, including daily dress-up themes, prizes, and a brunch at Charlie's Restaurant for the team members.



Staff Appreciation Brunch

Prizes

Gratitude from board members

As we look towards our future, the leadership and staff of Hiawatha Homes remain committed to providing compassionate, quality care to the individuals we serve. In the coming year we will share monthly stories with you in celebration of our 50th anniversary.

Hiawatha Homes also takes this opportunity to recognize the dedication and commitment of long term staff members.

- Rachel Lucey 46 Years
- Janice Peterson 42 Years
- Connie Walker 39 Years
- Carol Graumann Matz 38 Years
- Kathy Nauman 36 Years
- Sheila Edwards 28 Years
- Michael Klobuchar 27 Years
- Fadumo Hassan 26 Years
- Chad Skaran 22 Years
- Ruth Carr 21 Years
- Cindy Ostrowski 20 Years



Over the 50 years since the beginning of Hiawatha Homes, the structure of service delivery and the responsibilities of our team members have changed to meet the changing needs of the individuals we support. However, our mission is unchanged; **To provide quality support services to people with disabilities at home and in the community,** consistent with our core values.

Hiawatha Homes Core Values

Advocacy: We champion the needs and rights of those we serve.

Choice: We empower individuals to make informed decisions about their care.

Innovation: We embrace new ideas and technologies to enhance service delivery.

Relationships: We build meaningful connections based on trust and understanding.

Respect: We treat everyone with dignity and honor their unique stories.



All team members received 50th Anniversary Hiawatha Homes t-shirts.

Hiawatha Homes 50th Anniversary t-shirts are **available for purchase** at: hiawathahomes.org/50

I want to support 50 more years!

Consider becoming a monthly donor where \$50 a month supports Hiawatha Homes for years to come.

Our Story Begins With Home



HIAWATHA HOMES
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