

# LIFEWORKS SELF-ADVOCATES AT THE STATE CAPITOL!

As they are every Tuesday during the legislative session, self-advocates from Lifeworks were among 1,000 people on hand at the state Capitol on March 13!

While self-advocates rallied in support of essential services for people with disabilities, the Lifeworks Apple Valley choir also had the honor of performing a number of songs for attendees.

With support from host organizations ARRM and MOHR, many self-advocates met with their legislators to share their concerns about potential cuts to services that they rely on to live, work, and enjoy life in the community.

*Stay tuned to the Lifeworks Facebook page for additional photos and updates from our self-advocacy efforts!*

Pictured: Songbirds performer Trent Caraway waves to an admiring crowd during his performance at the Capitol on March 13.

**Lifeworks** | *A nonprofit serving people with disabilities*

Lifeworks Services  
2965 Lone Oak Drive, Suite 160  
Eagan, MN 55121

[lifeworks.org](http://lifeworks.org)

Lifeworks is a nonprofit organization founded in 1965 by parents of children with disabilities. Through Fiscal Support, Employment, and Day Services - as well as through partnerships with 300 businesses - Lifeworks provides support to 2,500 individuals with disabilities and their families throughout the Twin Cities and greater Mankato area.

**Lifeworks**

**LIFEPURSUIITS**

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Pictured: Ajani Lewis-McGhee, Lifeworks Personal Achievement Award Winner



# LIFEWORKS ENTREPRENEUR LAUNCHES LAWN AND SNOW SERVICE WITH HELP FROM MICROGRANT

Josh “Schultze” Schultz has been mowing grass, shoveling, and snow blowing for as long as he can remember – over 15 years, in fact. Last summer, he decided to make it a career by founding Schultze’s Lawn & Snow Service.

“I’ve had other jobs that I’ve done and it didn’t seem to work out,” Schultz said. “I just decided that it was good idea to start up my own business, [and] be my own boss.”

One of the first steps for any aspiring entrepreneur is securing the capital necessary to launch the business, something Schultz has invested plenty of time in. With some help from Lifeworks staff member Jodi Iverson, Schultz applied for a grant through the Minnesota Microgrant Partnership, which is administered by The Arc Minnesota and funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. The program is designed to support people with disabilities who have financial barriers to achieving their goals.

In Schultz’s case, his dreams of being an entrepreneur were held back by his need for viable equipment. After receiving a \$500 microgrant, Schultz purchased a new leaf blower that he expects will make a big difference in the efficiency of his work. He was so thrilled with his new acquisition that he decided to test it out, despite the fact that it was winter.

As his ambition for his business grows, Schultz has identified Vocational Rehabilitation Services as a possible funding source.

“They have a program for people that are starting their own business,” Iverson said. “But before they’ll work with anybody, the first thing he had to do was list out things that he wanted and he had to go out and find it and get the information on it.”

In hopes of securing additional funding, Schultz has also prepared a business plan, registered for a federal identification number, completed a competitor analysis, and applied for a license from the city of Cottage Grove where he lives. He’s also received quotes for additional equipment that he hopes to purchase, totaling approximately \$2,500.

## HELP ALONG THE WAY

Throughout the process of launching and growing his business, Iverson has worked with Schultz about four hours per week, but he’s also received support from his mother, aunt, and uncle.



“His mom found a business consultant in Cottage Grove,” Iverson said. “It’s a free program that helps people throughout Minnesota with starting their own business. She’s totally on board and willing to try to make this work, and she believes in Josh.”

Though Schultz is skilled at fixing equipment, his uncle is there to help when needed, and his aunt helped him create business cards. But that’s not to say he hasn’t done most of the heavy lifting himself.

“I LOVE  
BEING  
MY OWN  
BOSS”

-JOSH SCHULTZ

“He’s really good at marketing,” Iverson said. “Josh has done everything on that end by himself.”

Schultz has invested time in developing a logo and slogan, and when he first started his business around June 2017, he would drive around with business cards and put them up at local businesses. Soon, his seasonal advertisements will be on Carbone’s pizza boxes, which he hopes will bring in new customers.

## COMMITMENT TO QUALITY AND VALUE

As a new business owner, there is nothing more important to Schultz than quality and value. Whether it’s snow removal service in the winter or lawn care in the summer, Schultz said he likes to drive by every few days to check out his customers’ property. And he’s there more often when it has rained or snowed heavily. What differentiates

Schultz’s business from others is something he calls a “helping hands” service. Through this unique service, he charges an hourly rate to work alongside people who may enjoy working in their yard, but need a bit of extra help.

“Like you’d help your neighbor,” Schultz said. “The only thing is, that neighbor is a little further away.”

Currently, Schultz is serving “neighbors” in Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park, and the surrounding area.

## THE FUTURE OF THE BUSINESS

Besides purchasing a riding lawn mower, Schultz said he hopes to buy a weed-whip and other basic equipment he needs to do the job as his business continues to grow. And his vision for the future goes far beyond that.

“To expand more, maybe hire one more person,” Schultz said. “Maybe move out further. Expand, but don’t get too big where I can’t handle everything. My dream would be to have a five hour or seven hour or eight hour day, but constantly go from jobsite to jobsite.”

His vision includes three to five customers each day, so he can ensure each job is done with quality and care.

“I love being my own boss,” Schultz said.

*Schultze’s Lawn & Snow Service serves Cottage Grove, Newport, St. Paul Park, and the surrounding area. Contact Josh at 651-900-0856 for pricing and availability.*



# You're Invited

# LIFEWORKS

## ANNUAL CELEBRATION



## Join us for the 2018 Lifeworks Annual Celebration

where we'll honor people with disabilities and the individuals and businesses who support them!

Thursday  
April 26, 2018

The Depot – Minneapolis

5 p.m. Reception & Silent Art Auction  
6 p.m. Dinner, Awards, & Live Auction

### Thank You To Our Key Sponsors



Sponsors confirmed as of 03/21/2018

Register today at  
[LifeworksCelebration.org](http://LifeworksCelebration.org)

Tickets \$75 | Sponsorships available

### Lifeworks is pleased to present the 2018 Annual Award honorees!

Each year at the Lifeworks Annual Celebration, we present the Lifeworks Annual Awards. These awards celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of people with disabilities and the individuals and businesses who support them.



Nominated by: Breanna Freberg, Marilyn Freberg, & Jean Rodgers

As a Lifeworks employer partner dating back 26 years, Ameriprise Financial has maintained a strong commitment to building a diverse workforce. Throughout that time, Ameriprise has provided mentorship, informational interview opportunities, access to specialized trainings, and flexibility for Lifeworks associates who utilize Metro Mobility or want to work remotely.

In addition to its long-term partnership as an employer, Ameriprise has generously donated to Lifeworks through its corporate giving program and served as a sponsor of the Lifeworks Annual Celebration.



Nominated by: Diane Baker, Steven Brown, Sara Holeman, John Mabowald, Todd Marchiafava, & Richard Perket

Approximately four years ago, Corey Baker joined the order-processing department at Christopher & Banks. Surrounded by blinking lights, buzzers, and co-workers constantly feeding him new products to pack, Corey has excelled in a fast-paced role that requires concentration and an eye for detail.

Though Corey had a lot to learn initially, he has worked exceptionally hard to pick up the nuances of his position and is currently among the most productive members of his team.

Through his work, Corey is happy to be able to support his family, often using his paycheck to buy groceries and fulfilling his desire to be a contributor.



Nominated by: Russell Nelson, Gretchen Weaver, & Frances Woodson

As a small child, medical and education experts told Ajani Lewis-McGhee's parents they shouldn't expect he'd be able to accomplish much, due to his limitations. But AJ, as his friends at work call him, thrived as his family concentrated on his strengths.

For the past seven years, AJ has been an employee at Allianz Life Insurance Company of North America where he has consistently learned new skills, advanced, and shared his knowledge with co-workers as a trainer.

After years of preparation and focused development, AJ not only moved into his own apartment, but also independently planned a well-attended housewarming party.



Nominated by: Angela Baeten, Brian Begin, Sarah Franz, Mike Freiberg, Dr. Sheryl R Grassie, Carol Hearn, David Hearn, Tim Hearn, Kelly Kausel, Paula Oliver, Sara Santi, Kari Schamber, & Janice Weinmeyer

As the leader of the Lifeworks Brooklyn Park self-advocacy group, Lori Noland empowers people with disabilities to meet with their elected officials, sit in on committee meetings, and network with nonprofits and other advocates.

After several years of leading the group, Lori has taught countless individuals about their rights and helped them build authentic connections with the people who represent them by visiting the Capitol every Tuesday during the legislative session.



Nominated by: Emily Giannobile, Judy Lysne, Beth Niedringhaus, Suzanne Shute, & Sarah Wagner

For more than 10 years, Josi Wert has been leading a weekly women's book club for people with disabilities at Lifeworks Eagan. Nearly every Tuesday, she volunteers her time to read to a group of captivated women, many of whom have been in the group since it began.

Josi's role as volunteer leader of the book club has created a community of readers who come together to be swept up in a story. While some women in the group are unable to speak or communicate easily, Josi goes the extra mile to make sure they are included and able to fully participate, socialize, and immerse themselves in the weekly ritual.

# 2017 IN-YEAR REVIEW



LIFEWORKS ASSOCIATE BRETT NELSON AT LUNDS & BYERLYS IN EDINA

**198**  
New job placements in 2017

**82**  
New employers partnered with Lifeworks to employ people with disabilities

**\$978,917**  
TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED IN 2017

**603**  
Individuals supported on the job

**306**  
Total number of employers who partnered with Lifeworks

**200**

NEW INDIVIDUALS SERVED THROUGH FISCAL SUPPORT SERVICES IN 2017

**Thank You**  
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!



Your financial investment in Lifeworks is what makes all of this possible. Thanks to you, people with disabilities are able to achieve their goals while working and enjoying life in the community.

**564**  
Number of Lifeworks volunteers in 2017

**4,580**  
Hours donated by Lifeworks volunteers

**17**  
Number of visits to the Capitol by Lifeworks Brooklyn Park self-advocates

**52**  
Individuals who participated in Lifeworks bands and choirs

LIFEWORKS CHOSE TO BECOME ONE OF JUST A HANDFUL OF DISABILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS STATEWIDE WITHOUT A SPECIAL WAGE CERTIFICATE

**March 1, 2017**

**\$11.02**

The average wage of a Lifeworks associate directly hired by a business

## THANK YOU TO THE LIFEWORKS ANNUAL AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE!

An independent selection committee is formed each year to select the winners of the Lifeworks Annual Awards. These individuals donate their time and read dozens of nominations to select the five winners.

Lifeworks is grateful to this year's members for their dedication:

- **Leigh Bailey** – Founder, CEO, and Co-Principal at The Bailey Group
- **Hanne Hanratty** – Employee Benefits Consultant at USI Insurance Services
- **Justin Hanratty**
- **David Lyman** – Principal at LymanDoran
- **David Pellingier** – Product Manager, e-Commerce – Agricultural Supply Chain, North America at Cargill
- **Sonja Simonsen** – Senior Vice President Nonprofit Banking at Minnesota Bank & Trust
- **Aaron Sorenson** – Communications Manager at Lunds & Byerlys
- **Michelle Sullivan** – Strategic Partner, Marketing + Communications at AmplifyDMC



Lifeworks job seekers benefit from donor support that helps them gain employment in their communities.

## YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK: INNOVATION AT LIFEWORKS

Thank you for being part of the Lifeworks family and supporting our vision of making Lifeworks a person-centered, innovative, and sustainable leader in serving people with disabilities!

Government funding alone has never been enough for Lifeworks to provide the high-quality services that you and your loved ones expect and deserve. As a nonprofit organization, Lifeworks relies on donations from people like you to ensure we have the resources to stay ahead of the curve, expand our service offerings, and meet the ever-changing needs of our community.

In 2018, we're working on a number of projects that will improve the quality of the services we provide, including:

- Developing a self-directed assessment tool for people with disabilities
- Training school and transition staff in Dakota County on the use of the self-directed assessment tool
- Designing community workshops for people with disabilities and their families
- Training our network of employers on inclusive interviewing and hiring
- Implementing new software for time, attendance, and expense reporting that will allow our staff to spend more time directly supporting the people we serve

If you'd like to discuss how your financial contribution could benefit these projects and more than 2,500 people with disabilities served by Lifeworks, please contact Suzanne Shute at [sshute@lifeworks.org](mailto:sshute@lifeworks.org) or 651-365-3743.