

LIFEWORKS BROOKLYN PARK OPEN HOUSE CONNECTS LEGISLATORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

On November 9, Lifeworks Brooklyn Park hosted local legislators to connect them with the people with disabilities that we serve and educate them on issues important to them. Although she could not attend the event in person, U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar took the time to record a three-minute video for attendees.

“I want to thank everyone connected with Lifeworks for all you’ve done for the people of our state,” Klobuchar said through the video. “For over 50 years, Lifeworks has worked tirelessly to help those with disabilities.”

After watching Sen. Klobuchar’s video, attendees went on tours of the facility to see all that Lifeworks Brooklyn Park has to offer. Afterward, each legislator connected with their individual constituents.

Lifeworks is grateful to Sens. Hoffman, Eaton, and Newton as well as Reps. Freiberg, West, Carlson, and Lee who took time out of their busy schedules to attend our open house! A special thank you to Sen. Klobuchar and her Outreach Director, Sarah Franz, who coordinated the production of the video.

If you’d like to watch the full video from Sen. Klobuchar, please visit [facebook.com/LifeworksMN](https://www.facebook.com/LifeworksMN) and click on videos.



Sen. Chris Eaton speaks with her constituents at the Lifeworks open house event.

Lifeworks | *A nonprofit serving
people with disabilities*

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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 nearly 300 businesses - Lifeworks provides support to 2,500 individuals with disabilities and their families throughout the Twin Cities and greater Mankato area.

Lifeworks

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Pictured: Lifeworks Associate Brian Kley



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT AND CEO JEFFREY D. BROWN

Dear Friends in the Lifeworks Community,

In my first year at Lifeworks, I've learned so much from the people we serve, our families, donors, employers, volunteers, and community supporters.

Lifeworks values, honors, and highlights the impact made by people with disabilities, and I've been able to witness great examples of this over the past 11 months. Some of the highlights included:

- Our Lifeworks self-advocacy group joining a crowd of 1,000 people at a rally at the Capitol
- Artists blossoming into their true selves at the open house for the Lifeworks Brooklyn Park art studio
- Personal Achievement Award Winners Maggie and Niko sharing their life stories and accomplishments with all of us at the Lifeworks Annual Celebration
- Over 130 people beginning new jobs at employers throughout the Twin Cities and Mankato

Lifeworks is able to offer these rewarding experiences, and many more, thanks to donations from supporters and friends like you.

We rely on donations to help support our services and programs for people with disabilities because there's a \$600,000 gap between the real cost of providing our innovative services and the amount of government funding we receive.

Please consider donating to Lifeworks so we can continue to provide unique, person-centered services to people with disabilities. Every donation, no matter the amount, helps.

You can make your donation via the enclosed envelope or at lifeworks.org/donate. Your generosity at any level will make a positive impact.

Wishing you a happy holiday season,



Jeffrey D. Brown
President and CEO



Save the Date: April 26, 2018
THE LIFEWORKS
ANNUAL CELEBRATION

LifeworksCelebration.org

PRESENTED BY



Save the date for the 2018 Lifeworks Annual Celebration where we'll honor people with disabilities and the individuals and businesses who support them!

Visit our new event website - lifeworkscelebration.org - for more information about sponsorships, the Lifeworks Annual Awards, and more.





AMERIPRIDE POSITION A GREAT FIT FOR LIFEWORKS ASSOCIATE BRIAN KLEY

At AmeriPride, a family-owned business that was founded more than 125 years ago, Lifeworks Associate Brian Kley is just another one of the guys.

As part of a three-person team, Kley loads and unloads truckloads of shipments that travel between locations such as Rochester and Sioux Falls.

“He wants everything done right,” said Customer Operations Manager Scott Voss. “He leads the group. We’ve had a lot of turnover, and he’s been through everything. He’s doing a great job of training the new guys. I’m very impressed with what he does and how he handles himself.”

As someone who enjoys manual labor and a job well-done, Kley has thrived as an AmeriPride employee for the past nine months, often looking to pick up extra hours and sometimes working 50 hours per work.

“He fits in very well with the guys,” said Customer Administration Manager Scott Wetzell. “It took a while, but the route men have warmed up to him, and tease him - in a positive way - and Brian dishes it back.”

Learn more about partnering with Lifeworks at lifeworks.org/employer-partnerships

Lifeworks staff member Amy Herz (back left) with job seekers Brandon (back right), Amanda (front left), Julia (front center), and Adam (front right).



PROGRAM FOR JOB SEEKERS REVOLUTIONIZING HOW PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FIND WORK

For many people, searching for a job is a daunting task. Finding the perfect combination of skills, interests, and wages isn’t easy for anyone, but it often presents additional challenges for people with disabilities.

Lifeworks aims to bridge that gap. Through an employment program with smaller group sizes and more one-on-one support, we’re helping job seekers find a career more quickly. While searching for a job, participants learn about career possibilities, identify employment themes, and create personal employment plans. But the secondary skills they learn along the way are often just as valuable. For Adam, he learned about the importance of navigation skills on his first day in the program.

“I actually had to laugh,” he said. “The day I was doing my first class here I got lost because I was kind of in a rush to get home.”

For other participants like Julia, learning to voice their opinion has allowed them to increase their independence. Everyone involved is growing as they make an informed choice about competitive, integrated employment.

“We’re not applying for jobs just to get by,” said small group facilitator Amy Herz. “We want something that you actually like to do, that you want to do, and you get to pick what that’s going to be.”

While some job seekers are entirely new to Lifeworks, others have been around for many years. Regardless, everyone has benefited from the opportunity to take charge of their job search, identify career themes, and grow as human beings.

Learn more about services for job seekers at lifeworks.org/employment

LIFEWORKS ASSOCIATE TRAVIS SPRENGER: DOLLAR TREE EMPLOYEE EXTRAORDINAIRE

Travis Sprenger is no stranger to hard work. He’s worked in the food industry for Old Country Buffet, Buffalo Wild Wings, Hardee’s, and Culver’s. He’s worked in sales, assembly, housekeeping, cleaning, and janitorial. Today, Sprenger is a valued employee at Dollar Tree, where the skills he’s honed at his previous jobs have allowed him to excel.

“I kind of do a little bit of everything,” Sprenger said when asked about his current position. “Open in the morning, fill all the drink coolers, the balloon center, sweep the floors.”

And those responsibilities are in addition to stocking shelves and serving as a cashier. Sprenger’s versatility is something Dollar Tree desires in all its employees.

“They interact with us really well and give us all the tools we need to succeed,” Sprenger said.

Though Sprenger was initially a temporary worker, Dollar Tree promptly hired him. With minimal support from a Lifeworks job coach, he’s become an exemplary employee, recently earning the title of “cashier of the week” after helping more than 450 customers. Though Sprenger said he enjoys all aspects of his job, one thing stands out.

“Seeing all the babies and the kids. You could have a horrible day, but all the little kids come in here, they make you smile.”

Sprenger celebrated his one-year anniversary with the company in November.





THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING LIFEWORKS DURING GIVE TO THE MAX DAY!

We are so grateful to everyone who donated to Lifeworks for Give to the Max Day, Minnesota's largest day of online giving. In total, you raised \$11,815 to support people with disabilities!

Your donations help support innovative programs that go above and beyond what government funding allows and wouldn't be possible without your generosity.

Thanks to you, more than 2,500 people with disabilities have access to person-centered, goal-oriented programs that allow them to work and enjoy life in the community.

Overall, Give to the Max Day raised more than \$20 million for thousands of nonprofit organizations.

Did you miss Give to the Max Day? You can still donate to support Lifeworks and the people that we serve! Just visit lifeworks.org/donate.

LIFEWORKS ARTIST PEREZ-GARCIA FEATURED ON ALEXIS BAILLY VINEYARD WINE BOTTLE

Each year, Lifeworks partners with Hastings-based winemaker Alexis Bailly Vineyard, which commissions a piece of artwork to adorn the label of its nouveau wine bottle.

This year, a piece called "Free Spirit" by artist Florentino Perez-Garcia was selected by the vineyard!

Perez-Garcia is served by Lifeworks Brooklyn Park, where he created the winning artwork.

After his work was mass-produced for the label, Perez-Garcia attended a celebration of the first wine of the harvest, autographed the bottles, and took pictures to commemorate the honor.

The nouveau wine and unique Lifeworks artwork were only available at the exclusive event on November 4 and 5.



Lifeworks artist Florentino Perez-Garcia signs a wine bottle featuring his artwork

THANK YOU FOR MAKING 2017 AN INCREDIBLE YEAR!



LIFEWORKS HONORED AS 'EMPLOYER OF EXCELLENCE'



The Dakota-Scott Workforce Development Board has named Lifeworks one of 10 Employers of Excellence.

Employers were evaluated on a host of metrics, including: turnover, rate of growth, promotion rates, employee evaluations and feedback, percentage of employee injured, diversity of management, benefits offered, training expenditures, paid days off, and increase in pay.

Those who met the threshold to be named "Employers of Excellence" were recognized at a special awards banquet on October 4.

Of the 10 winners, four were categorized as small (under 50 employees), three were mid-size (50-200 employees), and three were large employers (more than 200 employees).

LIFEWORKS BLOOMINGTON SERVICE TRANSITION TAKING PLACE BY JUNE 30, 2018

Providers like Lifeworks are being impacted by changes at the federal and state level that shift focus to ensure people with disabilities are living and working in the community.

As a result, we will be increasing our community-based service offerings and transitioning everyone served at our Bloomington facility to other Lifeworks programs before our lease expires on June 30, 2018.

This change does not affect the jobs of those employed in the community.

We know that changes like this are never easy, and Lifeworks is committed to making this transition as smooth as possible for everyone.

Please visit lifeworks.org/bloomington-transition for more information, including frequently asked questions, a timeline, and service options.