

2018 ANCOR Award Honorees

Hammer Residences is proud to share that two employees in our organization earned honorable mention at the 2018 ANCOR awards. ANCOR, also known as the American Network of Community Options and Resources, is a national organization whose mission is to “advance the ability of our members in supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to fully participate in their communities.”

Brenda Barthel supports individuals in one of our homes, while Grace Gullixson works in our in-home services department. The award recognizes caregivers who are advocates for the individuals they support, display leadership skills, are innovative, encourage relationship-building, and demonstrate various codes of ethics.



Brenda Barthel and nail party

Brenda Barthel

Brenda works in a home where she supports four women. One of Brenda’s greatest strengths is her ability to creatively help the individuals she supports reach

their goals. One activity she has helped the women achieve is traveling, and she personally makes sure they have that opportunity. This past year, the group went to Duluth, led by Brenda.

Brenda also used her creativity to come up with a “salon night” for the women. Each week, she gathers the ladies and does each of their nails. This allows the household to come together and

bond as a group. It is important for the women to build relationships with each other, and Brenda has helped make this happen.

Grace Gullixson

Grace spends a lot of her time working with a man named Matthew. Prior to working with Grace, it was often difficult for Matthew to be comfortable at social events. Now, he enjoys going to these events, as Grace will step away with him if the atmosphere is too hectic. This helps Matthew stay happy and comfortable.

Since Grace has a person-centered approach in situations like this, Matthew has made more friends. In addition, Grace works to tailor an event to Matthew’s liking. For example, one of Matthew’s favorite gatherings is game night. One night, the group was playing cards, which Matthew doesn’t enjoy. Grace made up a game that was more suitable for Matthew rather than leaving the event. Because of her creativity, Matthew stayed in a social setting with friends and enjoyed what he was doing.



Grace Gullixson and Matthew

Hammer is grateful for the support that Brenda and Grace provide to each individual. Their dedication and person-centered approach demonstrate the foundation on which Hammer’s support was built. We are honored to have them on the team!