

ARRM Cares Award
Kaylee Larson | The Phoenix Residence
Submitted by: Jackie Larson

It is my pleasure to nominate Kaylee Larson from The Phoenix Residence for this year's ARRM Cares Award. Kaylee excels at developing person-centered approaches in helping our individuals live a life of choice.

Change can be hard—but thanks to Kaylee's undivided commitment to people with disabilities, it can be a little bit easier. Since starting at our Douglas home, Kaylee has built an exceptionally strong bond with one individual who has lived there for 30 years. Coming into this home could have been intimidating for Kaylee—not only did she replace a staff member who had been there for 30 years, but also an individual who had lived there for that long had just passed away as well. But that didn't stop Kaylee—she forged ahead and invested time with each one of her individuals, particularly bonding with one of them who was a little troubled from all the changes.

Since then, Kaylee has worked through this void by spending individualized time with him. Every time he goes to his therapy appointments, she goes out to a restaurant or activity of his choice afterwards—ultimately building the trust between the two. Moreover, she engages with all the individuals in the house like this, learning about *their* interests and needs, and doing everything she can to further those opportunities.

Furthermore, Kaylee has done a remarkable job of taking care of one of the individuals at the Douglas home who recently went into hospice care. She has gone the extra ten miles and made it her personal mission to ensure this individual still pursues his interests and engages in life fully.

This individual absolutely loves the Minnesota Vikings, so Kaylee planned a tour of U.S. Bank Stadium, wanting it to be a monumental experience for him. She planned all the details, including transportation, organization with the stadium, and communication with other Phoenix homes.

Unfortunately, when the day came, this individual wasn't able to attend because of health reasons. However, Kaylee didn't stop there. She personally took it upon herself to set up another day to take this individual on the tour, which turned out to be a fantastic experience.

Providing such personal and undivided care is simply part of Kaylee's nature. Recently, a mother and daughter toured our Douglas home. Following the tour, the mother indicated this was the first positive experience she had when looking for a home for her daughter. She was blown away by Kaylee, the home, and the activities offered.

Kaylee's infectious personality and presence has an impact on anyone she meets—even if she just met them. Because of Kaylee's welcoming character, the mother realized this transition could be a positive experience for them both.

Kaylee deserves this award because of her dedication and tenacity in providing individualized care to those we support. Douglas House and The Phoenix Residence would not be the same without her and neither would the people we serve.