

The Constellation

Congratulations Natalie Clarke! The 2021 Direct Support Professional of the Year

Natalie has worked as Specialist for Meridian Services since March 2018. She is known as “the glue that holds things together.” Natalie knows the homes very well and has jumped in and helped when there was not a Program Manager, to make sure that the program is getting the right groceries and has all the necessary supplies on hand. She has shopped for needed items for the house and individuals and leading as an example with all team members.

Natalie questions why things are done the way they are if she thinks something should be changed. She also offers suggestions of new ways to improve the quality of life of the people she supports. Natalie was instrumental in supporting one person served to get a haircut at a salon, which was something that that person had never been comfortable doing before.

Throughout the pandemic, Natalie has helped plan family visits and has kept families up to date when visits weren't possible. She was also creative in finding ways to engage the people that she supports even as activities have been limited throughout the pandemic.

Natalie is the epitome of respect. She supports people with an array of needs and does so with grace. She adapts her approach to the individual and the situation.

Thank you so much Natalie for all that you do and congratulations for being the 2021 Direct Support Professional of the Year!



The Constellation Contributors

Leota Bemis
Rachel Hilla
Gerrit Hunt
Danielle Jungk
Joy McLaughlin
McKenna Miller
Megan Murdock
Amber Nielsen
Pam Tessmer

Colonel Egahn Ehpets,
Retired, Editor in Chief

Waiver Reimagine for Fee for Service Programs

Fee for Service programs, including In-Home Services, SILS, ILS, and Respite programs have been undergoing a change with the services types since January 1, 2021.

The Wavier Reimagine is intended to simplify services. Previously, individuals supported in the community that participated in a Unit-Based Service through a waiver, such as; In-Home Family Supports, Independent Living Skills, Personal Support, Supported Living Services, will now merge to Individualized Home Support. There are three types of Individualized Home Support (HIS); 1. Individualized Home Support with family training for those previously under In Home Family Supports and Personal Supports, 2. Individualized Home Support with training for those previously supported under ILS and SLS, 3. Individualized Home Support with training for those individualized previously receiving Personal Support services. The Service types are all based on the individuals needs and desires in their services. Furthermore, Corporate Foster Care and Corporate Supported Living Services will now be referred to as Community Residential Services. These waiver changes will occur during annual reassessment or anyone that begins to receive services after January 1, 2021.



“... what a world,
what a world!”

Summer at Maple Lake

Matt Nordmeier, Harrison Remillard and Ashley Bruns had a wonderful summer, whether they were being pushed on the net swing, out on the deck, or enjoying a quiet afternoon in the backyard hammock.



Our Nominees for the 2021 Direct Support Professional of the Year!



Aissatou Bah



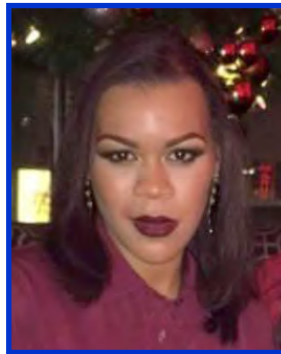
Theo Buzzelli



Sarsee Gbor



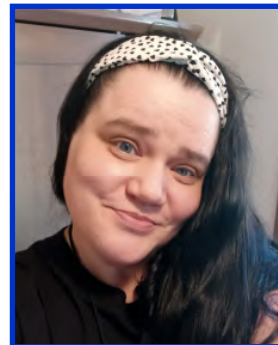
Prince Saeed Mohammed



Laquita Perry



Jessica Rydbom



Kayla Smith

Thank you all!

Summer With Loving Hearts Helping Hands

Loving Hearts Helping Hands enjoyed being together again this summer!

In July, the group tie-dyed socks that were then donated to Hope 4 Youth, a local organization providing assistance to homeless youth.



Enjoying the Last Days of Summer

Amy and Tricia, from Greenfields, along with Natalie, out on the dock on Buffalo Lake



Lacy, from Olympia Place, hanging out with her friend Sydney

In August, the group painted rocks that included messages of kindness and placed these around their communities for others to find.



John and Adam, from Northwood, at the game and on the deck

Both activities were examples of the simple ways one can spread kindness and bring joy to others!

Company Policy Questions

We invite you to review Meridian Services, Zenith Services and Orion Associates company policies which are posted on each company's websites.

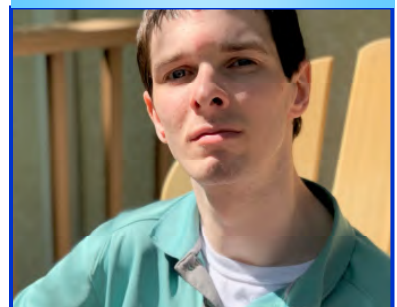
Meridian Services: <https://www.meridiansvs.com>
 Resource Center > Company Manuals >
 Meridian Services Personnel and Training Policies and Procedures Manual

Zenith Services: <https://www.zenithservices.com>
 Resources > Employee Manuals >
 Zenith Services Personnel and Training Policies and Procedures

Orion Associates: <https://www.orionassoc.net>
 Resources > Employee Manuals >
 Orion Associates Personnel and Training Policies and Procedures

If you have questions regarding company policies, including new or revised policies, please contact your supervisor.

You may also contact Stephen Hage, Chief Administrative Officer, at the Golden Valley East office, at 763-450-5004.



September Employment Anniversaries

22 Years

Melissa Schraut

21 Years

Cheryl Vennerstrom

19 Years

Rebecca P. Collins
Linda Jernberg

8 Years

Soklakna Proeun

7 Years

Taoreed Majekodunmi

6 Years

Andrea Hagen
Youa Lee
Oziegbe Ogharibhor
Barbara Thomas

5 Years

Yvonne Porte
Lauren Specht

4 Years

Sandra Corey
Stephanie Hughes
Kimberly Jackson
David Krah
Bao Vang

3 Years

Zaynab Abdullahi
Sudi Mohamed
Raymond Wheeler

2 Years

Stephanie Allen
DeAndrea Baylock
Daja Chambliss-Russo
Brianna Dougherty
Caitlin Magnuson
Shakeelah Morss
Gladys Nartey
Jasmine Rose
Mikayla Schultz
Joe Sneh
Tsion Teshome

1 Year

Augustine Ballah
Theodore Barlay
Tanya Barthel
Augustine Fallah
Christine Kim
Hannah Oakland

Person Served Spotlight: Ryan Cornwell

Ryan Cornwell lives in Golden Valley, at our Wirth Park home. He moved in almost a year ago and has quickly become an integral member of the house.

Ryan likes to spend his days staying active and busy. He has been involved with Special Olympics for many years and competes year-round in softball, bowling, floor hockey and basketball. Ryan has played in the regional, state, and even national level! If he is not playing a sport, you can find him cheering on any of Minnesota's sports teams. If you ever miss out on a game and need a recap, he's your man!

Outside of sports, Ryan enjoys volunteering, spending time with his family, and hanging out with his housemates. From helping at his local church to attending various community events, Ryan is always willing to lend a helping hand while having an upbeat personality! Ryan is a fun-loving individual who is sure to bring a smile to anyone who is spending time with him.



Person Served Spotlight: Richard Grimm

Richard Grim has been with Meridian Services' In-Home Services program since 2006. He has had the same staff for over seven years and they have built a great relationship. Richard was able to become his own guardian in 2020, with the help and support of his Interdisciplinary Team, especially his Direct Support Professional staff who advocated for him to make this possible. He has been very successful since becoming his own guardian.

Richard had some extra hours in his contract this past year and was able to go on a trip to Duluth, accompanied by his staff and his roommate. He enjoys attending his church and church events, gardening, and loves soda and juice. Richard is currently working at an assisted living facility in Edina, rolling silverware, doing dishes, and other various tasks. He enjoys his job very much. Richard has a very positive attitude and we are thrilled to have him be a part of Meridian Services' In-Home Services program.



Person Served Spotlight: Alex White

Alex took a three day vacation to Wisconsin in July, renting a cabin at the Fox Hill Campground, near the Wisconsin Dells. He was very excited about his vacation and had a wonderful time while he was there. Alex kept himself busy with a wide range of activities around the cabin, including hiking, a scavenger hunt in the woods, a picnic and two nights of bonfire. He also visited and toured the White House at Mount Olympus, the HO Chunk casino, and the Wisconsin Dells.

Alex bought a walking stick as a souvenir, which he takes with him while going for a walk. Since coming home, he can't stop talking about the great time he had!



In Memory of Myrna Mae Klebs

April 8, 1926 — July 2, 2021

Myrna Mae Klebs passed away peacefully at the Long Prairie home on Friday, July 2nd, surrounded by staff and members of the management team. She moved into the Long Prairie home in 2004 and lived to the age of 95. Myrna had a bright and vibrant spirit. She always knew what she wanted and was very good about advocating for herself, especially when she wanted a cookie. Myrna always had her purse near her and a “baby” on her lap to comfort. She made a big impact in the lives of her support staff, housemates and members of the community.

We would like to extend a special “thank you” to the Long Prairie staff and management team for showing so much care and compassion throughout her hospice experience. The Long Prairie staff took every opportunity to tell her how beautiful she was and how much they cared for her. Myrna was loved by so many and she considered her staff her family. We are very grateful that we had the opportunity to support over the years.



Shout Outs!

A Shout Out to **Lara Trujillo** and **Jeff Erickson** for your amazing ability to cover a caseload, train new employees, and manage a team! You are incredible. Thank you for all you do!

- Erin Huldeen, Executive Administrator, Orion Associates

I would like to take a moment to thank **Alyssa Wineberg**, **Leah Dean** and **all the staff at Little Stars** for picking up extra hours to help cover for vacations and time off over the past month. Everyone has gone above and beyond to ensure the kids are taken care of and covering open hours. Thank you! - Meghan Shields, Director of Recruitment, Orion Associates

Zenith Services would like to give a huge Shout Out to **Gerrit Hunt**, **Michael Gilbert and their teams** for all the help they have provided to Zenith, as well as to **Amber Nielsen** and the **Scheduling Department** for their help in filling shifts and working with our SES people served. Some days they have jumped to an SOS call and filled in at the last minute when something at Zenith changed. Their teams have been an integral part of Zenith Services’ success in staffing. Thank You!
- Sharon Kedrowski, Program Director, Zenith Services

I would like to give a Shout Out to **Alison Fore**, Central Lead. Alison is a great addition to the Maple Lake team. She is hard working and in the short time she has been here has really gotten to know the people living at the house. Alison makes sure they all have a fun time and does things to keep them safe and healthy. She has worked with a variety of staff and has a good working relationship with them. Alison makes sure things are done and documented as well. She lets me know what is going on in the house even when I am not there. Alison seems to always have a smile on her face and makes sure to be the reason people living at the house are smiling as well.
— Pam Tessmer, Program Director, Meridian Services

Shout out to **Spencer Leeco** at Golden Hills Specialized Services! He goes above and beyond picking up shifts to ensure the consistency of the staffing at Golden Hills! Thank you Spencer, we appreciate you! - Stephanie Hughes, Program Director, Meridian Services



Sharing the News!

Graduations

Jasmine Rose, ISO Coordinator, Orion Associates, graduated from the University of Phoenix on September 13th with a Bachelor of Science degree in Communications.



October Employment Anniversaries

31 Years

Mary Witucki

29 Years

Rebecca Hage Thomley

26 Years

Peggy Sandelin

20 Years

Toni Thulen

17 Years

Angela Cavalier

16 Years

Lara Trujillo

15 Years

Denise Greb

14 Years

Heath Alan Anderson

Amy Kruzel

10 Years

Mulugeta Berhane

9 Years

Julie Katzenmeyer

8 Years

Shannon Breeden

Jeanna Burns

7 Years

Anthony Abraham

Heather Rasmussen

Hoda Sulub

6 Years

Kevin Beneke

Rocio Cervantes

William Ebba

Bao Lee

Lindsay Miyamoto

5 Years

Linda Okwara

Pamela Tessmer

4 Years

Christiana Gandah

Kumba Jagne

Andrena McMillon

Jessie Pender

3 Years

Kenneth Brown

Abou Diallo

Shelia Henderson

Sheryl Nanik

Fatmata Ogunti

Christopher Perry

DeMoure Wade

2 Years

Samantha Adamich

Samantha Billups

Courtney Boettcher

Katrina Hansen

Mark Luger

Madelyn Miller

Amariel Moore

Patrick Paschke

Samuel Smart

Joan Thomas

Jeremiah Wiah

1 Year

Babatunde Adewumi

Frances Diedrich

Emilie Froidcoeur

Grace Halvorson

Hannah Jones

Chelsea Nieland

Dauda Nyango

Tanya Schmitz

November Employment Anniversaries

16 Years

Joy A Bredeck
Sherry Smith

14 Years

Ashley Emry
Deanna Marie Page
Kpeteh Gadala Worloma

11 Years

Mohamed Khan
Amanda Parker

10 Years

Aissatou Bah
Johnny Lawrence

9 Years

Gladys Tengben

8 Years

Fannita Jones
Bennie Randle
Jessica Rydbom

7 Years

Jimmy Earley
Kayla Meier
Isaac Williams

6 Years

Andrea Seurer
Clarence Suttle
Judy Yang
Jose Cervantes Zamora

5 Years

Laina Fiori
Quayee Slobert

4 Years

Melanie Glenn
Gavin Marsh
Alexzander White

3 Years

Ademola Balogun
Leah Dean
Carissa Dugan
Penny Johnson
Maria Juarez Orozco
Tobias Owiti
Ericson Tamba

2 Years

Amanda Elison
Kinsey Fitzloff
Kyla Olthoff
Anna Poikonen
Urias Tombekai
Heather Wilson

1 Year

Sumaya Abdullahi
Masalan Dolleh
Anisa Ereg
Mallory Lund
Merline McGee
Erin O'Toole
Anthony Sayachack
Kahoua Yang

Employees of the Month ... May, June and July

May

Natalie Clark -- Direct Support Professional -- Maple Lake SLS -- Meridian Services

Natalie is a role model for what a Meridian Services employee should look like and is the glue of Maple Lake. She does what is asked of her, but goes above and beyond her job duties. Natalie is always on time, dependable and productive for all of her shift. She is always willing to answer questions and to help her fellow co workers out. Natalie makes sure the individuals at Maple Lake are living their best life, is always advocating for and supporting them in every way possible.

Zach Garcia -- Orion ISO Program Director -- Orion Associates

Zach is the Orion ISO Program Director and continues to be a strong leader among our team. He has recently taken on the leadership of our social media content. Zach works with our Social Media Specialist weekly to post about current, relevant information regarding Orion ISO. He has spotlighted participants, Orion employees, DHS trainings, community offerings, and other topics related to the population served through Orion ISO. Our social media presence has been slim in the past, and we are thankful for Zach's hard work, focus, and desire to keep us current in the social media world.

LaKesha Sneed -- Direct Support Professional -- Kentucky SLS -- Meridian Services

LaKesha is always willing to help others. She has come in multiple times after her shift to help staff with something if they need it. Lakesha is always thinking of fun activities to do with our individuals and different locations she can take them. No matter what LaKesha has going on in her personal life, she comes to work with a positive attitude and ready to work. She encourages the individuals to look at their future and aim high with their goals. LaKesha will sit down for hours with them and have conversations about what their goals are, and what we, as staff and supervisors, can do to help them achieve those goals. She has amazing communication with other staff and supervisors about what is going on or what happened during shifts. Her documentation is always complete and very thorough. She has great patience with our individuals and handles difficult situations with ease and confidence.

Rebecca Stauffer -- Case Manager -- Case Management - Meridian Services

Rebecca has now been a Case Manager on the Ramsey County contract for five years! Throughout much of her time as a Case Manager, she has managed some of the most challenging individuals on the Ramsey contract. Rebecca continues to put forth 100% for each and every case that she handles. In the last couple of months, she has done an incredible job in dealing with one of her most difficult situations. Rebecca has worked tirelessly with the individual, hospital staff, administrators, the Ombudsman, family member, and all of the leadership staff on Team Ramsey. Rebecca has maintained her professionalism during care consultations with the hospital and supervisory staff; she ensures that her supervisors are kept abreast of the situation and follows appropriate Chain of Command at every step. Rebecca continues to offer her assistance and knowledge of this matter to all parties involved in order to ensure the best possible outcome for the individual served. Meridian Services and Team Ramsey is grateful for Rebecca's tenacity and dedication to her role as a Case Manager .

June

Rydel Anderson -- Program Specialist -- Meridian Services

Rydel goes above and beyond when working with persons served at Northwoods. He continuously sets a wonderful example to current staff and giving them motivation to improve their own standards and quality of work. Rydel offers wonderful suggestions and improvements for the persons served day to day life. He ensures that persons served are well taken care off and has an energetic vibe towards being persons served.

Scot Casey -- Direct Support Professional -- Long Prairie SLS -- Meridian Services

Scot did a tremendous job with Myrna until she passed. He sat by her side and made sure she was comfortable. Scot came in to support the overnight staff and took his co workers overnight shift for the following day. He did all of his assigned tasks and went above and beyond to ensure his co workers were okay. Scot did an awesome job with documenting during Myrna's last hours.



June Continued

Adam Grise – Application Support Specialist – Orion Associates

Adam has worked very hard to ensure that there is a smooth transition with Care Director and the uplift/upgrade project. He is always very friendly and helps out in anyway that he can. Adam has developed numerous reports and dashboards that has helped to improve quality assurance and tracking not only for the case management department but for the billing department as well. Adam's work is greatly appreciated.

Paige McKenzie – ISO Coordinator – Orion Associates

Paige is a valued employee who continues to adapt to ever-shifting Department of Human Services policies with a positive attitude, approaching her work thoroughly and thoughtfully. During the month of June, Paige volunteered to provide coverage for one of several open Orion ISO Coordinator caseloads. This coverage was for a caseload of self-directed community based services, even though Paige generally works with licensed programs. Instead of this being a barrier, Paige took this as an opportunity to work on executing the different rules and processes that pertain to the caseloads she was covering: responding to families, participants, case managers questions and concerns in a timely manner, as well as attending to time sheet problems, expense payments, managing new hires, revising budgets and Service Agreements, and problems with Billing.

July

Leon McCormick – Direct Support Professional – Calhoun SLS – Meridian Services

Leon has been working with the In-Home Services individuals who live above Calhoun for many years, continuously helping the individuals with their daily lives and is a good influence. He went on a trip to Duluth with both individuals for a weekend. They had an absolutely fabulous time and are making plans for more trips with Leon. He always puts his individuals first and has taken responsibility, and called 911 for an individual who was too weak to get out of bed. Leon takes the initiative to do good by the individuals and also encourages them to garden and explore their areas of interest.

Kelsey Miller – Case Manager – Case Management – Meridian Services

Kelsey always takes the initiative to step up! She manages her caseload with grace and willingly helps other team members and takes on additional work if needed, even is not asked to do so. Kelsey engages with members in a very professional manner that still shows care and support to them and their families. She is an experienced Case Manager who is willing to support her team members and Medica members in whatever ways possible.

Luke Morken – Direct Support Professional – In-Home Services Specialist—Meridian Services

Luke is always willing to help out or be flexible when needed. He's on time to shifts and always turns in all documentation on time. Luke is well liked by all the persons served he works with and their families. He is a great asset to our team and a very fast learner. Luke is very dependable and communicates well with both his persons served and his supervisors.

Andrea Seuer – Director of On Boarding and Benefits—Orion Associates

Andrea's managerial skills are exemplary. She is one of the friendliest people I have met since starting at Orion Associates, and one of the most approachable yet professional managers I have ever had. Although Andrea is responsible for the whole Human Resources Generalist team, she makes herself available to each of us if any questions come up during the day. She also has a great ability to communicate effectively and efficiently with her team, for example, if any question comes up for me in my new hire training, she tries to get an answer to me quickly. Andrea has been very patient and kind throughout all my new hire training and it has helped me feel very welcome to the team and excited to work.

Employee of the Month Nominees ... May, June and July

Aileen Arabiana, Lauren Cappelen, Thomas DeWell, Shandra Dunser, Greg Edmonds, Madeline Faffler, Ashia Fofana, Evan Gadke, Karl Honeck, Bethany Jewison, Amber Robles Martinez, Colleen McGuire, Cory Mitts, Magan Murdock, Elsarís Pacheco, Meghan Ross, Lara Trujillo, Jennifer Vang, Joe Warmboe, Kennita Wright-Jones, Amanda Yang

*Thank
You!*

Happy Birthday, Everyone!



Patty Jones celebrates her birthday at Timbercrest



Curt Erickson and Adam VanHoorik celebrate their birthdays at Northwood



Orion Associates

9400 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, Minnesota 55427

PRESORT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES, MN
PERMIT NO. 32246

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Entrepreneurs Among Us! Jane Weir, Royal Bead Collection

Jane Weir has been beading since 2006. The first piece that she made was for her mother.

Jane likes to bead because it gives me something creative to do. She gets her inspiration from Princess Diana and Faberge, the artisan who made eggs for Tsar Alexander III and Tsar Nicholas II. Jane likes jewelry that the Romanov's and the Windsor's wore. Recently, the acclaimed television series *Reign* has inspired her work as it has to do with Mary Queens of Scots.

To see Jane's creations or make a purchase, you can visit her sites on Social Media:

<http://etsy.com/shop/royalbeadcollection>

Instagram @royalbeadco1997

Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/RoyalBeadCollection/>

