



News from the Nest Special Edition

May 15, 2020



Hello Cardinal family and friends,

This is a Special Edition News from the Nest. It is my privilege to share with you all, our sincere gratitude and love for Kathy Karls. She is retiring after 25 years! We thank her for all she has given to Cardinal and this community. If you'd like to share your kind words with Kathy, her Cardinal email address, kathy@cardinalofminnesota.com, will continue to be activated through May 31, 2020.

Michelle, CEO

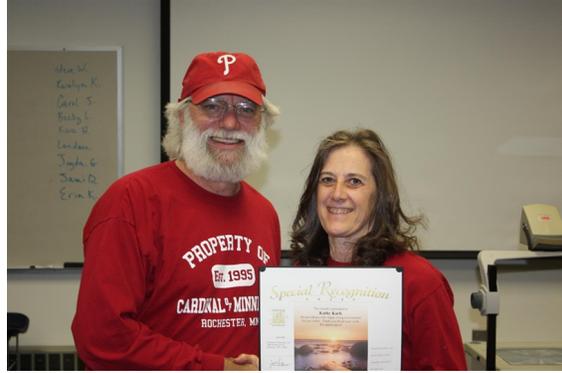
JP's Corner

Kathy

25 Years!! Congratulations, Kathy!! Yes, Kathy was one of the very first Cardinal employees, joining the company on May 15, 1995, just six weeks after our first

house was opened. Kathy took a significant leap of faith to join a fledgling organization and leaving the security of a long-established company. Thank you!!

Ten words to describe Kathy: compassionate, kind, generous, professional, passionate, strong, sensitive, smart, cleaver, fun. You made (make) us all better! Thank you!!



You have been my friend, mentor and role model for 35 years. Kathy has been the embodiment of Cardinal's five Core Values – Do your Best, Teamwork, Honesty, Fun, Platinum Rule (treat others the way they want to be treated). The example she provided inspired all of us to live these values. Thank you!!

I will miss having you as a colleague but you will be my friend forever - at least another 35 years – Kathy will be 100, I will be 104. Thank you!!

Thank You

By: Sky Royston, Director of Program Services



If you are ever in need of a listening ear or a bit of advice, you can always count on Kathy. I miss our long conversations while perched on the corner of her desk. Conversations about work, life, loss, family, and faith. Those moments held so much more meaning to me than our standard leadership meetings. I have been blessed with the opportunity to have Kathy as a mentor, authority, advisor, confidant, consultant, and friend. Even as time passed and roles changed, I knew that I could always count on her to be there for me, as I am sure many others can say.

Culture is what brought me to Cardinal and Kathy was one of its architects. She has been a key contributor to Cardinal's success since the beginning and one of only three people who will celebrate 25 years this year (just Jack Priggen and Amy Blackstad). In it for the long haul, never expecting or demanding of a spotlight...the spotlight was always on the people, our clients.

Her loyalty and commitment to our clients and all people receiving disability services is exemplary and is evident in her entire life's work. Her impact really has no bounds. Countless lives have been touched through her work with Cardinal, Civitan, Community Ed, Miracle league, and Pax-Christi. So many nights she left work and went right to the next commitment. Her tireless energy to help others inspires me to be the best that I can be. I have always been in awe of her. She is so selfless.

She gave me the opportunity to learn and grow. She challenged me to give others the benefit of the doubt or give someone a second/third chance even if they did not deserve it. Her grace is unmatched. I credit Kathy for "Cardinalizing" me. All the tears, laughs, hugs, stories, and life lessons learned. Even if we would disagree, I always felt like we were in it together. Kathy, no matter where you go, or what you do, your legacy will live on. I cannot think of a greater compliment to an extraordinary career.

25 Years at Cardinal of Minnesota

Where has the time gone? Who ever would have thought that when Jack opened Cardinal's first home on March 1, 1995, that the company would have grown to 55 houses and close to 250 clients. I certainly didn't when I joined the company on May 14 of that same year!



It will be hard for me to summarize everything that has happened during these 25 years. I'll just share a few fond memories. One of our first clients that moved into the first home is still a client today. He used to call me several times a week just to ask what I was doing and always asked "How's your kid?" He knew that I had adopted a baby girl from China. To this day when I see him he still asks me the same question. These are the types of relationships that are built at Cardinal.

Cardinal grew quickly and opened four homes within the first year. One of the most memorable for several reasons was Cardinal Circle in Austin. We put an ad in the paper and got over 70 applicants for that one house. My how times have changed! Two of the four original clients are still with us. We continued to grow rapidly the next few years, opening homes in Fillmore Co. and Winona Co. One of the original clients in Harmony is still with us. Don't worry I am not going to talk about every house and every county, but I think you can see a pattern here of the long term relationships that we have with clients, families, and county case managers. During my 25 years at Cardinal I have worked in each of the counties except for Beltrami (Bemidji). I can't take credit for the continued growth in these counties but I am very proud to be able to say I was privileged to be able to help Jack open the doors and build relationships in those counties and letting them know what Cardinal's mission, philosophy and culture are all about.

As we have grown there have been numerous changes in our types of services, direct care staff and management staff. I decided two years ago that there were many of our management staff that were a lot better at doing strategic planning and setting the course for Cardinal's future than I was so I decided to get back to the part of Cardinal that I am most passionate about and that is direct services. It has brought me great joy to have been a part of teaching and watching clients reach their goals and make progress in their independent living skills and developing their social skills beyond what many of them would have thought they were capable of.

On May 15 I will be retiring from Cardinal, I will be leaving with many fond memories of people and experiences. I can never repay Jack for all the things I have learned and the opportunities I have been able to be part of in making a difference in our client's lives.

I hope to continue to see many of our clients in the community as I plan to still be active in Community Ed, Park and Rec and Special Olympics Events.

Thanks to Everyone who has made the last 25 years an adventure that I will never forget!

Kathy





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