

# The LOOP

Read about the latest news with all the Aurora families!



## Happy Holidays!

The season of thankfulness, blessings, and cheer is upon us. We wish each of you happiness, peace, rest, and rejuvenation – in any way you can get it during this holiday season. Please know that we deeply appreciate the care and concern you provide the people we support and your part in the Aurora family! Be safe and healthy!

There is much debate about the requirement of employers to mandate COVID vaccination. Aurora has and will continue to comply with state and federal regulations, many of which are in limbo right now while facing legal challenges.

**We do not currently mandate vaccination but do require compliance with PPE mandates in our direct contact services.** As things develop, we will notify you of ANY changes.

## Owners Corner

featuring Kathi Tollefson

Kathi Tollefson has been with Aurora for 24 years as an Accounting Specialist in the Menomonie office. Before coming to Aurora, Kathi and her husband Bob did a variety of different jobs. One of the interesting jobs was at the Trempealeau County Health Care Center where they lived on the grounds for 10 years. They left TCHCC and bought a campground/resort in the Cameron area, where they lived for approximately 10 years before moving to the Menomonie area and working at Aurora.

Kathi started her journey with Aurora as a receptionist in the corporate office in 1998. She was a receptionist for 1.5 years before joining the accounting department. In this position, Kathi tackled the large task of billing for Medical Assistance Personal Care (MAPC) services for 107 consumers. With the advent of Family Care, MAPC was reduced to just a few consumers and she moved within accounting to learn billing for ARA, AVS, training, and supportive home care. Bob also worked for Aurora, first as a CNA and then as Program Coordinator for 011.

Kathi stated that the best part of her job is meeting a wide variety of people both from within Aurora and outside the company building positive relationships. At the end of the day, you walk away knowing you did something good and tomorrow's a new day! Kathi also stated, although we do not have direct consumer contact, the services we provide in the offices is essential to ensure the services we provide to our consumers and other clients are ongoing and uninterrupted.

Outside of Aurora, Kathi and Bob own and operate an adult family home supporting two individuals. Kathi also enjoys painting, woodworking, and crafting creating beautiful pieces of artwork that she displays in her office for all to enjoy!!

Kathi and Bob have two dogs (one being a puppy with a lot of personality!) and 3 grandchildren that they love spending time with.



Kathi Tollefson and Teresa Lien made wreaths for everyone's offices in Menomonie, bringing a whole lot of cheer and yuletide joy!



One of Kathi Tollefson's art pieces.

## Positive Leadership Communication

featuring Jesseca Erb

A meaningful, effective workplace and skilled leadership communication go hand in hand. Especially as we face organizational challenges, positive communication skills not only provide a clear direction through uncertainty, but also help employees feel heard and motivated to be their best. To ensure employees are engaged and connected in the important work that they do, it's important to practice the critical skill of providing positive feedback.

Every person on the team has the potential to be a productive and successful contributor to Aurora's mission. Take time to listen to employee concerns with a non-judgmental, open mind and respond with a non-confrontational approach. When discussing difficult subject matter, be clear, focus on the facts, and problem solve together on how best to accomplish desired goals. Consistently acknowledge the person's efforts and achievements. And remember, your positive words and kindness have great power, so use them well!

## Admin Services Team

featuring Linda Aton

The past few years have provided our Admin Support staff an opportunity to rethink how we can best support the continual changes of our company.

Staffing changes within the department, downsizing office space, and the ability to work remotely have given us new ways to support our customers and coworkers.

Many of the tasks that were done in each area office have been centralized within the department. Cross training admin from other departments and companies, transferring phones, and limiting office hours has allowed us to utilize skills and time efficiently.

Residential admin staff that were often in an office Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., may now be away from the office, assisting with site deliveries, site reviews, tracking, ordering and delivering PPE to sites, assisting with menu planning, online grocery shopping and pick-up. When needed, they are assisting with orientations, interviews and training new PMs, vehicle drop-offs and pick-ups, transporting consumers, and covering shifts at the sites.

The purpose of this department is to coordinate, collaborate, and problem solve with other departments and companies within Aurora Community Services. Please let us know if there is something we can assist you with!

## Welcome Aboard!

Please give our new hires a warm welcome.

### Jessica Kautter

Aurora Vocational Services  
IPS Vocational Coordinator, Spooner

**Why I applied for the job:** My passion for assisting people be the best that they can be and accomplish their goals and dreams.

**What I will bring to the job:** I have been working toward my Bachelor Degree in Psychology with six months to go until I finish. I feel that with this I will have the skills to understand individuals and help meet their needs and the goals that they have for their future.

**My background:** After caretaking for four years then providing 1:1 therapy for those on the autism spectrum, I wanted to help more people in accomplishing their hopes and dreams. While caretaking for those with mental health diagnosis, it pushed me to continue my education so I could assist more people in their lives and provide them with the support that they needed.

**Family:** My family is everything to me. Anakin, who is 12, loves to wrestle and spend time outdoors. Eric, my significant other of 10 years, has supported me through my journey of continuing my education and being the best that I can be.

**Hobbies/interests:** Puzzles, photography, music, and the outdoors.

### Hunter Rebak

Aurora Residential Alternatives  
Community Living Assistant, Menomonie

**Why I applied for the job:** I want to become a nurse. What I will bring to the job: Positive environment.

**My background:** I like helping people and hope to make their day better.

**Hobbies/interests:** Hunting, fishing, playing and watching sports.

### Jason Hager

Aurora Vocational Services  
Employment Specialist, Eau Claire/Chippewa

**Why I applied for the job:** I want to give back.

**What I will bring to the job:** Hopefully what I have learned and positive attitude.

**Hobbies/interests:** Building some server/writing code.

### Jennifer Faught

Aurora Vocational Services  
Vocational Coordinator, Eau Claire/Chippewa

**Why I applied for the job:** I love being able to help people reach their next goal in their journey.

**What I will bring to the job:** Compassion, a positive and outgoing attitude, and I love being part of a team.

**My background:** I've most recently worked in chiropractic offices and really enjoy learning about natural health. I'm also very active in volunteering at our church.

**Family:** Married, 4 children: Noah, 23; Garrett, 21; Kaden, 14; and Autumn, 12.

**Hobbies/interests:** Hiking, kayaking, cooking, plants.

### Leah Leisen

Aurora Residential Alternatives  
Community Living Assistant, La Crosse

**Why I applied for the job:** To help those in need and do work that's rewarding.

**What I will bring to the job:** Compassion, teamwork.

**My background:** Phlebotomy, health care.

**Family:** 5 pet birds; my dad and I run a side business doing crafts/projects.

**Hobbies/interests:** Video games, reading, puzzles, my pet birds.

### Tanya Herrin

Aurora Residential Alternatives  
Float Staff, Stevens Point/Plover

**Why I applied for the job:** I love helping people.

**What I will bring to the job:** Good communication, good times.

**My background:** 2 years experience in behavioral health and 2 years experience working in assisted living.

**Family:** 3 daughters, 4 grandkids.

**Hobbies/interests:** Love hard rock concerts, tattoos, diamond painting, huge love for animals/fur babies!

## We Have the BEST Staff

During the month of December, we celebrate anniversaries for these Aurora managers:

**Don Andresen** (29 years), **D Hopke** (15 years), **Heather Clark** (2 years), **Candy Wolf** (19 years), **Nikki Coss** (19 years), **Ann Stevens** (18 years), **Sam King** (5 years), **Eleanor Lucas** (2 years), **LuAnn Esko** (4 years), **Marisa Lammer** (9 years), and **Erik Olson** (5 years).

**Combined, that's a whopping 127 YEARS of experience within our ranks!**  
**Thank you for sharing your time and talents with Aurora!**

Information for *The Loop* may be sent to [asolberg@auroraservices.com](mailto:asolberg@auroraservices.com) at any time.  
Publication is usually on the Friday of the 2nd full week of the month.