

ARRM Cares Award Nomination

By Submitted by: Chelsea Clark, Program Manager at Parkway Apartments

For the ARRM Cares Award, I am nominating Geoff Makousky. Geoff is the embodiment of person-centered support. Between his innate drive for quality care and hard work, he has truly made the DSP role his own by seeking out common ground between the passions and dreams of the individuals that he supports and his own.

When Geoff started with Hammer, he found this common ground with an individual who loves music. This individual, Mark, wanted to learn how to play guitar and loved classic rock and roll bands. Geoff, a musician himself, took the time to work with Mark each week in Mark's 'music room' with his various instruments and equipment. This time was so valuable to Mark, who aspired to be just like his favorite rock and roll bands. Geoff realized this and quickly got to work on helping Mark make his dream a reality.

Geoff soon recognized that some of the other individuals in our program were interested in the work he was doing with Mark. Over time, he would invite other individuals to practice; one week, someone would try out vocals, another, someone would try out a bass or keyboard. Geoff donated a few of his own personal items for use so everyone could have a chance to try something. As with any origin story for a great band, there was a LOT of jammin' going on.

Before you know it, the band had written original songs and made a name for themselves, now known as the Parkway Band. Individuals started requesting instruments from their families for Christmas and birthday gifts, and Geoff facilitated trips to Guitar Center to help price these out for families. Geoff advocated and organized for the band to play at Hammer events and board meetings. Not only did they get rave reviews for their performance, the individuals were having the time of their lives.

Since then, the band has added another staff member who plays the drums, and the band is currently in the process of recording a music video with the help of a volunteer videographer. The band practices every Monday for 'music night' after they go to Guitar Center to check out what's new. All are welcome in the Parkway Band.

In addition to the creation of the band, which has vastly improved upon the quality of life of the individuals we support, Geoff facilitates a program podcast which is a creative and fun way to pull upon the strengths of the individuals in our program and bring them closer together. He has also encouraged individuals with community alone time to take leadership roles on outings together and fully exercise their independence in the community.

Geoff deserves this award because he has had an incredible impact on the lives of the individuals we support, Hammer, and this field as a whole. He makes it his mission to live life to the fullest, and is an amazing support in helping others to do the same.

[See Live Recorded Performance of Parkway Band](#)