



NEWS RELEASE

May 11, 2017

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Spirit of Volunteerism Award – Youth Award: Gabrielle “Ellie” Dahm

SIOUX FALLS – Gabrielle “Ellie” Dahm is the 2017 Children’s Dental Center and Parkway Orthodontics Spirit of Volunteerism Award winner in the Youth Award category. Dahm received the award Thursday at the Spirit of Volunteerism Luncheon, an annual event that honors Sioux Empire volunteers for the impact they make on the community. The event is a project of Helpline Center. 2017 marks the 35th year the Helpline Center has presented volunteer appreciation awards.

Dahm has volunteered at LifeScape on a weekly basis since June 2016. She began her volunteer journey at LifeScape’s Specialty Hospital as a “Cuddler” and “Play Friend.” Dahm’s role as a volunteer was to get to know each child, ages 0 to 21, for their unique likes, dislikes, strengths and weaknesses. Once she understood each child’s medical and developmental needs, she facilitated meaningful, age-appropriate activities to inspire children’s mental, physical and social growth.

Dahm also requested another opportunity to be a consistent role model to students at LifeScape during the summer. She became a friend and role model to middle school-aged students within the LifeScape Specialty School- summer school program. She volunteered during the summer school program in a specific classroom assisting with daily classroom work, and was a field trip buddy throughout the summer of 2016.

When school began, Dahm changed volunteer opportunities to evenings/weekends, which lead her to a new friendship with an adult supported by LifeScape. Although the age gap of 30 plus years and the client’s progressing dementia proved challenging, Dahm has become an instrumental support network to this person.

The Spirit of Volunteerism awards are made possible through the generous support of Midco, Independent Insurance Agents of Sioux Falls, Children’s Dental Center and Parkway Orthodontics, The First National Bank in Sioux Falls, First PREMIER Bank/PREMIER Bankcard, EarthBend, MetaBank and Citi.

The Helpline Center’s Volunteer Connections Program provides the community with ways to connect with volunteer opportunities as well as offer non-profit organizations volunteer recruitment assistance and support for volunteer managers. To learn more go to volunteer.helplinecenter.org or dial 211.