



CONGRATULATIONS OUTSTANDING EMPLOYERS

Morningside's Outstanding Employer award is given to employers who exemplify a vision of the future in which people with disabilities have access to the same opportunity as all other citizens – working in the community. Our 2019 Outstanding Employers have all demonstrated sustained efforts to support and encourage Morningside clients on the job. They have also demonstrated the flexibility to make accommodations when necessary, which translates into productive and valued employees. Morningside is very appreciative of employers who are willing to step forward and say "yes" as well as our other partners, such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and counties with whom we collaborate to make people's employment dreams come true.

Tinderbox Coffee Roasters in Aberdeen

Walking into Tinderbox Coffee Roasters, you are greeted with a warm welcome and the aroma of freshly roasted and brewed coffee. Aubrey Baier, along with her husband Chad, own the delightful establishment. They were selected as Outstanding Employer in Grays Harbor because of how they have supported Anna Miller and advocated for supported employment. Anna was hired to stamp the company logo on cups, bags and envelopes; measure and bag ground coffee and coffee beans. Aubrey pointed out that Anna is their Supply Assistant. "She is very precise, and we have many jobs that can utilize those talents in addition to stamping our cups and bags. Anna reaches her goals and pushes herself to make improvements or capitalize on improvements that I suggest. It has been a good match." Congratulations, Tinderbox!



(L-R) Aubrey Baier, owner Tinderbox Coffee Roasters; Anna Miller, employee; Jonathan Pleger, CEO Morningside; Leslie McNutt, Employment Consultant Morningside.



(L-R) Jonathan Pleger, President/CEO, Morningside; Carl Jonientz, Co-Owner, Brandon Hordyk, Tire Tech Assist.; and Curt Martin, Owner of Tiny's Tire Center.

Tiny's Tire Center in Tacoma

Tiny's Tire Center, on Pacific Avenue, in Tacoma, has been in business for 40 years. They attribute their success to superb customer service. Everyone in the shop is quick with a smile and responsive to customers. They hired Brandon Hordyk as a Tire Tech Assistant and Shop Maintenance worker, to keep the shop and office area clean and tidy. They have made accommodations, including to his schedule, in order to meet Brandon's transportation needs. However, it is the camaraderie in the shop that has played a big role in Brandon's support and success on the job. His addition further strengthens the team and contributes to that positive workplace atmosphere. Congratulations to Tiny's!

McDonald's of Lewis County

McDonald's of Lewis County, owned by Shari Nixon, operates seven McDonald's franchised fast-food restaurants (five in Lewis County, one in south Thurston County and one in Mason County). McDonald's has been awarded as Outstanding Employer by Morningside for hiring individuals with disabilities in three of their restaurants in Lewis County. These three stores provide excellent, ongoing training in a positive, encouraging environment. Supportive, caring and inclusive are words used to describe this company. Congratulations, McDonald's of Lewis County!



Mike Kealy, employee at Walmart McDonald's; Jen Kloepfer, Manager, Grand Mound McDonald's; Joseph Morrison, employee at Grand Mound McDonald's; Mike Fladager, Director of Operations, McDonald's; Jeff Stanford, employee, Airport Depot McDonald's; Jonathan Pleger, President/CEO, Morningside; Carla Martinez, Walmart McDonald's; Krista Davis, Manager Airport Depot McDonald's.



(L-R) SFrank Miller, Susie Hancock Morningside Employment Consultants, Greg Fallon, Maintenance/Facilities Coordinator YMCA, Jaime Giffen, Member Engagement Specialist YMCA, Victor Hanes YMCA employee; Jonathan Pleger CEO, Morningside; Kurt Turner, Executive Director YMCA, Wayne Bartz Morningside Employment Consultant.

YMCA in Sequim

The YMCA in Sequim is a beehive of activity from a daycare for parents who are working out to senior citizens taking exercise classes in the gym. The Y is also very supportive of employees Victor Hanes and Kali Dissing. Victor works in the maintenance department and Kali as a Play Care Aid in the kid's center. The YMCA has made accommodations in schedule as well as supporting Kali when she recently had an operation and had to be off work for an extended period of time. They are a very inclusive organization. Congratulations, YMCA of Sequim on being chosen as the Clallam County Outstanding Employer for 2019.

Bruce Titus Nissan

Bruce Titus Automotive Group has six dealerships; five in the South Sound area and one in Palm Springs. The Service Department at Bruce Titus Nissan in Olympia has nothing but positive things to say about two individuals who obtained their jobs there, with assistance from Morningside.

Ben Cinkovich is employed as a full-time lube technician, responsible for servicing vehicles by performing regular maintenance, such as oil changes. Barrett Swalling is a detail specialist.

Bruce Titus Nissan is very supportive and has gone above and beyond to make sure their employees, supported by Morningside, are working at jobs that match their interest, skill and ability. Congratulations, Bruce Titus Nissan, for making your dealership a supportive work environment and a 2019 Outstanding Employer!



(L-R) Steve Hughes, Job Developer Morningside; Barrett Swalling, employee Bruce Titus; John Brown (JB), Manager, Bruce Titus; Jonathan Pleger, CEO, Morningside; and Jenna Myrfield Service Manager at Bruce Titus.



(L-R) Leah Hart, "Mate" at Trader Joe's; Shelley Longacre, employee, holding the plaque and Jonathan Pleger, President/CEO Morningside presenting the award.

Trader Joe's in Olympia

The atmosphere at Trader Joe's is electric as shoppers and staff bustle about picking items from shelves and stocking product; carts whizzing by with happy shoppers.

A strong team atmosphere is evident, as all the employees are hustling around, responding to customers' needs. It is no surprise that they were presented with an Outstanding Employer award because they have gladly assimilated Shelley Longacre into the workforce. Shelly said she not only likes her job but loves her job. She has made many friends working at the store. Congratulations Trader Joe's!

2019 ANN BOLENDER AWARD

This award is given in honor of Ann Bolender, whose life was an inspiration to all who knew her. Despite a debilitating illness, she continued to be at work even when it seemed impossible. This award is given each year to recognize a client who is an inspiration to others and who embodies Ann's spirit and perseverance.

Bill Gakin is the 2019 recipient of the Ann Bolender Inspirational Award. He has been steadily employed for over 19 years. In 1999, Bill personally started his own landscaping company in Olympia, having done this same work in Seattle. Bill spent the next eight years building his business by gaining and servicing new and existing customers. In 2007, Bill was presented with the option of closing down his business and working for Morningside on a road crew contract for the Thurston County Road Department. He accepted. This new opportunity gave Bill the ability to have year round, steady work, particularly during the winter season. He worked for this crew for several years, enjoying his job. He loved the varied opportunities this job offered like using the riding mower on large jobs. In 2016, Morningside closed this business and this job ended. Bill spent the next year working part-time for a local residential care provider performing grounds maintenance. However, he wanted to work more hours. In 2017, Bill jumped at the chance to work at a local farm and he thrived in this environment and welcomed the increase in hours.

Throughout the years, Bill has inspired others with his fantastic work ethic and eagerness to work. Bill is a very dependable employee. The people that Bill has worked for have all commented about his strong work ethic. Those job coaches who have supported Bill over the years say the same thing. Bill always wants to do a good job and strives to provide his employer with the very best work he can. With his proven track record, Bill is undeniably deserving of this inspirational award. Congratulations Bill!

