

AKPH Celebrates Social Workers & Volunteers

March 2019 was National Professional Social Work Month and April 2019 highlights National Volunteer Appreciation Week. Both social workers and volunteers play a vital role in the Alaska Pioneer Homes system and the division would like to take this time to shine a spotlight on the amazing people who fill these roles.

Each Alaska Pioneer Home has a Protective Services Specialist (social worker) who serves as the primary point of contact for elders moving into the home. For prospective elders, or their families, who would like to learn about the Pioneer Home system, the social workers provide tours of the homes and take as much time as needed to answer questions. During the admissions process, the social workers work hard to ensure a smooth and easy transition for all involved, and continue to serve as the primary point of contact for elders and their families on any administrative questions that may arise during the elder's time in the home. They also help each elder apply for any state and/or federal programs they may qualify for. Our social workers repeatedly say that they love their job for the elders that they serve and the families that they help. The Alaska Pioneer Homes would not be the same without our deeply passionate, caring and loving team of social workers - thank you Grace, Mikki, Adrianna, Bobbie, Laura, Rachel and Sharon!



Grace, a protective services specialist in the Anchorage Pioneer Home, hands out an Iron Chef award during a Fourth of July Cook Out event.

The 2019 National Volunteer Appreciation Week is happening April 7 – 13 and the Alaska Pioneer Homes would like to share our deep appreciation for our volunteers. Without their presence in each of our homes, life would not be the same for either the elders or the staff. The Alaska Pioneer Homes utilizes the Eden Alternative® philosophy, which works to side step loneliness, boredom and helplessness by creating an environment within the home where the elders, caregivers, support staff, family members and volunteers can flourish and grow. As such, volunteers are a vitally important component to the lives of our elders, as they help us to bring the world at large into the homes, something that is of particular importance to those elders for whom outside excursions are difficult. Volunteers also provide invaluable assistance to staff as they offer their hands and their time to the completion of tasks that are always in need of doing. The Division of the Alaska Pioneer Homes is delighted to work with individuals, groups, and/or businesses who are interested in helping Alaskan elders. Whether it is helping with yard work, assisting the Activity Departments in their fun and games, or serving in other ways, there is a little bit of everything available at the Alaska Pioneer Homes.



A local Alaskan color guard volunteers their services during a Quilts of Valor ceremony at the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Homes in Palmer.

If you, your family or your organization are interested in ways to serve and have fun with some of our state's pioneers and veterans, stop by any of the Alaska Pioneer Homes in Anchorage, Palmer, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan or Sitka today!



Left: Tammy the Pot Belly Pig and her owner visit the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home and bring a smile to everyone they meet.



Right: Sister Marie spending time with residents and staff members during her weekly visit to the Juneau Pioneer Home to lead rosary.



Left: The Alaska Button Box Gang volunteering their musical services during a Fourth of July BBQ at the Anchorage Pioneer Home.



Above Left: The Combat Vets Motorcycle Association of Alaska during their annual visit to the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home to spend time with residents and offer rides on their motorcycles.



Above Right: A member of the Combat Vets Motorcycle Association of Alaska takes out an excited resident, Mrs. Norma Erickson, for a short motorcycle ride around Palmer.