

# The Many Hands of our Mission

*The Many Hands of our Mission* provides information on Diakon staff members celebrating anniversaries in January, February and March. A list of all staff members celebrating work milestones is shown at the end of this online publication. Everyone celebrating an anniversary is asked to provide additional information by answering a brief survey, along with submitting a photograph. Those who responded are listed below. Please congratulate everyone celebrating work anniversaries. Thank you for your continuing service and commitment to our ministries and to those we serve!

## SHERRY HECKMAN

Diakon Family Life Services -  
Williamsport  
*School-based outpatient therapist*  
Years celebrating: 5

### FAVORITE DIAKON MEMORY...

Working with the children and families.

### LIKES OUTSIDE OF WORK...

Reading and spending time outdoors.

### MOTIVATION TO FULFILL DIAKON'S MISSION...I enjoy helping others.

**DEFINITION OF SUCCESS...**Making a difference in other people's lives.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION...**I have served in several different capacities since coming to Diakon over the last 5 years. My favorite role was when I was the respite coordinator in Lycoming County helping families with various needs. I really miss that role.



## RON FLAMISCH

Luther Crest  
*Senior Director of Maintenance*  
Years celebrating: 20

### FAVORITE DIAKON MEMORY...

Meeting all the residents and staff over the years.

**LIKES OUTSIDE OF WORK...**I enjoy fishing.

**MOTIVATION TO FULFILL DIAKON'S MISSION...**I love to provide excellent service to our residents. Being able to use this ministry is an extension of my church... to love thy neighbor

through acts of kindness. I just love helping others in time of need.

### DEFINITION OF SUCCESS...

Knowing I make a difference in people lives and having peace of mind doing God's work.



## DAVID IRVIN

Diakon Facilities and IT  
*Executive Director Facilities Management*  
Years celebrating: 5

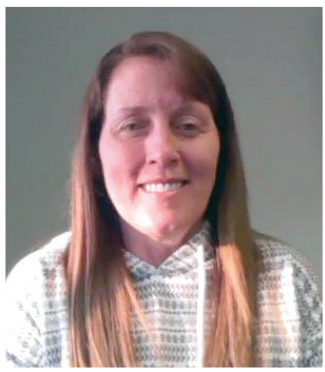
### FAVORITE DIAKON MEMORY...

Not one, but many times with conversations of new residents and how they love their new home.

**FAVORITE ASPECT OF YOUR ROLE... AND WHY...** Working with Diakon people and helping them get what they need.

**MOTIVATION TO FULFILL DIAKON'S MISSION...** I really enjoy helping people get what they need and want. If I can make someone happy - that's a good day!

**DEFINITION OF SUCCESS...** I am driven by goals and accomplishments. I need to see improvement to be successful.



**MICHELLE HESS**

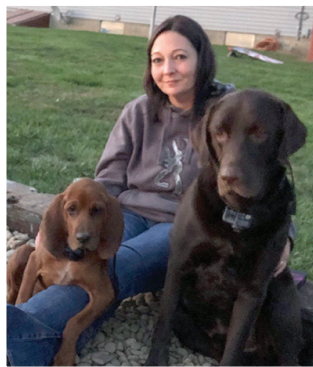
Cumberland Crossings -  
Ministry Support  
*Regional Business Office Supervisor*  
Years celebrating: 10

**FAVORITE DIAKON MEMORY...** I would see this resident each day doing Tai Chi in the parking lot. I told him that no matter what kind of day I am having when I saw him it would always put a smile on my face. That made him extremely happy, and he felt he needed to bring his wife down to meet me. I felt honored to have him take the time to introduce me to his wife.

**LIKES OUTSIDE OF WORK...** I like to go camping either in our camper or at our family's cabin in Renovo, PA. I like to read and complete diamond paintings.

**MOTIVATION TO FULFILL DIAKON'S MISSION...** Love working with residents and families in the senior living facilities.

**DEFINITION OF SUCCESS...** I define success as going the extra mile. Always strive to do better.



**ROBERTA GEMBE**

Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village  
CNA  
Years celebrating: 10

**FAVORITE DIAKON MEMORY...** Love working the rehab unit. Seeing residents meeting their goals and are able to go home makes it all worth it.

**FUN FACT...** I'm a country girl.

**ADVICE FOR NEW COWORKERS...** Have respect; treat others how you would like to be treated.

**FAVORITE QUOTE...** "Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, it's about learning to dance in the rain."



**CHARLES RICHEY**

Family Life Services -  
Mechanicsburg  
*School-based Therapist*  
Years celebrating: 5

**FAVORITE ASPECT OF YOUR ROLE ... AND WHY...** Seeing kids graduate from high school and demonstrate resiliency.

**FUN FACT...** My desert island item would be a jar of peanut butter.

**ADVICE FOR NEW COWORKERS...** Practice flexibility and self-care. Believe in people.

**FAVORITE QUOTE...** "You cannot unlock potential if you cannot unlock people. - Brene Brown. Curiosity will beat cleverness every time." - Stephen Rollnick.

## SHANNON COPELAND

Ministry Support  
Administrative Assistant for  
Corporate Communications  
Years celebrating: 5



### FAVORITE ASPECT OF YOUR ROLE ... AND WHY...

I love the variety of tasks that I have to complete on any given day. It keeps the mind sharp and the day interesting! (Although coffee helps, as well.)

### MOTIVATION TO FULFILL DIAKON'S MISSION...

As an individual, I whole-heartedly agree with Diakon's mission statement... that we are to love and serve our neighbor... so being able to prioritize this at work is a joy. However, I am also motivated every day by the kindness and passion of my coworkers. There have been many instances where Diakon staff have gone beyond what was required to help someone in need, who may not have even had any association with Diakon! It inspires me to do more, do better and love whole-heartedly.

### ADVICE FOR NEW COWORKERS...

Remember that our jobs are about the people we serve. And that coffee can save the day.

**FAVORITE QUOTE...** "We did not ask for this room or this music. We were invited in. Therefore, because the darkness surrounds us, let us turn our faces to the light. Let us endure hardship to be grateful for plenty. We have been given pain to be astounded by joy. We have been given life to deny death. We did not ask for this room or this music. But because we are here, let us dance." – Stephen King

**FUN FACT...** I hate oregano and love The Great British Bake-Off.



## KIMBERLY VELEZ

Adoption and Foster Care - Topton  
Child Prep and Profile Specialist  
Years celebrating: 5

### FAVORITE ASPECT OF YOUR ROLE ... AND WHY...

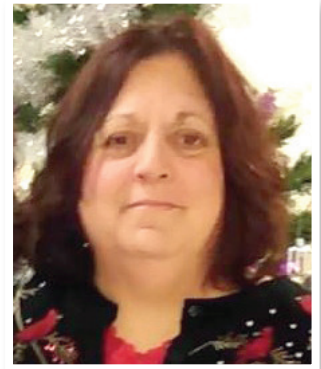
I feel privileged and gratitude to connect with families on such an interpersonal level. I learn something new, and this helps when supporting and advocating for families.

**FUN FACT...** I play trivia! My team and I visit several trivia locations in the Lehigh Valley. After playing for a couple years, we finally won one in 2022.

### ADVICE FOR NEW COWORKERS...

Flow with process. Celebrate small wins for yourself. You are not behind.

**FAVORITE QUOTE...** "Courage is one step ahead of fear."



## SUSAN GABROVSEK

Family Life Services – Capital  
Counselor  
Years celebrating: 10

### FAVORITE ASPECT OF YOUR ROLE ... AND WHY...

Individuals can be incredibly resilient to difficult life circumstances. It is such a gift to see someone (and their families) grow strong and engaged in life!

**FUN FACT...** About 50 years ago, I managed the mail-order computer software business for a friend when he was starting out and knew VERY little (like -1%) about the products. Fortunately, I knew several professionals in that field who helped me... pretty much daily for a while!

### ADVICE FOR NEW COWORKERS...

Be patient with the process.

**FAVORITE QUOTE...** "Children (adults, parents, friends) need your help most when it seems they deserve it the least." Emma Bombeck



**DAWN MARY HOUGHTALING**

RSVP of Berks, Pike & Wayne Counties  
 Program Coordinator  
 Years celebrating: 5

**FAVORITE ASPECT OF YOUR ROLE ... AND WHY...**My favorite part of my role is having the ability to work with and serve so many wonderful people!

**FUN FACT...**A fun fact about me is that nature is a core part of my soul.

**ADVICE FOR NEW COWORKERS...**Study the history and mission of this organization. It's pretty amazing and inspiring!

**FAVORITE QUOTE...**“God grant me the serenity to accept the things that I cannot change, the courage to change the things that I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

**JANUARY 2023 SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES**

Name	YOS	Program/Community Office	Department	Position
Bonnie Knarr	20	Buffalo Valley	Skilled Nursing	LPN (NCC)
Christine Hendricks	10	Permanency Services	Adoptions	Prep & Profile Specialist II
Charles Richey	5	Family Life Services	Cumberland Perry D&A Commission	Family Life Services Therapist

**FEBRUARY 2023 SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES**

Name	YOS	Program/Community Office	Department	Position
Wendy Carlin	10	Lutherwood	HUD Operating	HUD Service Coordinator
Susan Gabrovsek	10	Family Life Services	Perry Hope	Family Life Services Counselor
Amanda Gearhart	10	Buffalo Valley	Skilled Nursing	Nursing Assistant (NCC)
Roberta Gembe	10	Buffalo Valley	Skilled Nursing	Nursing Assistant (NCC)
Kathryn Juliana	10	Permanency Services	SWAN OCMI Grant	Child Specific Recruitment Specialist
Dawn Houghtaling	5	Community Services	RSVP Berks Pike Wayne	Program Coordinator (RSVP)
Stefanie Sutton	5	Cumberland Crossings	Skilled Nursing	Nursing Supervisor (NCC)
Kimberly Velez	5	Permanency Services	Adoptions	Prep & Profile Specialist II

## MARCH 2023 SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

Name	YOS	Program/Community Office	Department	Position
Debra Morrell	25	SWAN	SWAN	Administrative Assistant (SWAN)
Ronald Flamisch	20	Luther Crest	Plant Operations	Senior Maintenance Director
Michael Hofstetter	20	Luther Crest	Plant Operations	Lead Maintenance Specialist
Jeff Desir	15	The Lutheran Home at Topton	Skilled Nursing	LPN (NCC)
Edwin Payne	15	The Lutheran Home at Topton	Skilled Nursing	Nursing Assistant (NCC)
Michelle Hess	10	Ministry Support	Finance	Regional Business Office Supervisor
Shannon Copeland	5	Ministry Support	Communications Pub Relations	Administrative Assistant
Sherry Heckman	5	Family Life Services	Counseling & Education Pgm	Family Life Services Therapist
David Irvin	5	Ministry Support	Planning and Implementation	Executive Dir. of Facility Management
John McNally	5	Luther Crest	Plant Operations	Maintenance Worker
Dale Zuberka	5	Luther Crest	Plant Operations	Maintenance Worker