

Meet The Team: Fawn Ladd



**Late Night Host &
Front Desk Assistant**

It takes a **team** to provide shelter and low-income, affordable housing resources to people experiencing homelessness in our community. The Pillars team includes dedicated **staff**, selfless **volunteers**, and generous **donors** contributing to common goals:

SHELTER, SUPPORT, SOLUTIONS.

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

"I am a 41-year-old, single mother of 3. I work full-time as the hiring/scheduling/training manager at a McDonalds in Appleton. I enjoy music, art, culture, and travel. I love adventure and trying new things. I also like to PC game in my off time and have built my own PC to game on. I work on my own cars and love to learn new things. That is just a little of who I am."

What were you doing before you became a Pillars volunteer?

"To be honest, not a whole lot. Finding myself, working, spending time with my kids...pretty much it."

Why did you start volunteering at Pillars? What motivates you to continue volunteering?

"Over a year ago I had the feeling that I wanted to do more with my life and be more involved with the community. I remembered helping with my church's soup kitchen when I was a young child. The experience and being able to help others was one of my favorite memories and enjoyable moments from my childhood. That is when I had the idea that volunteer work is what was missing from my life. I did some research of places that needed help and found Pillars. Pillars is exactly what I was looking for. I was so excited and could not wait to jump in and help in any way I could.

As for what motivates me, if we are being honest... it is a bit of a story, but I'll try to make it the short version. I am a survivor of emotional and mental abuse. It took me a lot of time and struggle to fight to get my life back and move forward in a healthy way. My job was affected and so was my family. The work I put into myself to gain my confidence and self-love was not easy, but I did it, and I did it mostly alone with no real help. There are still days I must fight with my inner self to see my own self-worth, set boundaries, and PTSD; but I have come so far, and things are only getting better for me. Granted homelessness is different from domestic abuse but the struggles I feel are very similar. To be able to help be a part of something that is helping people get back on their feet and take back their lives, it means a lot to me. I enjoy and love being able to allow the people who are helping these folks, who are going through a tough time, the chance to be able to do the job of getting them on the right track and the opportunity to move forward in a healthy and positive direction."

What does your typical volunteer shift look like?

"As a Late Night Host at the Adult Shelter, I usually start with the laundry, and make my way to bagging prepared lunches for clients working the next day. I receive a lot of appreciation from the clients and the advocates, and I am more than happy to do what I can.

As a Front Desk Assistant my shift is filled with a lot of phone calls about donations or people looking for shelter, assisting clients with basic needs and helping the community with donations. Clients will tell me about their days and when good things are starting to come their way. Kids are always laughing and playing. Just like the Adult Shelter, I am shown a lot of appreciation for the work I do."

How has volunteering at Pillars impacted you?

"I feel like my life has more purpose and feels whole. It was that "something missing" from my life that I found and gave me passion and hope. It also shows me that there really are good people in this world and other people who care just like me."

What is the best thing that has happened to you, or that you have seen while volunteering?

"During the Christmas season, I had a client approach me thinking I worked at the shelter. I explained to him that I had a day job, that this was my fun time/me time. He looked astonished and asked what I do for a living. I told him and he was in awe that even with my full-time job I still found time to come help at the shelter. He then told me how, once he got his life in order and back on his feet, he wants to come back to the shelter to give back and help after all the help he received from Pillars."

Is there one thing the world should know about you?

"I guess this goes back to my motivation answer:

I am a survivor of emotional and mental abuse, both domestic and childhood. I do not like to say the word "victim" because I feel that is a negative view of the situation. I had struggled a lot with my way of thinking and how I viewed myself. It took a lot of work on myself to learn to love who I am, to find my confidence, and trust myself. I fought a long and hard battle to take back my life and live it the way I wanted to; to see my own worth and value. I would never wish anyone to have to go through those struggles and especially not alone. I want others to know that there is always a light at the end of the long dark winding path, you just must have faith and be patient. You will get to a better place in your life, you just need to keep trying and moving forward."

For individuals interested in serving in your position at Pillars, what is one thing they should know?

"That this is an opportunity to make a positive impact on someone's life. Your volunteering gives others the chance to give the attention and help needed to allow them to move forward in life."



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