

My Story

I began my career at the Arizona Training Program over 50 years ago. When I started my first day of employment as a direct care staff, I just had a feeling that this was the place where I was supposed to be. 50 years ago, we did not have a lot of knowledge on how to truly help our members. As the years went by, there was a new mission on campus to teach self-help skills. I wasn't sure what the outcome was going to be regarding this new thought process. I am glad those changes were made. Teaching someone to hold a spoon, a simple task that we take for granted. Some people may think that's no big deal. But to me and others, it was grandiose. The members enjoyed learning and they flourished beyond expectations. For 40 years, prior to transferring to the laundry, I have had the honor of establishing relationships with members that were built on trust, compassion, respect, and the understanding that we're all God's children. I believe that everyone has a natural gift. I believe my gift is helping others.

For the past 15 years or so, I have been asked many times, when am I going to retire? I haven't been able to answer that question. I talk to God and rely on him to help me with my decision making. I feel good. I am enjoying my life. I go to church and spend quality time with my grandchildren. But just as importantly, I still have the opportunity to come to work with the people I enjoy. For now, I will continue to walk this path.

Gwen Palmer