

Meet our Admin Staff!



Cindi Lee Jernigan: (218) 333-8264 / (888) 534-4432

Cindi Lee has served as the Executive Director since the program began in 1998. Her passion is to have our community be a place that you could be proud to grow up and grow old in. Cindi and Michael have been married since 1989 and have 2 children, Justin (28) and Josh (23). She has 2 Siamese cats named CleoCatra and Patti Cake. She grew up south of Bemidji near Guthrie and lived in Virginia Beach and Middleburg Florida before returning to the area. Cindi provides most of the grant writing, accounting, reporting, and supervision.



Katelin McDonald: (218) 333-8266

Katelin has been with Northwoods Caregivers for just over 6 months. She spends most of her time serving as the Homecare Program Specialist & works directly with Denise with all the documentation that is needed as a homecare agency. Katelin also helps with payroll, media and marketing efforts. She is the person behind our reenergized Facebook, newsletters and eblasts.

Karen Bedeau: (218) 333-8098

Karen Bedeau has been with Northwoods Caregivers since February, 2016. She is a dementia outreach specialist/advocate providing caregiver coaching services, dementia sessions/classes encompassing "Powerful Tools for Caregivers", "Reach" (resources for enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health in the Community), "Dementia Friends", "Basics and 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's" and serves as the chairwoman for our Giiwedining Committee which helps to support our Act on Alzheimer's Action Team and hosts our Honoring Elder Wisdom Conference.

Michelle Nelson: (218) 333-8262 or (218)333-8265

Michelle was hired in January of 2022 as the First City and Transportation Coordinator. She has a background in working with early childhood education, and works with families who need supervised visitation. In August Michelle became full time and also now serves as HCBS Manager which includes coordination of the respite and homemaking programs

Earlene Buffalo: (218) 333-8261

Earlene comes to Northwood's Caregivers with the role of Caregiver Advocate. She has a real passion for helping people in the community with Alzheimer's & Dementia and leads a primary caregiver support group in Cass Lake. After Earlene retired from Minnesota Indian Area Agency on Aging she heard about our position for "Caregiver Coach" and she worked as a contractor until taking a position as Caregiver Advocate with us in March of 2023.

Kate Halden: Bemidji High School Student Worker

Northwoods Caregivers was blessed to have Kate start to work for us the summer after her junior year in 2023 helping with projects, entering timesheets, quality assurance, and filing. She will continue to work with our organization until the Fall of 2024 when she will be attending the University of Minnesota in the nursing program.





Denise Smid (218)333-8204

Denise came to Northwoods Caregivers in the role of RN Home Health Manager in March of 2020. Denise had worked for Northwoods Caregivers as a contract RN in previous years. She has been an RN for 31+ years with most of that time spent caring for the elderly in the Minnesota veterans home Luverne and in other assisted living facilities. Denise has 5 children and 4 grandchildren and enjoys being both mom and nana.

Evie Bauer: (218) 333-8247

Evie started at Northwoods Caregivers under the Americorp program. in the Summer of 2021. She was hired as a program assistant that fall. Evie's main tasks are entering timesheets, filing, and phone triage along with coordinating our volunteer driver program. Evie moved to Bemidji when she was 14 years old and after graduation moved to the Twin Cities for 3 years. After having her son decided she wanted to move back to the area.



Jenn Cole: (218) 333-8097

Jennifer Cole came to Northwoods in October 2018 and served as Dementia Program Manager. Last Fall she took the newly created position of Associate Director. She is originally from the Bemidji area but had been gone for 25 years. She and her family returned to the Bemidji Area so that Jenn could attend BSU graduating with her degree in Community Health. Jenn enjoys the outdoors and spends lots of quality time on Lake of the Woods in the summer months. She is married to her high school sweetheart, and has two grown sons.



Adella Hadrava: (218) 333-8204

Adella joined Northwoods Caregivers in the Fall of 2022. Adella grew up in Northern Minnesota with her mother and brother. She attended an all girls boarding school in high school in Massachusetts. After suffering a TBI (traumatic brain injury) in 2000 she decided to become a nurse & graduated as an RN from Northwest Technical College. She is married with two children Patrick (11) and Ella (8).

