

## Pickford Film Center Wins Employer of the Quarter for Summer 2024



Cascade Connections is pleased to announce Pickford Film Center in Bellingham as the chosen recipient of our Employer of the Quarter for Summer 2024! The Pickford has been a Bellingham staple for nearly three decades and offers independent, international, and documentary film, plus related special events throughout the year. The Pickford's mission is to provide a forum and resource for independent cinema, strengthening community through education, dialogue, and the celebration of film. True to their values, the film center is also an inclusive employer of Cascade Connections' customer Matthew, who joined the Pickford team in January of 2024.

Currently a weekend janitor at the Pickford, Matthew has dreams of eventually becoming a movie-screen cleaner who cleans and maintains film projectors.

Matthew hopes that working at the Pickford will bring him closer to reaching this goal some day, but in the meantime, he is focused on excelling in his current role. He told us: "My favorite part of my job at the Pickford is that it doesn't involve any customer service, so I can stay focused on my work and have minimal disruptions."

The Pickford has proven a great work environment for Matthew so far, and he is flourishing there. Matthew's Cascade Connections job coach Kate observes that "it has been incredible to see Matthew's work continue to improve each week. He has taken on this new role with confidence and determination, and I have no doubt that he will continue to grow in his role."

The Pickford's Staff & Projection Manager, Skyler Hunt, echoes Kate's praise: "Matthew picked up the job quickly (no small feat in this space), and he clearly takes pride in and ownership over what he does. He's also easy to talk to and has a great sense of humor – he said something about "choosing not to make [himself] a road hazard" during our last meeting that had the table breathless for a solid minute! Matthew also has a sense of clarity and focus that I wish I could channel on hectic days. We're happy to have him on the team."

The Pickford's Assistant Manager, Jason Walker, says: "Matthew is a pleasure to work with here at the theater. I enjoy talking with him whenever I get the opportunity, he is always trying to find ways to improve his work. He is very clear about wanting to meet expectations and is seeking clarity on expectations in return. He has a very unique style and I am glad he is here on Sunday morning when I come in. I do wish he could make it in to see more movies!"

Matthew's job coach Kate appreciates that "The Pickford has been very supportive and encourages Matthew to continue to take ownership of his job. His supervisors check in with him frequently to discuss how he is doing and always have great feedback." Kate is grateful that they can always count on clear and concise communication from The Pickford: "I am met with a smile and warm welcome each time I have a chance to meet a new employee/volunteer. They seem to have a pretty incredible team of people." Kate adds: "Skyler and Jason are consistently offering opportunities to help



Matthew grow in his role, whether that be through coverage shifts or alternate tasks. Their dedication has not gone unnoticed.”

Tanya Tjoelker, an Assistant Program Coordinator for our Vocational team, shares that “The Pickford has been a great community partner to work with in support of Cascade’s mission of opportunities for all. Not only did they take the leap to hire Matthew this year, but they also hosted a work experience for a student exploring career options last fall, and welcomed a weekly volunteer supported by Cascade from 2012-2023. Skyler, Jason, Lesley, and everyone else at the Pickford have embraced our customers for who they are and shown incredible encouragement, flexibility, and support.”

The Pickford staff have expressed mutual enthusiasm about partnering with Cascade Connections. Skyler told us: “I’d like to shout out Matthew’s job coaches, Kate, Julie, and Tanya, all of whom have been delightful to work with. They’ve gone above and beyond working with Matthew on (sometimes very) early weekend days, helping him best utilize his resources, and facilitating clear communication. They’re also just so dang friendly. This is my first experience employing a Cascade Connections client – the Pickford has worked with clients as volunteers since long before my time – and I wouldn’t hesitate to do so again were the right opportunity to arise.”



Paul volunteered with Pickford Film Center through Cascade Connections Community Inclusion Program for several years.

### Support a Business That Support Cascade Connections!

Did you know that Pickford Film Center is known for showing the best independent, foreign, and documentary films including movies about disabilities? We encourage you to visit their website and check out what’s showing this month at: <https://www.pickfordfilmcenter.org>

## THOSE THAT ARE DOING IT RIGHT!

Since 2005, Cascade Connections has recognized local employers who are “doing it right” in their hiring of employees with disabilities. Employers who receive this recognition have contributed substantially to Cascade Connections’ mission. By offering meaningful employment, these local partners have helped us to empower individuals with disabilities to enhance their quality of life.

What does it mean to do it right? Our recognized employers have been open to looking at their hiring practices a little differently. In collaboration with our employment consultants, these employers have formed partnerships that benefit business and support our applicants. By working together, we have changed the face of employment in our community.

### Please join us in thanking all of Whatcom County’s current and former employer recognition recipients for helping Cascade Connections to provide opportunities for everyone.

A Child’s Life Learning Center  
Among Friends Adult Family Homes  
Anvil Corporation  
Avamere Bellingham Healthcare  
BAAY  
Blaine Ace Hardware  
Burlington  
Cascade DAFO  
CHS Northwest Bellingham Farm & Home  
Connections Speech Language Pathology  
Costco  
Denny’s  
Downtown Bellingham Partnership

Elenbaas Country Store  
Family Care Network  
FastCap  
FitEvo  
Fred Meyer  
Haggen  
Hannegan Home and Farm  
Justesen Industries Inc.  
Marlin’s Auto Service  
Marshalls  
Millard Mall Services  
Northwest Health Care Linen  
Park Bowl

Pickford Film Center  
Red’s Aquarium & Pet Supply  
Rusty Wagon  
Safeway  
Samuel’s Furniture  
Soy House  
Target  
The Seedlings Early Learning Center  
Walmart  
Whatcom Transportation Authority  
Woods Coffee