

2015 COMPASSIONATE EMPLOYER AWARD WINNER



Bassett Mechanical

Nomination letter from Kris, Elizabeth and Kathryn Sauter

In September 2014, Jay Sauter was unexpectedly diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. While this diagnosis was devastating, Jay remained positive and hopeful. Our family was blessed to be supported by extended family and friends as well as kind, compassionate, caring Bassett Mechanical colleagues and friends!

Shortly after diagnosis, Jay started an aggressive chemotherapy regimen. He was also hospitalized twice during the course of the treatment. Throughout this time, Bassett friends provided prayers, daily positive messages in the form of cards, notes, texts and phone calls to both Jay as well as us. In addition to supporting and checking in with Jay, they also wanted his family to know their thoughts and prayers were with us during this difficult time and offered to provide assistance in any way possible.

When Jay learned of the cancer diagnosis, it was his desire to remain active in his profession as long as possible as he enjoyed his career and particularly the 30 years he was privileged to work with the Bassett Mechanical team. During the course of his chemotherapy treatment, Jay was provided the support and structure needed to focus on his health and wellness, but also continue to participate in job responsibilities whenever possible. Members of the management team as well as colleagues assumed additional duties and assisted in an effort to support Jay while continuing to ensure the job responsibilities were fulfilled.

Accommodations included a flexible work schedule during treatment and recovery, scheduling planning meetings around treatment and recovery times, providing opportunities to participate in activities via conference calls, and working from home when his strength waned. The opportunity to continue his career and contribute professionally while surrounded by a group of caring and supportive colleagues provided a sense of normalcy and was a source of encouragement, strength and hope as Jay journeyed through cancer treatment.

During the course of the last 30 years, we often witnessed the generous support and compassion the Bassett Mechanical team provided to employees and/or family members experiencing health challenges or other personal tragedies. Bassett leadership and colleagues were always quick to volunteer to support families in need through team effort, providing emotional support, gifts of time to assist with tasks of daily living and financial contributions.

The culture of care and compassion demonstrated by the Bassett team is consistently reflected in their actions as well as the Bassett Mechanical core values which include among others, integrity and respect for people. The Bassett group regularly supports community efforts as well as local charities and believes that genuine concern and empathy contribute much to creating a vibrant work environment while nurturing relationships as well as teamwork. They understand and demonstrate that all benefit when employees feel valued, cared for and supported. Bassett Mechanical, a family owned business, truly views and treats employees as an extended family, valuing each colleague as an important member of the team.

In addition to the flexible work schedule, accommodations to allow Jay to participate as much as possible in his job responsibilities, daily uplifting communications and prayers, members of the Bassett



Mechanical team demonstrated support in countless ways including providing meals, a prayer shawl, homemade apple pie, offering assistance with household projects, providing rides and home visits. There were so many kind and thoughtful gestures of support!

During his second chemotherapy session, Jay received a poignant email that had been sent by a colleague inviting Bassett co-workers to participate in a "Movember" activity to support Jay and highlight men's health issues. Participants grew a moustache for the month of November and then at the end of the month, gathered to celebrate and pose for a treasured group photograph. The touching gesture also provided levity and humor during a stressful time. Jay (and we) were so touched by the show of support when over 70 males and a group of females with creatively designed moustaches joined in the cause!

When Jay's team of colleagues learned our family scheduled a cruise vacation in January, they provided Bon Voyage gifts of warm weather gear complete with flip flops, swim trunks, a Hawaiian shirt and a brimmed hat to ensure he was dressed fashionably for the islands. In addition to providing support, the Bassett team also remembered that often, laughter and humor are the best medicines.

Unfortunately for Jay and our family, a cure was not to be and sadly, Jay passed away on May 2. The Bassett Mechanical team supported us during preparations for and during the service celebrating Jay's life and continues to support our family by checking in with us frequently, volunteering to assist with tasks and including us in Bassett functions. The care and compassion they demonstrate is second to none!

We are honored to nominate Bassett Mechanical for the Community Benefit Tree, Inc. Compassionate Employer Award! We know we have been and continue to be blessed by countless acts of kindness, support and encouragement. Jay, and our entire family, could not have asked for a better source of support and we are forever grateful for the kindness shown during a challenging time!



Nominate your employer today, go to CommunityBenefitTree.org!