



Creating Opportunities for Happy Lives

THANK YOU DSPs!

THE EEDA READER

NEWS FROM EAST END DISABILITY ASSOCIATES, INC.



DSP

WHEELCHAIR

2019

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Friend,

EEDA is celebrating Direct Support Professionals September 8th - 14th! We have invited all in the EEDA family to share in the acknowledgment and appreciation of the hard work DSPs do every day throughout the year. We are compiling a *Special Edition* Direct Support Professional Newsletter that contains letters and pictures expressing recognition and gratitude from friends, family, peers, and those we support.

EEDA is giving our beloved DSPs hooded sweatshirts delivered to their work sites and on Friday, September 13th, and a \$25 gift via Sole Card or direct deposit. These tokens of appreciation are our way to say thank you. DSPs are the very foundation of the work that occurs at EEDA and make a difference to those we support in countless ways. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Lisa Meyer Fertal

Lisa Meyer Fertal

Chief Executive Officer



Newsletter Contributors

Jeremy Grand - Kimberly Schebler - Camden Ackerman - Lisa Kennedy - Patti Maiorana -
John Hatton - Tracy Zimmerman - Katherine Haas

EEDA LOVES OUR DSPs!

Brandon Rodriguez was nominated by his coworkers at Russell Street to be highlighted in our newsletter for his compassionate work as a direct support professional. Brandon has been supporting people at Russell Street for the past year and a half. His team mentioned the passion he has for his job and the people he supports. They also spoke about Brandon's work ethic, punctuality, and use of humor to brighten the workplace. Brandon's supervisors said he exemplifies all of EEDA's values. He really thinks outside the box and works hard to draw out the personality of each person he supports. Brandon's easygoing attitude and positive energy adds so much warmth to the house, its residents, and staff. Brandon always has a smile on his face and never brings negativity to work. He doesn't just treat this like a job, but a part of his life. EEDA is so grateful for Brandon's hard work and dedication to the people he supports!

**Thank you for your service,
Brandon!**



**WHO WILL YOU NOMINATE
NEXT??**

THANK YOU, SHAMECCA AND LYNNISHA!

With their dedicated support Elijah is doing good with in-home tasks and being out in the community. Having his workers with him helps his anxiety during events in the community and helps curb his wandering or fleeing tendencies. He is able to do the things he loves and get through difficulties with his support staff by his side. Without them, he would not be able to get through the many challenges in his life with not only his daily living skills, but being able to do the things he loves safely and effectively. His personality shines through because of the dedication and work ethic they showcase around him.

Our family used to be isolated, unable to attend functions, or get through our day because of Elijah's condition. Now, we are able to go out and enjoy things. Sometimes it is a struggle, but both workers know from working with Elijah what his triggers are and how to pinpoint a possible meltdown. They each have their own techniques that help with redirecting him and allowing him to regulate himself and get back on task. They have worked well with him to ensure he is safe in the community and able to enjoy his outings. He is thriving because of the immense support they give. We are forever grateful!

The Milton family



THANK YOU, ADULT SOCIALIZATION & HENRY LEWIS LANE DSPs!



The Adult Socialization Program visited the residents at EEDA's new IRA on Henry Lewis Lane in Jamesport.

THANK YOU, MARISSA!



Self-Direction participant Scott has only fond things to say about his self-hired staff Marissa. Marissa is known to go above and beyond for Scott. They like taking pics together, going to Plasterkrazie, glow-in-the-dark mini golf, and many other activities.

THANK YOU, DAN!



Vincent and Dan have had many great times together. Dan loves spending time with Vincent and looks forward to their weekly visits.

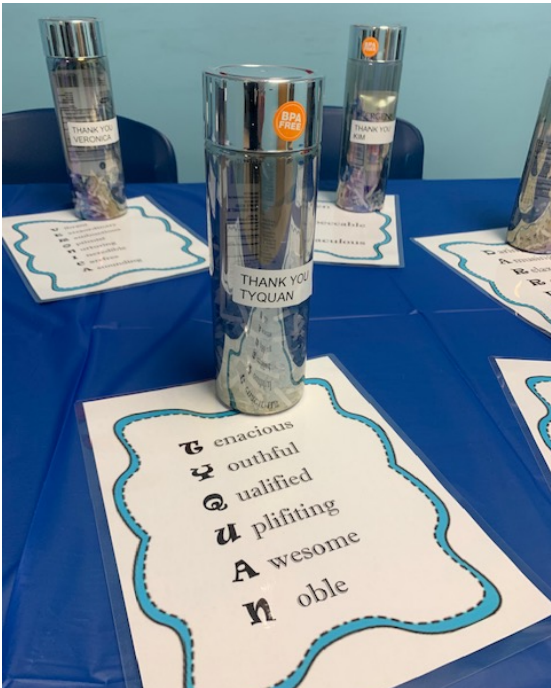


THANK YOU, NICOLE!

Thank you, Nicole, for your dedication, support, and care for the Southfield house, especially on Thursdays with Caroline. She sure did enjoy her outing with you at the aquarium!!



THANK YOU, DAY PROGRAM DSPs!





Celebrating DSP's ..I would like to thank everyone who works with my son Jaquan and takes the time with him and the patients even though I know patients can be worn (lol) but I do appreciate every single person whole heartedly!



THANK YOU, CRISIS TEAM DSPs!



I would like to support your DSP appreciation week. This photo was at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons this June, 2019. Claude and Kim brought Michael, Sam, and Giancarlo to the dance event! They all came beautifully dressed and ready to enjoy the evening. Michael and Giancarlo danced all night and everyone took turns dancing with the other guests.

I have observed that the direct care professionals are wonderful people who really look forward to bringing joy to their supported person. They deserve to be honored, respected and applauded for their noble work.

Warmest regards,
The Kessarlis Family.

THANK YOU, SUE AND DINA!

We are so thankful for Sue and Dina working with our son Derek. They both do such an amazing job with him, taking him for walks in the community, swimming, painting all his favorite things, and keeping him safe.



THANK YOU, BARBARA!

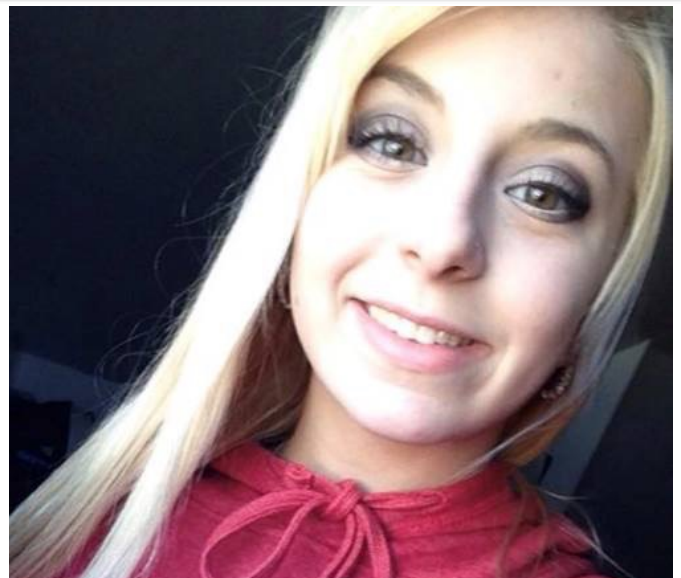


Barbara Bell is amazing! Josh has grown so much in the last year with all the amazing things Barbara does with him. Barbara has introduced him to nutrition classes, socialization classes, beach meet ups, and game nights and he is loving all of them! Josh has made friends and looks forward to seeing Barbara. As one of my friends said, "Barbara is the Josh Whisperer." Barbara has been a great addition to our family, not just for Josh, but for all of us! We are so lucky to have Barbara Bell as our staff.



THANK YOU, TIFFANY!

Tiffany Villani is a direct support professional in our Self-Direction program. She provides support to one of our guys living independently in her community. Tiffany is extremely compassionate, always willing to help, and goes above and beyond on a regular basis. She makes every effort to get him out and help him feel like he belongs. She even recently reached out in their community for a Playstation 4 for him and helped him set it up in his apartment. He says he can always count on Tiffany and we are proud to have her on the EEDA team.



TO ALL THE DSPs

To All the DSPs

Every day I am thankful for all of the Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) across EEDA dedicated to making a world of difference in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities we're so lucky to support. The demands placed on you, our vital workforce, are overwhelming, yet you carry on the important work demonstrating EEDA's mission and values while maintaining a commitment to quality every single day.

How often when you tell "civilians" what you do for a living at EEDA do they respond with statements such as, "oh you are so special—an angel," or "you must be so sweet and patient," or the common, "there is a special place in heaven for you." Well, they are right, but there is so much more...

How can you possibly sum up the importance and significance of your work and the amazing people you support in just a few words? How this isn't just a job—it's an adventure, a commitment, friendships, and a way of life. Until someone walks in your shoes and understands the profound and intense loving relationships that form between you and the people you support—"civilians" will never get it.

I was a DSP for many years and I did walk in your shoes. I understand the significance of your responsibilities and how hard this work is. I would suggest you explain to those "civilians" the following:

- DSPs are proud of the work they do every day.
- Society should value the work of DSPs by compensating them with a living wage.
- DSPs have families they need to support too!
- DSPs are the voice of those who can't speak.
- DSPs are quick on their feet and make a million decisions each day that impact people's lives.
- DSPs help people overcome obstacles so they can live rich and enviable lives.
- DSPs rock!
- The DSP position is one of the highest in demand and anticipated growth area in the United States.
- DSPs empower people by teaching, modeling, and supporting people through all phases of life and death.
- DSPs keep people safe.
- DSPs check their egos at the door to help people succeed. They are "BADA*S!"
- DSPs implement support for health and wellness routines such as dispensing medications and implementing significant treatments, medical, and behavioral interventions.
- DSPs help people feel secure, diminishing fear and anxiety while encouraging positive thoughts and actions.
- DSPs support and assist people on medical appointments to communicate and interact with medical professionals about health related issues.
- DSPs help people develop and maintain friendships and important relationships.

- DSPs make sure people have healthy meals and are dressed for the weather.
- DSPs are like snowflakes—no two are alike, but they are all beautiful forces of nature.
- DSPs are often the person who tucks someone into bed with thoughts of sweet dreams, and wakes them in the morning with positive thoughts for the day.

I could go on and on. So when the next “civilian” asks about your role as a DSP, tell them you are no angel! Just a proud, smart, underpaid, committed, “BADA*SI!” snowflake that rocks!

Thanks again for all you do.

Joy O’Shaughnessy

“It is from diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

-- Robert Kennedy

Thank you for the tiny ripple of hope you create every single day for the people we are so privileged to support. You not only create this ripple of hope but one of shared experiences, care, safety, learning, patience, and creativity that helps the people we support swell with pride, accomplishment, growth, good health, and safe lives.

THANK YOU, CALVERTON DAY HAB DSPs!



To all DSPs and staff at Calverton Day Hab,

Our daughter, Lauren, wakes up every day so excited, full of joy and happiness to get on the van to Calverton Day Hab! We often ask ourselves where would we be without Lauren’s Day Hab Program and all of you at Calverton. Honestly, we could not survive without all of you in her life.

It is a great feeling to know that she is safe, loved, and supervised by all her wonderful staff. Your amazing dedication and day to day care for Lauren is so appreciated as we know how difficult it can be. We don’t say it enough, but thank you all so so much from the bottom of our hearts; we appreciate each and every one of you.

Sincerely,
Joan and Chuck Lucarelli

NATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR DSPs

National Code of Ethics for Direct Support Professionals

Developed by the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals, the Code of Ethics is intended to serve as a straightforward and relevant guide for DSPs as they resolve the ethical dilemmas they face every day on their jobs, and encourage them to achieve the highest ideals of the profession.

1. **Person-Centered Supports:** As a DSP, my first allegiance is to the person I support; all other activities and functions I perform flow from this allegiance.
2. **Promoting Physical and Emotional Well-Being:** As a DSP, I am responsible for supporting the emotional, physical, and personal well-being of the individuals receiving support. I will encourage growth and recognize the autonomy of the individuals receiving support while being attentive and energetic in reducing their risk of harm.
3. **Integrity and Responsibility:** As a DSP, I will support the mission and vitality of my profession to assist people in leading self-determined lives and to foster a spirit of partnership with the people I support, other professionals, and the community.
4. **Confidentiality:** As a DSP, I will safeguard and respect the confidentiality and privacy of the people I support.
5. **Justice, Fairness and Equity:** As a DSP, I will promote and practice justice, fairness, and equity for the people I support and the community as a whole. I will affirm the human rights, civil rights and responsibilities of the people I support.
6. **Respect:** As a DSP, I will respect the human dignity and uniqueness of the people I support as valuable and help others understand their value.
7. **Relationships:** As a DSP, I will assist the people I support to develop and maintain relationships.
8. **Self-Determination:** As a DSP, I will assist the people I support to direct the course of their own lives.
9. **Advocacy:** As a DSP, I will advocate with the people I support for justice, inclusion and full community participation.

THANK YOU, PATTI!

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude for the unconditional support that Patti Maiorana has provided over the years to me. In addition, when I was attending undergraduate school for my Bachelor's Degree in Healthcare Administration, Patti proctored me and made certain that I understood what I read for the examinations. Without any doubt, Patti is all for the guys at East End Disability Associates. The late great James Walsh made a wise choice hiring Patti for the position at Calverton Day Hab fifteen years ago. Thank you for your honesty and dedication.

Sincerely,

Orlando Urena-Cordero



THANK YOU, ERICA!

Two years ago Kelly began Self-Direction services with no idea of what she was interested in. Kelly had a hard time leaving the house and when she did, all she wanted to do was walk around malls. She was resistant to trying anything new at all. Fast forward two years and Kelly takes weekly swimming and gymnastics lessons. She has performed in two gymnastics expos and has passed four swimming performance tests. Kelly has physically become stronger, and is more enthusiastic about trying new things. She is confident in herself and very proud of what she does. She loves to tell people that she's a gymnast and a swimmer and shows off her skills whenever possible. Kelly says "I love being a gold medal star!" Kelly has come such a long way in only two years.

Kelly's success is all due to Erica Leibowitz, her wonderful, amazing staff who takes the time to listen and expose Kelly to different things. Erica is always bringing her A game to the table. Kelly and her family are so grateful to have her in their lives.



THANK YOU, SAM!

I always wanted to go to NYC for Christmas. First stop was at Bryant Park where I was able to look at several different pop-up shops and food places. I enjoyed hot chocolate from one of the pop-up food places. I was even able to take a picture with the very large Christmas Tree. The next stop was to Columbus Circle, where I viewed more pop-up shops and food places. I enjoyed looking at the horse and carriages that travel through Central Park.

All this was possible because Sam, my staff, wanted to help me make my dreams come true! Since I have started working with Sam I have gone on the best trips. I have gone to Six Flags, boat rides, and bike rides. Sam takes the time to research fun stuff for me to do while encouraging me to be more engaged in my community. I am very grateful for my staff!!

Samantha Urban—THANK YOU!



THANK YOU TO ANDREW'S DSPs!

When I became a parent my life changed in a huge way. I was excited to be a mother and was also awed by the responsibility that came with parenting. I dreamed about my son's accomplishments and who he would become in this world. Within a few years of Andrew's life, I learned he was intellectually and developmentally disabled. This changed many of my original dreams and wishes for him, but I realized Andrew hadn't changed at all. I believe he was born just as he was supposed to be, and my job as a mom became more serious with the knowledge of his disabilities. My wishes and dreams for him transitioned to what are now the same wishes and dreams I have for myself and anyone I care about. I want him to be happy, satisfied, and valued. I want him to be surrounded by a community of people who understand and accept him just as he is.

Special people have been a part of Andrew's life from the start, including professionals in the health, education, and support sectors. So many individuals contribute to his well-being and success. The hopes and prayers I have for a community, are found in every Direct Support Professional that offers support and assistance in a million ways. Andrew's everyday needs could not be met without DSPs helping him dress, toilet, bathe, prepare meals, transport, attend appointments, give medications, identify when he doesn't feel well, and learn to understand what his wants and desires are. This is not an easy job, but the DSPs who work with him do it seamlessly. The most heartwarming thing to me is witnessing the humor he shares with the DSPs he is close with and how his face lights up when his favorite DSPs are present.

It's spectacular to think there are so many people who know him deeply and recognize his contributions. Many DSPs have told me that Andrew has made an impact on them. I remind them that it is because of the love, care, and support he receives every day from DSPs. I will not include the names of those who support him only because I fear I would forget to include someone. But I will thank all the Direct Support Professionals that work at his Russell Street home and his Riverhead Day Habilitation Program. He is fortunate to have each of them in his life. I thank them for their patience, humor, compassion, and courage to do what they do daily. As we celebrate Direct Support Professional Week I thank everyone who has chosen this vocation. I am humbled and awed by every act of kindness. Andrew's life is better and more successful because of the work of DSPs.

With grateful appreciation,

Andrew's Mom



THANK YOU, RUSSELL STREET DSPs!



THANK YOU, KATE!

Our daughter Colleen loves all the DSPs and staff at EEDA. One DSP in particular who works with her is Kate Danega. Colleen has had Kate as one of her staff at CAP for about five years. Four years ago, Kate started working with Colleen doing Community Res Hab twice a week after CAP. They worked on fitness goals, money skills while shopping, took painting and cooking classes at the local library, organized Colleen's bedroom, and returned bottles, donating some of the money to charity.

Kate also accompanied Colleen to her volunteer appreciation dinner at the aquarium and has taken her to some of the marine rescue's turtle and seal releases. Colleen recently moved into an EEDA residential home. Kate left CAP and is now a DSP at her new house. She has been a huge help to Colleen adjusting to her new home and all the tasks she partakes in. Kate is a very generous and kind person who always has a positive outlook. She goes above and beyond her job title and cares deeply for all the clients she works with. We are very lucky and appreciative to have her and all the EEDA staff in our daughter's life.

Thank you,
Mr. and Mrs. Shanahan



THANK YOU, EIGHT BELLS DSPs!

Unfortunately, we will be away for DSP appreciation week, but we dropped off some gift cards for the staff at Eight Bells from the Forziano and Samuels families. Andre at Eight Bells has always been a warm and caring presence at the house. He always does his best for all the guys and gets things done (he made the dish washer up in the apartment absolutely gleam when I thought it was a goner!). He is always easy to speak to and never seems to panic about any situation. We are very lucky to have Andre at Eight Bells. I know the whole staff at the house works very hard. Unfortunately, at this time, I don't know too many of them except Marisol and Yulis.

Roseann & Frank Forziano

THANK YOU TO OUR SURFERS HEALING VOLUNTEERS!



PROCLAMATION SUPPORTING DSPs

T O W N O F R I V E R H E A D

Office of the Supervisor

PROCLAMATION

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION WEEK IS SEPTEMBER 8-14

Whereas: it is both fitting and proper that the Town Board and all citizens of the Town of Riverhead join East End Disability Associates, Inc. in honoring those who have gone above and beyond; and

Whereas: A Direct Support Professional (DSP) provides essential support to help keep an individual with disabilities connected to their family and community, to live meaningful, successful lives, and to avoid costly institutional care; and

Whereas: Direct support workers, direct care workers, personal assistants, personal attendants, in-home support workers and paraprofessionals are the primary providers of publicly funded, long-term support and services for millions of individuals with mental health issues and disabilities; and

Whereas: Direct Support Professionals (DSP's) are vital to the life experiences of many people with disabilities in the Town of Riverhead and are often the difference between community participation and isolation; and

Whereas: A DSP must build a close, trusting relationship with individuals and assist with their most intimate needs on a daily basis; they provide a broad range of services, including preparation of meals, help with medications, personal hygiene, mobility, transportation and general daily assistance; and

Whereas: the work of these professionals is essential to allowing individuals with mental health issues and disabilities to live successfully as part of their communities, and also enables these individuals and their families to avoid extended, costly institutional care; and

Let it be known that Direct Support Professional Week is an opportunity to recognize the important work of those who ensure inclusive environments with equal access to all; and

Now Furthermore, the Town of Riverhead recognizes the vital role that dedicated DSP's play in enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities. We extend our appreciation for their contributions that help thousands overcome challenges and help them reach their full potential; and

Therefore, be it proclaimed, that I, Laura Jens-Smith, Supervisor of the Town of Riverhead, New York, do hereby proclaim the week of September 8-14, 2019 as *Direct Support Professional Recognition Week* in the Town of Riverhead and urge all residents to sustain public knowledge of these individuals who contribute to making a quality community life for those with disabilities.

Proclaimed this 12th day of September, 2019.



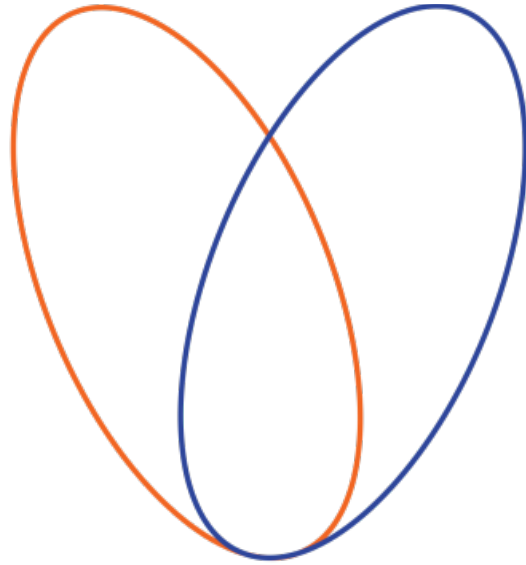
TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

James Wooten
Jodi Giglio
Tim Hubbard
Catherine Kent



Laura Jens-Smith
Laura Jens-Smith
TOWN SUPERVISOR

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the Town of Riverhead to be affixed this Twelfth Day of September in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Nineteen.



2019 Direct Support Professional
RECOGNITION WEEK
September 8 – 14, 2019





East End Disability Associates (EEDA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides supports and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

EEDA's Mission Statement: "Your Challenge... Our Commitment. Dedicated to creating practical solutions and providing innovative supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on the East End of Long Island."

www.eed-a.org



Creating Opportunities for Happy Lives

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Staff***

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Chief Program Officer

Joy O'Shaughnessy

Chief Administrative Officer

Gus Lagoumis

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Dara Gary

Director of Program Operations

John Hatton

Director of Self-Directed Services

Diane Lagoumis

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