

A quarterly publication of the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities

DSP Employment Connections highlights opportunities in DD field



Close to 20 direct support professionals from a variety of different agencies participated in a photo shoot to help raise awareness about the position. This is just one way LCBDD is helping to recruit DSPs.

What is a DSP?

It's a job that is absolutely critical to the developmental disabilities field – but many have never heard of the position.

A DSP, which is short for direct support professional, is paid to provide support to a person with a disability. That might mean helping a person with daily hygiene, connecting people with the community or helping people find jobs.

It's a job where every day is different, where flexibility is key and the fulfillment people get is immeasurable.

But locally, there hasn't been an organized effort to raise

awareness about the position or the need.

"It's really difficult to recruit for this position, when no one knows what a DSP is," said Angie Finck, director of provider relations at the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD). "People in our community don't know this is a job opportunity."

LCBDD is working to change that.

As more people with disabilities access their community, the need for DSPs has never been higher.

DSP Employment Connections, a

Continued on page 4

A message from our
Superintendent Jason Umstot



Many of you may be wondering just what a DSP – or direct support professional – really is.

DSPs are the heartbeat of the developmental disability services field. They are hired by providers so needed services and supports for people with developmental disabilities can be offered.

I consider DSPs to be heroes, friends, companions, teachers, confidants and leaders. They are the front line staff who make a difference by working to fulfill the dreams of each person so they can live, happy, fulfilling lives.

One of the best decisions I ever made was becoming a DSP. I worked with two adult men who had a variety of support needs. I was there for them and I felt appreciated. Each day I looked forward to seeing these two guys, who I considered my friends. This experience taught me so much more than I could ever have imagined. I will be forever
Continued on page 4

Upcoming events

- **4:45 to 6 p.m. May 16, June 20 and July 18:** LCBDD Board Meeting, Suite B2 of the Newark Commerce Center, 195 Union Street, Newark Ohio, 43055.
- **9 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 15: 2018:** Tech Summit, FREE to people with disabilities and their families, Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris Hotel, 409 Altair Parkway Westerville, Ohio 43082.

LCBDD News

Free 2018 TechSummit open to families

The Ohio State University Nisonger Center and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities are hosting a TechSummit from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on June 15.

The event will be held at the Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris Hotel, 409 Altair Parkway in Westerville.

The event is free to people with disabilities and their families and participants will be able to try out different pieces of technology. For more information, go to: *nisonger.osu.edu/techsummit*.



Families encouraged to follow Fix The List

People and families we support will continue to hear more about Fix the List, a statewide movement, initiating a new waiting list rule for Home and Community Based Services waivers. As more information comes from LCBDD, we ask families to also go to *fixthelist.info* and follow Fix the List on social media.

Provider Guide Plus rolled out May 14

On May 14, the website Provider Guide Plus launched throughout the state of Ohio.

Offered in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, the Ohio Association of County Boards and the Ohio Provider Resource Association, this site is a new tool for families to research different provider agencies and share feedback on their experiences.

For more information about the site, go to: ***providerguideplus.com***.



Check out our new LCBDD commercial!

In March, LCBDD released a new commercial featuring three people we support – Axton Bryant, Megan Sowers and Chris Holderby. We are thankful that they were willing to share their stories with our community!



To see the commercial, go to youtube.com/user/LickingCountyDD.



To Licking County Transit:

Christy Riley called and left me a voicemail to express her appreciation of her transit services. She appreciates how the schedulers and drivers are "positive and helpful."

– Christine Burkamp
Service coordinator

To MEORC RN Suzanne Wilson:

Suzanne goes above and beyond to complete Nursing Task Assessments! She is sensitive and understanding of what families go through during this process. I have many times experienced Suzanne providing comfort and reassurance to families, including big hugs! Licking County is very fortunate to have Suzanne as part of our team!

–Sarah Quinn
Service coordinator

To Keisha Darst, Samantha Sapp, Alexis Scott, Valerie Hartsough, Dale Miller and Terry Wilden from CSS:

This group of direct care staff has gone above and beyond to provide quality care for a person that was dealing with a rapid decline in his health. Due to their dedication to

We can't do our job without the support of the community! LCBDD staff members are using this space to express our gratitude to providers and members of the community who have gone above and beyond.

completing all recommend PT with the person, the team has seen an amazing increase in his health, mobility and overall level of happiness. It has been amazing working with a team that is so focused on quality care and improving the day to day life of our folks.

–Tiffany Rhoads
Service coordinator

To Adam Hartman from LICCO:

He has gone above and beyond over and over again to support people.

–Amanda Osborn
Service coordinator

To CSS HR Director Gina Broseus:

She lent her HR experience to the provider relations team as they were developing the DSP Employment Connections program. Her feedback was incredibly valuable to creating processes that reduce administrative time for participating provider agencies.

To Mary Thompson-Hufford:

Her feedback regarding the need for provider agency customization of the DSP Employment Connections program helped us better meet the needs of each agency.

–Angie Finck
Director of provider relations

To Marina Anderson and Wendy Wells:

They rock the house with funding knowledge and willingness to help. We appreciate them so much.

–Cheree Nelson
Transition youth team leader

To Ginger Kehler of the Fuse Network:

Thanks for your dedication and commitment. She is person centered and listens to the people she serves. Ginger recently had her first placement for an person in community employment. On another note, she arranged a Community Based Assessment, for a young man, listening to his interests, making it a great scenario for him. Thanks Ginger!

To the team at Fuse Network:

The team demonstrates excellence doing your daily activities of job placement, coaching, and follow along services. Kudos to all!

To the Licking County Human Resources Team:

They are always open to listen and offer us support when needed. You're greatly appreciated!

–Linda Hogue
Employment support specialist

To Amanda at CDS:

Thank you for treating potential employees with the upmost respect and showing kindness.

–Brandi Body
DSP eligibility specialist

Front page cont.

new initiative from LCBDD, uses several approaches to address the workforce crisis.

Leaders at provider agencies have shared with LCBDD that staff turnover and recruitment are their biggest challenges.

"They want to provide great services for the people they support, but being short on staff makes it incredibly difficult," Angie said.

Using provider feedback, LCBDD's provider relations team created DSP Employment Connections, which takes the burden of screening potential DSP applicants off providers.

Providers who decide to participate in the customizable program receive assistance with onboarding applicants, at no cost.

Brandi Body, the first ever DSP Eligibility Specialist in the state of Ohio, was hired to work one-on-one with future DSPs. If applicants meet all the requirements, they are informed of open DSPs positions. Once

they are hired, Brandi will follow up with them to provide support.

Since the program started on Feb. 5, Debra Chamberlain, Licking County area director for Community Living Experiences Inc., has already hired two new DSPs who have gone through the screening process.

By initially meeting with Brandi and learning about the field, applicants get a sense of all the options available to them and come to her excited about getting people out in the community.

"It brings out if they are truly interested in working with people with developmental disabilities," Debra said.

Assisting with onboarding is only effective when members of the community understand what a DSP is and how to enter the field.

LCBDD has also launched a significant marketing effort to promote DSP positions and celebrate their contributions.

Radio ads and billboards, featuring real DSPs debuted in March and LCBDD is continuing

to spread the word by attending job fairs, launching social media campaigns and reaching out to community partners.

Brandi has also been reaching out to local high schools and colleges, promoting the position as a way for students to get experience in the field.

Word is spreading and DSPs have been excited to see themselves featured in promotional materials.

For Gina Broseus, human resources coordinator for Consumer Support Services, it's been exciting to see DSPs get recognized, and different provider agencies come together.

"Everyone has been open and receptive to being able to work together to get ourselves staffed and get the people taken care of," she said. "That's the ultimate goal!"

To learn more about DSP Employment Connections, contact DSP Eligibility Specialist Brandy Body at 740-644-0344 or brandi.body@lcountydd.org.

Umstot cont.

grateful for the skills and traits I gained.

Today, DSPs continue to find the job to be rewarding. I often hear them say that this is the best job they have ever had. I've also heard how much they love

coming to work. You don't get these additional benefits of emotional gratitude at just any job. The rewards are endless.

We have excellent providers in Licking County who are looking for people interested in becoming DSPs. If you want to learn more, contact Brandi Body

at the board office at 740-349-6588 or go to DSPOhio.org and click on Licking County to get an overview of employers in our county who are hiring.

Contact Superintendent/CEO Jason L. Umstot by calling 740-349-6588 or email: Jason.Umstot@lcountydd.org.

Momentum is created and edited by LCBDD Public Information Officer Anna Jeffries.

If you have ideas for future publications, or would like to get on our mailing list and receive this electronically, contact Anna at **740-322-6911** or anna.jeffries@lcountydd.org.

The Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD) has been proudly funding services and supporting people with developmental disabilities for more than 50 years.

LCBDD can be reached by calling 740-349-6588 or by visiting our website, lcountydd.org.

Follow us on social media using @LCOUNTYDD. If you are a family member of someone we support, don't hesitate to visit our family support page by searching "LCOUNTYDD Families" on Facebook.