



Crystal Run Village, Inc.

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News

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Celebrate Our Everyday Heroes

A U.S. Senate resolution has designated September 12 through 18 as National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week to salute a critical segment of America's private sector workforce that is routinely undervalued. Direct support professionals (DSPs) are referred to by many names, direct care workers, direct service staff, home health aides, long-term care aides and personal service assistants. Their support services play a vital role in our communities by promoting independence and inclusion for people with disabilities.

As reported by The Research and Training Center (RTC) on Community Living at the University of Minnesota, America's need for this level of support is increasing at a dramatic pace. Nationally, there are an estimated 464,000 DSPs working in community residential settings while another 40,000 work in nursing facilities. And yet another 161,000 DSPs work with our aging population and the elderly. Further, statistics and trends from RTC projected a 37 increase over the next 10 years in the demand for DSP support services to meet the needs of aging baby boomers alone, yet the DSP workforce is expected to grow only 7 percent during that period. The DSP workforce supply deficiency is cause for alarm that will only grow worse without the immediate attention of lawmakers to plan for an increase in funding.

DSPs deserve our respect and deepest admiration for the role they play in strengthening the fabric of our communities socially and economically. In addition to providing a quality life for people with disabilities, community inclusion is fiscally responsible. The annual cost of home and community based services is nearly 3x less per person than the average annual cost for care in a congregate setting. Simply put DSPs work to bring dignity to the lives of others, which betters society and benefits us all. Take time the week of September 12 to honor and celebrate them. If you don't know a direct support professional, someday you will.

Crystal Run Village, Inc. has been providing services for the inclusion and independence of people with disabilities for 51 years. The human services agency supports adults and children with intellectual disabilities, autism, spectrum disorders, mental illness, and individuals dually diagnosed and their families living in Orange, Rockland and Sullivan Counties. Of the agency's more than 850 employees, approximately 85 percent function as direct support. **For information about the Direct Support Professional workforce at Crystal Run Village, Inc., contact: Associate Executive Director Laurie Cirillo in the human resource department at 845-692-4444.**

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