



ADAPT
COMMUNITY NETWORK

[we change]



Direct Support Professional Staff Appreciation 2022-2023

Empowering people through innovative solutions, one person at a time.

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DSP STAFF APPRECIATION

As our most valuable resource for the individuals we support, Direct Support Professionals (DSP) are the backbone of the programs and services ADAPT Community Network provides. The role of a DSP is to support people with developmental or intellectual disabilities in fully living their lives and participating in their communities. Each September, we celebrate these valued staff and the vital work they do. The month culminates in the Honoree Luncheon for Direct Support Professionals, where the top DSP from each of our programs is honored.



This year, the luncheon took place on October 19th at 320 Park Avenue in Midtown, where over 40 DSPs from both **ADAPT Community Network** and **Human First** attended. Awardees were seated in a dining room with a panoramic view of the New York City skyline and listened as Chief Executive Officer of ADAPT, Ed Matthews, gave a welcome speech. Next to speak was Eileen Cruz, a family member of one of the people we support. Longtime supporter **Mutal of America** underwrote the whole event.

Eileen Cruz, sister of Ruben Cruz, who attends Adult Learning Center 3 at Grand Concourse, said, "Organizations and programs such as this are deeply appreciated and vital to the support of all of us who need them. Work is one way to define what [DSPs] do, but it's more than that – it's a labor of love: people helping people. On behalf of our family, again, thanks for all you do. You make a difference!"

After lunch came the awards ceremony, in which ADAPT executives Linda Laul, Dahlian Porter, and Elizabeth Stehle congratulated exemplary DSPs who showed extraordinary levels of dedication, empathy, and kindness in their work. The honorees from programs across all five boroughs are *listed on the next page*.

The importance of DSPs within the ADAPT community cannot be

stressed enough. Robertine Yaya, Program Director of Tanya Towers, one of our residences in Manhattan, supervises a team of DSPs and spoke on the magnitude of their roles.

"Our DSPs contribute greatly every day to our noble mission of providing outstanding care and support to our people," Yaya said. "They do a great job supporting people with disabilities to enjoy limitless opportunities in their lives (*taking them out on recreation trips to broadways shows, parades, conferences, movies, and restaurants as well as vacation trips to places like Vegas*). DSPs help us keep our people actively engaged in the community in addition to their daily home routine and medical appointments... For this and many more things they do, our management team at Tanya is forever grateful to them."

Susanna Cramer, a resident of Tanya Towers, came to stay at an ADAPT respite program for the first time in 1973, and then full-time when her parents passed away in 2001. Now, at the age of 65, Cramer has lived at Tanya Towers for almost two decades. As a featured speaker at the DSP luncheon, she thanked honorees on behalf of the people supported by ADAPT Community Network, then made a video addressing her residence's DSPs.

"Thank you all for helping me since my parents' passing," she said in the video. "My mom recommended me for Tanya when I was 16 for when she could no longer take care of me, and I want to thank you all for picking up where my parents left off."

“Work is one way to define what [DSPs] do, but it's more than that – it's a labor of love: people helping people.”

— EILEEN CRUZ

In addition to the festivities at the DSP luncheon, each program center held its own activity and gift card raffle for Direct Support staff. Residential and Adult Learning Centers hosted parties, breakfasts, picnics, and more throughout the month. In appreciation of their DSPs, individuals supported made art, cards, and speeches to present at the parties.

We at ADAPT Community Network would like every one of our Direct Support Professionals to know how much we value them. We hope you had a wonderful DSP Appreciation Month and enjoyed the festivities!

ADAPT COMMUNITY NETWORK HONOREES 2022

HONORED STAFF	LOCATION
Veronique Accimeus	BK DH6
Keishana Alston	Colden IRA
Andy Andrades	Bronx Day Hab 4
Grace Bannon	Perry Avenue IRA
Tameka Brown	Lurtng4 IRA
Devin Cropper	SI DH 2
Daphne Crosbie	1841 Lacombe Av ICF
Ayoko Dalmeida-Nandji	Webster IRA
Nikita Davis	Ardsley
Esohe Enoragbon	Belsky 6A IRA (140 Lawrence Ave)
Nathalie Figaro	Vandalia ICF
Lystra Findley-Man	Manhattan IRA 2
Hilary Francis	596Lousn IRA
Arlene Gravesande	Spring Creek IRA's
Paula Grullon-Lopez	Johnson Ave IRA
Iesha Harris	MN DH5
Alice Howard	BK DH1
Danielle Jackson	Harbor Cluster 1
Jeryl Johnson	Greystone IRA 4E
Jamoire Johnson	Swinton Ave IRA
Vonda Johnson	Waterside 8F IRA
Ellen Kinard	Sylvan IRA
Roxanne Laborde	Forsyth IRA
Kesner Malette	MN DH2
Elaine Matthew	Willlog6A IRA
Nicola Moffett	75 AveD 2D2E
Mari Mouscardy	Castleton1e IRA
Nancy Nieves	MN DH3
Tawa Olawale	Champlin IRA
Lorraine Orr	SI DH 1
Susan Owusu-Ampaw	BX DH3
Laura Payano	TOP
Yvette Reed	Lake St ICF
Spencer Robertson	BK DH5
Jennifer Santos	BX DH1
Steven Selkowitz	BX DH2
Dorris Tiewloh	Csten1LM ICF
Keturah Toby	Englewood IRA
Trecia Usher	BK DH3
Darren Wingate	Bronx DH WOW

HUMAN FIRST HONOREES 2022

HONORED STAFF	LOCATION
Malik Bovelle	IRA Inwood
Madeline Desrameaux	Day Hab Brooklyn Site
Adeola Nurse	165th IRA
Luanne Hilton	NYC Day Program
Ritchy Laurent	IRA - 106 St.
Yetunde Awonusi	196th IRA



