
News Release



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Vermont Celebrates Direct Support Professionals on September 10

Montpelier, VT — **Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week** is September 10th – 16th and Vermont is celebrating! This week honors the dedication and contributions of direct support professionals in supporting individuals with disabilities and their families. In Vermont, the state's direct support professionals will be recognized with a state-wide celebration on **Monday, September 10, 2018 from 11am-1pm on the Vermont State House Lawn in Montpelier.**

Green Mountain Self-Advocates, Vermont Care Partners, and the **Vermont Developmental Disabilities Services Division** will co-sponsor the event, which honors Vermont 's direct support professionals' commitment to community inclusion for individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities.

Feature speakers **Jennifer Stratton** of Morrisville, **Julie Cunningham** of Brattleboro and **Max Barrows** of Montpelier will highlight the irreplaceable role of Direct Support Professionals in supporting Vermonters with disabilities to lead meaningful and inclusive lives.

A colorful **Story Garden** will display hundreds of personal stories and artwork created by people with disabilities. Celebration flags will be displayed in the Story Garden, sharing how support staff positively impacted the lives of Vermonters with disabilities. Flags from previous years have said,

“Jacob has been in my life since 2007. I am a two-time cancer survivor. He went to all my appointments, chemo-therapy and was my nurse at home. He was there for me physically and emotionally”

“Staff are important to me because I am going through one of the hardest times I have ever been through. Staff helps me get out and find positive things and helpful things that can get me better and helps point me in the right direction.”

“If it wasn't for my support worker I would probably be in jail or in a lot of trouble because I was a troubled kid growing up.”

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"I have outstanding support staff to assist me. I move through feelings of anxiety and fear with her coaching me to be courageous and brave. It takes the right partnership to depend on someone to support you to accomplish your life goals."

This year's event will feature opportunities for people to video-record stories with their support staff, have refreshments, hear public remarks and view the beautiful Story Garden.

For more information about:

Green Mountain Self-Advocates www.gmsavt.org.

Vermont Care Partners <http://vermontcarepartners.org/>.

Vermont Developmental Disabilities Services Division <http://ddsd.vermont.gov>.

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