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Three Direct Support Professionals Receive Awards for their Outstanding Service

Three outstanding direct support professionals were recognized in May for their service to people with disabilities at the Fourth Annual Conference for Direct Support Professionals, coordinated by the Center for Disabilities Studies at the University of Delaware. The goal of the conference was to enhance and recognize the professionalism of the direct support professionals who enable thousands of Delawareans with disabilities to live more independently and successfully navigate their lives each day. Direct support professionals provide supervision, training, support, and personal assistance to people with disabilities.



(from left to right are Jose Andrada, Kate Antisavage, and George Farren).

Each year, the conference committee recognizes a select group of outstanding direct support professionals based on nominations by co-workers and/or the people they serve. This year, Leader, Advocate, and Star Awards were presented to three deserving individuals.

The Leader Award is for a professional who leads by example, is inspirational to others, and is able to motivate others to perform at their best. This year's recipient was Kate Antisavage, a program instructor at the Adults with Disabilities Day Services Program of Easter Seals Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore in Newark. Kate, a resident of Bear, was nominated by Susan Isaacs, one of her co-workers. Susan said that Kate provides

exceptional care and support to individuals with disabilities, is a superb role model for all staff, and is "the perfect example to everyone in the field of disabilities."

George Farren of Newark, who works at a residence in Bear operated by Chimes of Delaware, received the conference's Advocate Award. This award is for a direct support professional who demonstrates understanding and respect for all people and persistently pursues what is best for the person that he or she serves. George was nominated by Rosalyn Green, the parent of a resident whom he serves. Rosalyn praised George for his commitment to work on her son's behalf and to always keep his interests and likes in mind, noting that George "genuinely cares for [her] son and his roommate."

The winner of the Star Award, Jose Andrada of Harrington, was nominated by two of his supervisors at the Opportunity Center, Inc. in Dover and two of the people he serves. The Star Award was designed for an individual who is a shining example for others and fulfills the demands of his or her work with the highest level of integrity. According to the people who nominated him, Jose consistently displays these attributes; he is dedicated to the happiness of the people he serves and is always brightening the days of the people he works with. Robert Paxson, one of Jose's supervisors, noted that he will "go to the end of the earth" to help the people he serves with any tasks or challenges that occur.

After announcing the three award recipients at the Conference for Direct Support Professionals, Paula Resele, the awards committee chair, presented each with a framed certificate and a cash award in recognition of their outstanding service to people with disabilities.

The mission of the Center for Disabilities Studies is to enhance the lives of individuals and families in Delaware through education, prevention, service and research related to disabilities. The center promotes independence and productivity so individuals and families can fully participate in the life of the community. Additional information is available on the CDS web site, www.udel.edu/cds, or by calling 302.831.6974 or 302.831.4689 TDD.