



The ALL-STAR Newsletter

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Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Jefferson County BDD

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The Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities observed Direct Service Professional Recognition Week at Shaffer Plaza on Sept. 13-19 in honor of 45 employees who help 24 residents at the complex. Also pictured below are management representatives, from left, Kassey Minor, quality developmental disability professional (QDDP); Billie Jo McCartney, home operator; Jonnie Gray, home operator; Phyllis Westfall, QDDP; Natalie Baird, residential manager; Shelley Criss, director of nursing. Not pictured is Heather Schumaker, home operator.

Shaffer Plaza Highlights DSP Recognition Week

The Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities highlighted some very important employees during Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week on Sept. 13-19.

Direct support professionals, or DSP's, provide residential care and related assistance at Shaffer Plaza Apartments for 24 adult residents. The observance included daily inspirational notes and treats, pizza and more tokens of appreciation to thank the estimated 45 employees for all they do. Resident Manager Natalie Baird said DSP's make a difference in the lives of the people they serve and deserve to be honored for their efforts.

"It recognizes our direct care professionals for their patience, knowledge, heart and dedication to individuals in our profession. Often the job goes unrecognized and people don't realize what a difficult job it is, but it is rewarding as well," Baird said. "The smallest of accomplishments is the greatest thing."

Several of the employees shared why they enjoy their roles.

Tyler Bridges, a Toronto resident who has been employed as a residential aide for more than a year, said he was inspired by his mom Brenda, who has worked at the

facility for four years. Although mother and son work in separate buildings, they occasionally spend time together on the job. Bridges

(Continued as DSP)



said they both liked helping people and this job was a perfect fit.

“My mom recommended me because she knows I like helping people. I enjoy it,” he said. “It’s a rewarding factor of seeing them happy and getting them to accomplish a goal. It’s touched me in a way I’ve never felt before.”

His duties include taking care of nine residents, making sure their rooms are clean and that they have their meals, but he also tries to find ways to entertain them since coronavirus has restricted their usually busy schedule of outdoor activities. Bridges, who studied gaming art and design with a minor in graphic art at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, believes he’s found a calling at Shaffer instead.

“I can definitely see myself continuing in this field,” he said.

Rebecca Riffée, a Steubenville resident, has spent the past 19 years as a residential aide and said it takes a real gift to perform the role. She learned about the job from another JCBDD official and has been happy ever since.

“I was interested in it when someone at the School of Bright Promise told me about the place. I started in September of 2000 and I love the clients.”

She said being a DSP means taking good care of the residents, giving them the best and bringing happiness to them.

“You almost have to be gifted to work in a facility like this,” added Riffée. “I didn’t know about this place until I was approached [about the job]. It felt like it’s my family when I’d just started working here. I love working here, I really do.”

Phyllis Westfall, quality developmental disability professional (QDDP), has been with the facility for 30 years and said she has always liked helping people. Her experience began as a volunteer for

the Jefferson County Special Olympics, where she co-chaired the committee in high school with friend Rachel Scott. It was at that time she met Dick Sperry, the Special Olympics organizer. Westfall was also involved with fundraising and donations, leading her to learn about residential services in Carroll County and eventually Shaffer Plaza.

“I’ve always been drawn to caring for people who need it and assisting them to become as independent as possible,” the Toronto resident said. “I started working at Shaffer Plaza as a residential aide in 1990, where I instantly fell in love with the residents. I worked in the aide position for six years, then moved to a home manager position for 24 years.”

During that time, she raised a family and earned a bachelor’s degree in legal studies from California University in Pennsylvania in 2013. Westfall was promoted to QDDP this June and said she still enjoys her work.

“I love the joy you get every day,” Westfall commented. “These guys can brighten your day like no one else.”

Meanwhile, Baird was grateful for the support her staff gives on a daily basis and said she tries to make the facility a warm and welcoming one to all who inhabit it.

“I like making this a place where people want to come and work. We’re recognizing our staff and their hard work and I think it makes things enjoyable for them. My No. 1 thing was to make this a happy place for people to come to work and our residents to come live.”

For more information on a career as a direct service professional, contact (740) 264-7176 or email Human Resources Coordinator Diane Paice at dpaice@jcbdd.com.

October 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Craft Night (Shaffer A&B); Resident’s Choice (C)	2 Walk in SBP Gym (A); Decorate for Halloween (B); Fall Crafts (C)	3 Baking Night (A); Picnic (C)
4 Make Your Own Sundae (A); Game Night (C)	5 Craft Night (Shaffer A&B); Walk on Grounds (C)	6 Parent/Teacher Conferences (SBP); Taco Tuesday (C)	7 Watson (SBP); Movie Night (A); Events at Jeffco Center (B&C)	8 Craft Night (A); Board Games (C)	9 Behavior Team (SBP); Wii Games (A); Pizza Party (C)	10 Baking Night (A&B); Karaoke Night (C)
11 Van Ride (A); Basketball (B); Lazy Sunday (C)	12 Bingo (A); Leaves for Crafts (C); No School (SBP) - Columbus Day	13 Human Rights (SBP); Resident’s Choice (A); Jeffco Center (B&C)	14 Movie Night (A&B); Bake Cookies (C)	15 Pumpkin Judging (SBP); JCBDD Mtg.; Craft (A); Staff’s Choice (B)	16 Curriculum Team (SBP); Walk in Gym (A); Board Games (C)	17 Baking (A); Music (B); Resident’s Choice (C)
18 Ride (A&B); Crafts (C)	19 Craft Night (A); Resident Council (B)	20 Safety Mtg. (SBP); Resident’s Choice (A&C); Picnic (B)	21 Movie (A); Basketball (B); Dinner on Patio (C)	22 End of First 9 Weeks (SBP); Craft (A); Jeffco Center (B&C)	23 PDD (SBP); Walk in Gym (A); Movie (B); Music on Patio (C)	24 Paint Pumpkins (A)
25 Ride (A); Joke Night (B); Resident Council (C)	26 Bingo (A)	27 Halloween POD Parties (SBP); Resident’s Choice (A); Jeffco Center (B); Ride (C)	28 Halloween POD Parties (SBP); Movie Night (A); Leaf-Peeping (B)	29 Crafts (A); Pick Costumes (B); Movie (C)	30 Walk in Gym (A); Halloween Treats (B); Resident’s Choice (C)	31 Halloween Treats (A); Halloween