



# OUTLOOK

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## Letter from the CEO

KATHRYN SUSANO-MORRIS

Here we are, ready for Spring, and we just can't stop the snow and rain. It will soon be Spring and we can enjoy our beautiful countryside.

During Valentine's week, we showed our DSPs some love. Many staff received complimentary messages. Thank you to everyone who participated. There is nothing better than compliments from a co-worker.

During Dr. Martin Luther King's week, Georgie Provance and I volunteered to work at an in-service. It was an opportunity to speak with Governor Shapiro and Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis about the ID/A program and the needed funding.

Fayette Resources is now involved in a relatively new certification program from NADSP. About 52 DSPs are currently enrolled in the training program. Please contact Kelly Knarr at 814-372-2115 for more information.

We are still looking for new ideas/suggestions for training opportunities. Please submit suggestions to your program specialists.

Just a few housekeeping notes. There is a "No smoking" policy in Fayette Resources properties. Smoking is only permitted in designated smoking areas. This is a policy for everyone. We have zero tolerance for smoking, so please comply.

Have a great Memorial Day, and look for upcoming events!



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# CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES: NADSP E-BADGE ACADEMY NOW OFFERED TO FRI DSPS

We at Fayette Resources, Inc. are thrilled to share our latest venture – a new training and certification program for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). Our collaboration with the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) has made this possible. Our organization has always emphasized the importance of lifelong learning, and we believe that offering educational opportunities that are relevant to our services can pave the way for a successful career.

The NADSP certification program is a nationally recognized platform that acknowledges the contributions and competencies of DSPs.

NADSP's Core Competencies align directly with the mission and vision of Fayette Resources, Inc., which include Crisis Prevention and Intervention, Safety, Person-Centered Practice, Health and Wellness, Evaluation and Observation, Communication, Professionalism and Ethics, Community Inclusion, Networking, Empowerment, Advocacy, Community Living Skills and Supports, Education, Training, and Self Development, and Cultural Competence. These competencies are crucial in equipping DSPs with the necessary tools to deliver quality care and support. The training program offers best practices and evidence-based skills that can be applied in the workplace.

DSPs will now have the opportunity to pursue their certification path through the NADSP E-Badge Academy. By earning electronic badges based on specific core competencies and hours of completed accredited education, professionals can work towards a three-tier credential program. Direct Support Professionals can earn certification through this program as a DSP I, DSP II, or DSP III. This certification program aims to recognize and acknowledge the exceptional work of DSPs in supporting individuals with IDD and Mental Health needs.



## A Team of DSPs and Dedication Make a Difference

Leah's involvement in her community has significantly increased in the past year, thanks to the unwavering support of her dedicated DSPs. She has been able to participate in a range of activities, including visiting farms, parks, and stores, all of which have brought her an immense amount of happiness. Wendy, Leah's site coordinator, has worked tirelessly to ensure that her outings are enjoyable. Witnessing Leah's joy while engaging in activities she loves fills us with happiness, and we feel proud of her hard work and the ongoing commitment of her staff.



## BUILDING A BETTER TEAM AND LEARNING SIGN LANGUAGE

Our Allegheny Region provides support to four homes with residents/program participants who are deaf. To support them, we initiated weekly sign language classes in 2019 for not just the participants but also Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), program specialists, and housemates. We assessed their comprehension and discovered that two homes required complete proficiency, while the other two required basic sign language. As a result, we opened up the classes to DSPs as well. One of the participants who excelled in learning basic signs was able to communicate with his housemate.

Numerous staff members successfully achieved that standard at the two houses where proficiency was required. Additionally, many others significantly enhanced their skill sets. As a result of acquiring these skills, the staff has observed decreased instances of miscommunication-related behavioral incidents, established stronger connections with the participants, and communicated more effectively with families and external organizations that work with the deaf community.

In addition to in-person classroom teaching, our organization has implemented online resources to improve the learning experience. Our team regularly participates in bi-annual training sessions focused on the Harry M. Communication Assessments. These assessments evaluate their communication skills and provide suggestions for improving the community and environment of our facilities.

Over the summer, ODP's independent assessors conducted a reassessment of our participants' communication standards based on Harry M. Lawsuit's guidelines. It's commendable that our program received recognition for the significant progress we've made in just five years. The assessors were impressed with the excellent training we provided to our employees and our adherence to environmental and community recommendations.



## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SUPPORT (CPS): UNIONTOWN SALVATION ARMY THRIFT STORE

For over four years, the Uniontown CPS Program has been actively involved in volunteering at the Salvation Army Store. This has resulted in numerous positive relationships and connections being formed. Three groups of individuals volunteer for three days every week, including Brian, Todd, Corey, Amy, Suzanne, Danny, Joe, David, and Dave. Their excellent work ethics and commitment have earned them admiration from both supervisors and fellow volunteers in the store and stockroom areas.

Lora D., a Salvation Army employee, stated, "The Fayette Resources group does such an awesomely wonderful job."

"The help we receive from this wonderful group of people is such a blessing!" exclaimed Amber M., a supervisor.

Salvation Army staff prepares daily or weekly projects and tasks for the group to focus on. Upon arrival at the store, store staff explains the details to our group. They are encouraged by their accompanying Therapeutic Activities Aide/Direct Support Professional to complete the task independently to the best of their ability.

"We have found that giving our folks the opportunity to own each project and understand that they are the ones who are volunteering helps aid them in the confidence they have within," said Darleen K., FRI, DSP. She also said, "they will seek out Salvation Army supervisors' assistance with any questions about their project."

When we first started volunteering at Salvation Army, we hoped the experience would be more than positive. It has grown into so much more. Lasting friendships and acceptance are what most sticks out to us when visiting and hearing accounts about their busy days at the store. Each of our individuals feels they are part of the Salvation Army mission.



### Employee Spotlight

Pamela Anderson

Let me introduce myself; my name is Pamela Anderson, Administrative Assistant for Fayette Resources in the Allegheny Region. I have been employed with Fayette Resources since September 2014.

I obtained a Bachelor's Degree from Carlow University in Early Childhood Education. In addition, I was employed as an Administrative Assistant for an insurance brokerage firm for fourteen years. Combining both experiences, Fayette Resources is a perfect fit for me, and I am passionate about my work.

My two adult sons are Ryan, an environmental civil engineer, and Brayden is in the gas and oil industry. I am very proud of my sons and their success. My husband Bentley is my rock and soul mate.

During my first year at Fayette Resources, I improved operational flow by developing an organized office and facilitating administrative support throughout the office for a smooth day-to-day operation.

A typical day in the office finds me at the front desk, managing a busy, multiline phone system and greeting guests as they enter the office. My most frequent guests are our Direct Support Professionals. I assist them with everything from groceries and obtaining supplies for our houses to answering questions and pointing them in the right direction.

Many office operations fall under my umbrella as well. I manage incoming/outgoing mail and shipments, maintain the schedule for our three conference rooms, distribute company vehicle registrations and insurance cards, and manage vehicle identification inventory. I also oversee and track office supplies and equipment inventory. I assist with webinar training and support residents who work in our office. I also enjoy organizing and planning events with my office co-workers for our annual Halloween and Christmas parties.

Fayette Resources is a true blessing in our communities. Their dedication to providing top-notch resources and services is outstanding. I am proud to work for Fayette Resources and work with dedicated and devoted employees.



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