



NEWS RELEASE

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DSP Appreciation Week at TVS

TVS Honors Employees During DSP Recognition Week

Brevard, NC (September 17, 2019) – Transylvania Vocational Services (TVS) spent last week honoring and celebrating the almost 30 Direct Support Professionals (DSP) employed by the organization with a variety of themed activities, games and food.

DSPs work directly with individuals with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities, with the aim of assisting individuals to lead self-determined lives and be involved in the community.

DSP Recognition Week is part of the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) National Advocacy Campaign, whose mission is to enhance the lives of all people with disabilities who rely on long-term supports and services by obtaining the resources to recruit, train and retain a highly qualified and sustainable workforce.

“The work of DSPs is tremendously important,” said Program Director Carla Hill. “They are the catalyst for empowering individuals to live the lives they choose.”

National DSP week offers employers a chance to give back. At TVS the DSPs are working together in several different areas to create a holistic approach for participants. DSPs assist individuals on the job and in the work force as Employment Specialists; they work in Residential environments where they live with the individuals and support them on reaching personal goals; and they work in the TVS Life Skills and INTERACT day programs, assisting participants with community engagement and activities.

“The job of a DSP is rewarding, but also hard. We hope that this week of recognition made them feel appreciated and empowered,” said Training and Developmental Specialist Emily Owens.

Monday kicked off the week with Jenga games made up of stacked Nutty Bars, a huge Apples to Apples board displayed in the break room, a Guess Who game with DSP baby photos and a “getting to know your DSPs” crossword puzzle.

“We wanted to have a game that would help the DSPs get to know each other,” said HR Assistant Catherine Whitley. “The crossword puzzle allowed them to talk to other DSPs that they normally would not have the time to get to know.”

The Apples to Apples game was left up all week, allowing all TVS employees to participate in matching fun adjectives with names of the DSPs. “It was fun getting to imagine what adjective would end up besides each name when I was translating the game into something interactive,” Owens said.

DSPs received planted succulents from their supervisors on Tuesday and cookies were brought in by TVS DSP, Ashleigh Alquiza. She owns Ashleigh’s Cakery and supplied the sweet treat in celebration of the week.

“I loved being able to bring them in,” said Alquiza. “The chocolate chips are my favorite to make.”

On Wednesday, DSPs were surprised with fresh-baked cinnamon rolls made of TVS' own Mountain Maid brand mix. On Thursday games of Checkers made with mini Oreos and mini Nutter Butters as the checker pieces were left with a note saying that the DSPs were "game-changers" and thanking them for all their hard work and making sure the participants "are never BOARD."

DSPs were also seen wearing their shirts from last year's appreciation week saying, "I am a Direct Support Professional, what's your superpower?"

The week of activities ended with an ice-cream social at lunch. DSPs were served ice-cream with their choice of toppings by members of the management team.

"The best part of the week was the crossword puzzle," said Employment Specialist Tye Hoffman. "I enjoyed getting to know my coworkers better."

"This week is a way to honor their depth of commitment to providing meaningful and intentional experience for participants," said INTERACT Supervisor Jeanette Wayne. "We would not have the ability to support our participants without them."

TVS is a 2019 member of the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) joining over 100 other supporting member organizations and affiliate members.

The NADSP is a national non-profit whose mission is to elevate the status of direct support professionals by improving practice standards; promoting system reform; and advancing their knowledge, skills and values. Please visit <https://www.nadsp.org/> to learn more.

About TVS

TVS is a social enterprise contract manufacturer specializing in the blending and packaging of dry food and beverage products. Founded in 1967, their mission is to provide quality employment, job training and residential & community services to individuals with disabilities and other barriers to employment. For more information go to www.tvsinc.org

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