

2010 DSP of the Year Contest Winners Announced

Last month during the Management Practice Conference and Trade Show held in New Orleans, ANCOR honored Maria Cordova of Adelante Development Center, Albuquerque, NM as the 2010 Direct Support Professional of the Year. The Direct Support Professional Award program was started by ANCOR in 2007 to acknowledge the commitment and courage of the direct support professionals (DSP) who work to ensure community inclusion and full participation for hundreds of thousands of Americans with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities. Cordova was named the national winner among 231 nominations submitted for the competition. Forty additional DSPs received awards as best of the best in their respective states and the District of Columbia.

“There were so many inspiring and deserving nominees that it was difficult to choose the final winners,” said Renee Pietrangelo, ANCOR CEO. “ANCOR takes great pride in recognizing and honoring the remarkable work done by these professionals. We congratulate Maria Cordova and the other 40 for their stand-out achievements.”

ANCOR is pleased to recognize these DSPs for their tremendous work and for the considerable difference they make each day in the lives of people with disabilities, and in the communities they serve. ANCOR will be honoring all of our contest winners in a special issue of LINKS this summer, and plan to present awards to our state winners during the 2010 DSP to DC event taking place in September.

ANCOR salutes the 2010 DSP of the Year class!

ANCOR Release Results of 2009 National DSP Wage Survey

ANCOR recently released the results of its national survey that clearly illustrate the growing need for increased federal funding for low-wage workers who provide supports to people with disabilities. The *2009 Direct Support Professionals Wage Study*, which for a second year was conducted in partnership between ANCOR and the Mosaic Collaborative for Disabilities Public Policy and Practice, imparts a sobering view of a national healthcare workforce in crisis.

A key finding of the report shows that nationally the 2009 average wage for Direct Support Professionals working in private community based agencies is \$10.14/hour compared to \$15.53/hour in state operated facilities. This represents a 51% disparity!

A significant affect of this disparity is a 154.7% higher turnover rate for community DSPs and resulting unquantifiable deleterious emotional and psychic affects on the people served.

“The link between low wages and high turnover is indisputable and the wage disparity among private and public DSPs is unjustified,” said Renee Pietrangelo, CEO of ANCOR. “As demand for the Medicaid services provided by DSPs increases, low wages will continue to prevent private-operated providers from attracting and retaining a qualified workforce. People with disabilities receiving services under Medicaid in their communities deserve to enjoy continuity in their support system.”

This report, again, substantiates and strengthens ANCOR’s claims that a stark disparity exists between state and private DSPs, and provides the statistical data necessary to compliment our continued efforts before Congress to increase Medicaid funding to the states for DSP wages, training, and technology.

Visit www.ancor.org for more information on the 2009 DSP Wage Study.