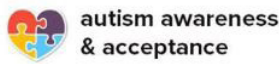


## Autism Awareness/Acceptance Month



Governor Tom Wolf has declared [April as Autism Awareness/Acceptance Month](#). As part of this distinction, ASERT is promoting the *Be Safe* campaign. Each week throughout the month, the organization will offer a list of resources alongside a video describing the use of each. The goal is to spread the message to a varied audience. This campaign is also being forwarded by the Department of Human Services, which will also offer other Autism Awareness/Acceptance Month materials through the DHS social media platforms.

In 2018, National Public Radio ran a series called “Abused and Betrayed,” which highlighted the underreported statistics of sexual victimization against individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In response to these alarming statistics, ASERT collaborated with the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center at the Medical University of South Carolina to develop the *Be Safe* campaign to provide information to individuals, caregivers, and professionals about the prevention of sexual abuse and sexual assault. Topics of the materials include tips on how to teach body awareness and body safety, teaching relationship building skills, and resources on how to identify and report abuse in children and adults.

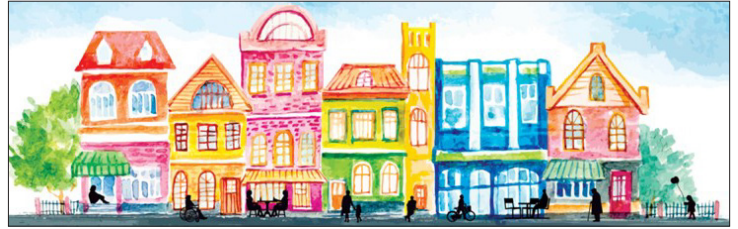
As part of this initiative to prevent sexual abuse, ASERT will also promote the *Ask, Listen, Respect* pledge. The concept of the pledge is for people who work with individuals who have autism or intellectual disabilities to **ask** before touching or providing physical support, **listen** to what the individual tells them, and **respect** the individual’s wishes (if they don’t want help, or want someone else to help them). The campaign helps promote body autonomy for individuals with I/DD.

For more information about the *Be Safe* campaign and for sexual abuse prevention resources, visit [www.paautism.org/besafe](http://www.paautism.org/besafe). You can download an *Ask, Listen, Respect* pledge card at [Be Safe: Ask, Listen, Respect Pledge Card](#).



# ODP News

April 2019  
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## State Center Employee of the Year Announced



photo by Julia Sloan

All nominees are shown, from left: seated, Tammy Gilley, Beatrice McKinley, and Eric Spoke; standing, Julia Posten, Edward Enright Jr., Khadijah Weatherly, Brittany Fox, Director of State Centers Kevin Dressler, Paul Blackner, George Keyser, Deputy Secretary Kristin Ahrens, David Galbraith, Dan Mitnick, David O'Brien, and LaLinh Kung. (Not pictured: William Spiegelberg and Jolene Howell) Nominee Roberta Ahrens is shown to top right.

***Shared at the 2019 State Center Employee of the Year Banquet: The 4 C's of how to get competitive integrated employment:***

- ***Conversations (with individuals, employers, neighbors)***
- ***Collaboration (ask for help, resources)***
- ***Clarity (even if a job doesn't work, you get a clearer picture and make adjustments)***
- ***Celebration (celebrate any steps, even small wins)***

***— Hastie LeFevre, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation***

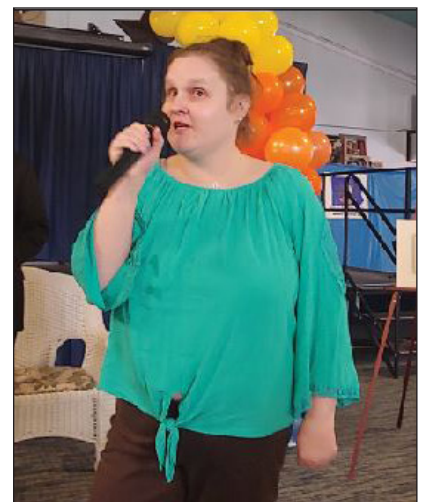
ODP's commitment to Employment First across our programs was evident at the State Center Employee of the Year awards ceremony held at Ebensburg Center on March 13.

Employment leads and other staff recognized nominees who represented Ebensburg, Polk, Selinsgrove, and White Haven. The employment success stories shared at this event exemplify the dedication and commitment ODP has in fulfilling Governor Wolf's executive order to make Pennsylvania an Employment First State.

A special congratulations must be given to Brittany Fox of Selinsgrove, recipient of the State Center Employee of the Year, and to all the nominees.



Ebensburg Center staff hosted a successful, celebratory banquet.

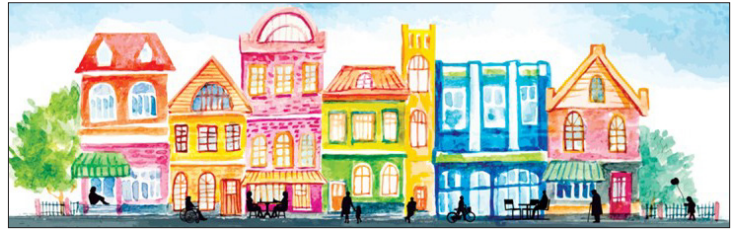


**2019 State Center Employee of the Year Brittany Fox speaks to attendees. Brittany has three jobs at the center and works for Knoebel's Amusement Park.**



# ODP News

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## CAPS Pilot Launched!

The Community Autism Peer Specialist (CAPS) Pilot is recruiting 10 individuals, age 18-26, with a diagnosis of autism to become trained peer supporters. These individuals help others diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) to achieve personal wellness and community integration.

This is a joint venture between The Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, Community Behavioral Health, ASERT, and the Philadelphia Autism Project. Community Behavioral Health of Philadelphia adapted a similar peer specialist model that existed in mental health services to meet the needs of people with autism. Valerie Paradiz, Ph.D., executive director of the Autistic Global Initiative of the Autism Research Center served as a consultant.



The CAPS pilot, which will begin in June, hopes to bolster the self-advocacy movement. Those trained become certified as peer specialists and three will be chosen for paid positions. If successful, the pilot program will be replicated statewide.

“CAPS is an exciting undertaking,” said Nina Wall, Director of the Bureau of Autism Services. “For many years, Individuals with ASD have expressed a need for the development of peer to peer support. I am hopeful that this pilot introduces another approach to assisting individuals learn strategies to support wellness and growth.”

ASERT will develop outcome measures. The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is funding the program.

## Health Risk Screening Tool to Roll Out in Summer 2019

In July, the Health Care Quality Units (HCQUs) begin implementing the Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST), a web-based application developed to screen for health risks associated with intellectual/developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, disabilities associated with aging, and traumatic brain injury. The HRST measures health risk, not disability.

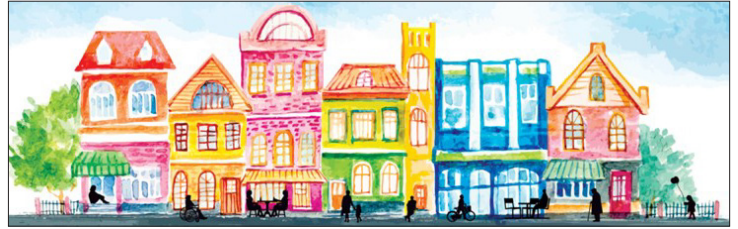
The HRST produces suggested action steps in the form of service and training considerations that inform supporters on how to respond to objectively identified risks. It is intended to empower supporters with information needed to more effectively oversee the health and welfare of individuals in our service system.

The HRST will be rolled out to those individuals receiving waiver or base-funded residential services. The full roll out of the HRST will occur over an approximate one-year period and in six phases. Each phase will span two consecutive months, beginning with those at SIS Needs Level 7. Look for more details and training schedules through ODP Announcements and on MyODP.

# ODP News

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## Internships Are a Big Part of Project SEARCH

Goodwill Keystone Area is the community rehabilitation provider for five Project SEARCH programs in Allentown, Harrisburg, Carlisle, and Reading. Project SEARCH is a business-led, employment program that takes place entirely in the workplace. The program is a collaboration among partner agencies including the business partner, a vocational rehabilitation provider and a community rehabilitation provider.

Recently, five interns gathered at Project SEARCH Cumberland/Perry in Carlisle for their second internship rotation to practice discerning between a legitimate employment ad and a suspicious one. Afterward, they left for their assigned work sites. These interns work at Big Spring Senior Center in Newville, Cumberland/Perry MH/IDD department, and the Children and Youth Services department. Two will work at the Bosler Library. Other partnering sites include Claremont (dietary, housekeeping, laundry, and activities); County Commissioner's Office Mailroom, Archives Department, and Information Management Technology Office.



**Pictured, from left: Thomas MacDonald, intern Haley Wickard, intern Natalie Crull, Brenda Thomas, intern Harry Spilker, intern Sean Damiano, and Kristy Lanser.**

According to Christine Roggenbaum, Services Director Southern Region, Mission Services, Goodwill Keystone Area, preparation for the work requires two weeks class time within the program and a week of internships. During this time, interns learn about team building, technology, maintaining employment, financial literacy, and other independent living skills. Locally, Goodwill has two Project SEARCH programs in county government. Goodwill Keystone Area has partnered with Dauphin County for the past four years. Members of a previous class had 4 out of 5 young adults gain employment upon graduation. Staff is still working with the fifth individual to obtain employment.

"We were able to replicate the Dauphin County Government program in Cumberland/Perry County Government and we are now in the middle of our second class there. They will graduate in June," Roggenbaum said. "We are partnered with the County as well as the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. A requirement of Project SEARCH International is that 75% of the participants must be diagnosed with an intellectual disability. We have excellent partners with the Supports Coordination Organizations in these counties as well."

Most Project SEARCH programs are geared toward youth transitioning out of high school and they are usually in a hospital/medical setting. These two programs in county government are for those individuals who have graduated high school. Learn more about [Project SEARCH](#).



# ODP News

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## Project SEARCH Intern Showcases Artwork

(Submitted by Goodwill Keystone Area)

Harry Spilker isn't just a Project SEARCH® intern, he's also an artist!

An avid photographer, Harry enjoys digitally altering his photos using various iPad apps to manipulate light, colors, and textures to great effect. A selection of Harry's photographs are currently being displayed at Square Bean Coffee in Carlisle. A "Meet the Artist" reception at Square Bean on March 1st was hosted by the Charles Bruce Foundation, a Carlisle-based non-profit dedicated to supporting visual, written, and musical arts in and around Cumberland County. His work will be on display at the shop through April.

He has an [online gallery called H-Force Photography](#).

Harry first got the attention of staff at the coffee shop during one of his coffee breaks from an internship at Cumberland County Courthouse through Project SEARCH. He was visiting Square Bean and met Pat LaMarche, a board member of the Foundation, who was impressed with his artwork and helped to coordinate the exhibit at the coffee house.

Harry's interest in photography began about six years ago, while he was a student at Camp Hill High School. His father, Spike, noticed that Harry had been borrowing his phone to take pictures and encouraged Harry to continue with photography. Now, father and son share their mutual enjoyment of photography by going out on special picture-taking trips together.

Harry's artwork (both photos and paintings – he's multi-talented) has won awards and has been displayed at numerous locations throughout Central Pennsylvania over the past few years. His unique style has even garnered his works comparisons to those of luminaries Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat.

In addition to artistic growth, Harry has demonstrated significant personal growth as well through his participation with Project SEARCH. He has honed new skills that are helping him become more independent, and he has made great strides in his communication and interpersonal development. Currently, he is an intern at the Cumberland County Children and Youth Center. He will be among the Project SEARCH of Cumberland/Pretty County June graduation class.

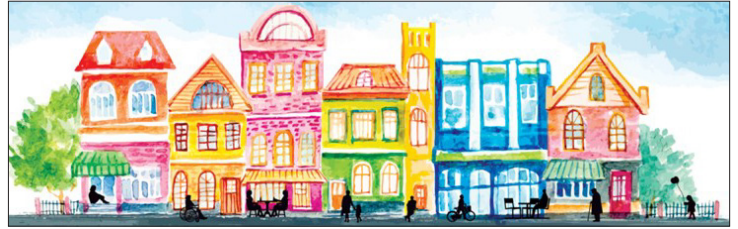


**Harry Spilker's photography is on display at Square Bean Coffee, 25 W. High St., Carlisle through April.**



# ODP News

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## QA&I Annual Report for Self-Assessment Released

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) recently announced the release of the [Quality Assessment and Improvement \(QA&I\) Annual Statewide Report of Self-Assessments for Cycle 1 Year 2 \(C1Y2\), FY 2018-2019](#).

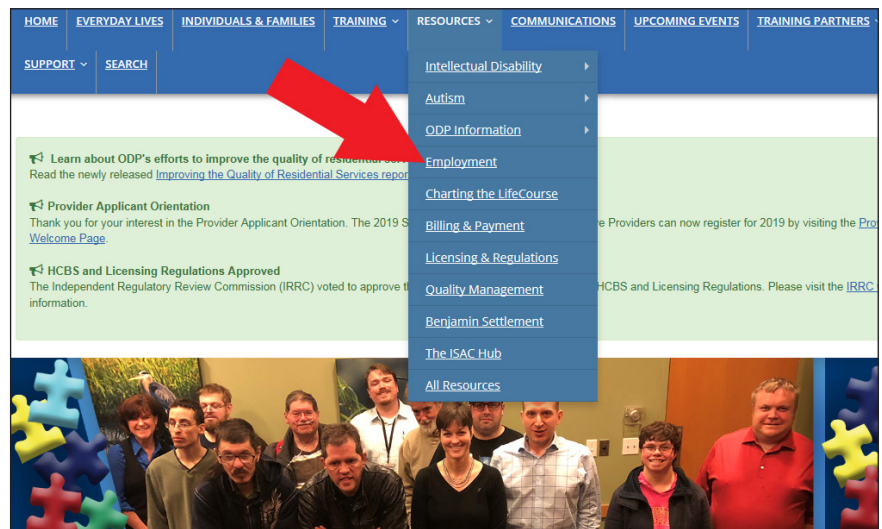
Through the QA&I process, a comprehensive quality management review of county programs, and professionals throughout our service system who deliver services and supports to individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders is conducted. As part of that process, all Administrative Entities, Supports Coordination Organizations, and Providers are expected to complete self-assessments of their performance on the provision of services and supports annually. Self-Assessments evaluate key quality metrics and the implementation of Everyday Lives: Values in Action. This report includes a summary and analysis of statewide results of self-assessments conducted in July and August 2018, sorted by geographic region.

## MyODP Dedicates Page to Employment Resources

[MyODP](#) now features a resource page dedicated to employment, with resource bundles categorized by individuals and families per waiver, as well as by provider roles in the service system.

ODP will update material on the web page as it continues its efforts, in accordance with the [Employment First Act \(62 P.S. §§ 3401-3409\)](#) to help individuals obtain competitive integrated employment. An employment outcome is the first and preferred outcome for individuals who receive services funded through the ODP waivers or base-funding and

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation services. Employment provides many benefits to the individual including, but not limited to: increased opportunities for economic self-sufficiency, an opportunity to contribute to the community, a chance to build a network of social relationships, and the creation of opportunities for lifelong learning. An employment outcome is also consistent with the overall goals and recommendations in *Everyday Lives: Values in Action*, the document that provides guiding principles for ODP.

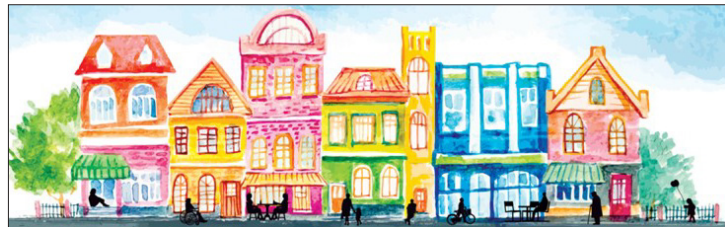


## Learn About WRAP® Services and How to Build a Peer Workforce

Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery is offering a free workshop May 7-9 at 118 Grant St., Franklin, for anyone who wants to learn about the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP®) and begin to incorporate it into their life to improve personal wellness and achieve an improved quality of life. This workshop also lays a broad foundation for building a peer workforce. [Register online](#).

# ODP News

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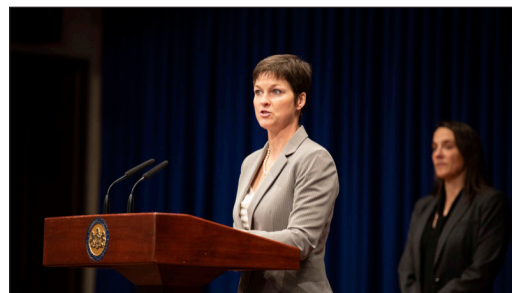


## Secretary Miller Highlights ODP Residential Report

Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Teresa Miller announced a report on March 20 that highlights the department's commitment to maintaining high-quality services to assure the health and well-being of nearly 12,000 individuals with developmental disabilities who reside in community-based homes across the commonwealth.

The newly released [\*Improving the Quality of Residential Services Report\*](#) includes planned and ongoing initiatives to improve the quality of care people receive in their communities.

[View audio, video, and photos of the event.](#)



**Secretary Teresa Miller and Deputy Secretary Kristin Ahrens announce the report highlighting improvements in residential services for Pennsylvanians with intellectual disabilities and autism.**

## Information, Upcoming Events, & Training

### Disability History and Action Consortium Wins National Award

The Western Pennsylvania Disability History and Action Consortium has been selected to receive the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) 2019 Hervey B. Wilbur Historic Preservation Award.

The award recognizes significant contributions to historic preservation in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Western Pennsylvania Disability History and Action Consortium is being recognized for its efforts to preserve and honor the struggle of people with disabilities to attain human and civil rights.

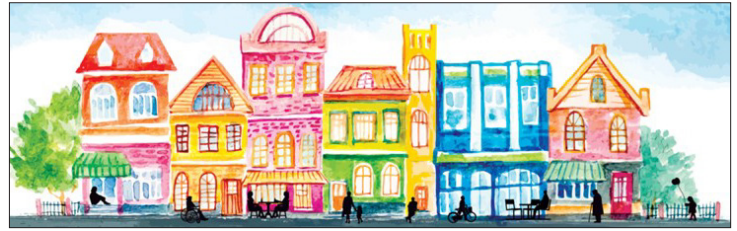
### Webinar on Community Living

The webinar, "Being 'of the Community': Exploring and Celebrating Community Living for Adults with IDD," will take place April 16, 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. The webinar, edited by Amy Hewitt, PhD, and Kelly Nye-Lengerman, PhD, is an exploration of how to create ideal conditions to facilitate community living and participation for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The editors and presenters will share a model of community living for adults with IDD that includes ever-evolving dimensions related to both the place of community and the feeling of community. Detailed explanations of a number of book's core topics areas will be discussed [Register for the webinar here](#).

We'd love to hear from you.  
Email us at [RA-PWODP\\_OUTREACH@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PWODP_OUTREACH@pa.gov) with news or suggestions!

# ODP News

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## Summary of ODP Communications Issued March 2019, With Links



1. ODP 19-020: [Update Regarding Electronic Visit Verification \(EVV\) Information and Department of Human Services \(DHS\) Survey](#)
2. ODP 19-021: [Training Opportunity: Consider Communication](#)
3. ODP 19-022: [Required by March 24--Transportation Trip Cost Report for Provider Type 26](#)
4. [Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month](#)
5. ODP 19-023: [Office of Developmental Programs' Virtual Training Offerings April, May, & June 2019 UPDATE](#)
6. ODP 19-024: [Open for Public Comment-- Proposed Rates for Community Participation Support and Transportation Trip for Fiscal Year 2019-2020](#)
7. ODP 19-025: [Now Available -- Updated ID/Waiver Employment Service Definition Question and Answer Document and ID/A Waiver Employment Service Definition Quick Guide](#)
8. ODP 19-026: [ASD Seminar 2019-- Being an Informed Supporter: What You Should Know About Autism](#)
9. ODP 19-027: [Spring 2019 AAW Workshop Succeeding in an Environment of Change: Exploring the Evolving Dynamic of the Adult Autism Waiver \(AAW\)](#)
10. [Spring 2019 State Employment Leadership Network \(SELN\) Shorts Series](#)
11. ODP 19-028: [KEPRO's New SIS Assessment Scheduling System Training Registration is Now Open](#)
12. ODP 19-029: [Quality Investigation Unit at Temple University](#)
13. ODP 19-030: [2019-20 Fiscal Year \(FY\) Renewal Guidance](#)
14. ODP 19-031: [College of Employment Services ACRE Update--Discounted Rate Extended](#)
15. ODP 19-032: [Launch of the Quality Assessment and Improvement \(QA&I\) Process for the Adult Autism Waiver \(AAW\)](#)
16. ODP 19-033: [ODP Releases 2017-2018 Annual Data Report](#)
17. ODP 19-034: [Requirements Regarding the Number of Individuals Served in Licensed Facilities that Provide Community Participation Support or Day Habilitation Services](#)
18. [Money Follows the Person \(MFP\) Initiative Dual Diagnosis Professional Conference Series: Charting the LifeCourse April 26, 2019](#)
19. ODP 19-035: [ACRE Basic Certification Training for Providers of Employment Services](#)
20. ODP 19-036: [Process To Implement Participant Direction Transfers From the Adult Autism Waiver to an ID/A Waiver](#)
21. [ODP Newsletter March 2019](#)
22. ODP 19-037: [June ACRE Basic Certification Training for Providers of Employment Services--Two Dates](#)
23. [State Employment Leadership Network \(SELN\) Shorts: The 30-Minute Series](#)
24. 19-038: [Now Available--Registration for Initial Certified Investigator Courses and Peer Review Course](#)
25. ODP 19-039: [AAW SCO and Provider Contact Information for the Quality Assessment and Improvement Process](#)