



## Governor Wolf Proclaims DSP Recognition Week

Governor Wolf signed a proclamation announcing September 8-14, 2019 as “Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week” to express gratitude to DSPs. [Read the full proclamation.](#)

“Thank you to all Direct Support Professionals,” Deputy Secretary Kristin Ahrens shared. “You are crucial to helping individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities achieve everyday lives. We celebrate the immeasurable difference you make in their lives.”

The American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) named Gayle Feron as Pennsylvania’s DSP of the Year. Gayle is an employment specialist with Keystone Human Services.

“Gayle is dedicated to true community inclusion,” said Charles Hooker, President and CEO of Keystone Human Services. “Every day she is working to help people pursue their goals and make sure people’s voices are heard. We’re proud that ANCOR has recognized her with this honor.” Learn more: [Keystone Human Services.](#)



**Governor Wolf presents Gayle Feron with a copy of his proclamation designating DSP Recognition Week.**

## Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Month

— Contributed by Marlinda Smith, LCSW, BCD, NFCC- ODP, Lead Dual Diagnosis

September is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Month. Individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) have very specific needs. It is an invisible disability and comes with key issues related to intellectual functioning due to brain damage.

Since FASD is an invisible disability, people often have much higher expectations of the individual than are reasonable, given his or her actual intellectual abilities. The individual with FASD often may have good or even above-average expressive communication abilities, which can convince others that they don’t have a disability at all. The reality is that often their receptive communication skills are very low and out of sync with their expressive skills. Also, when it comes to receiving, processing, and responding to information, individuals with FASD can become anxious at even the most basic tasks or expectations.

Using verbal intervention strategies can be very confusing for people who support people with FASD. If you’re part of a crisis intervention team for an individual with FASD, you should be sure to raise the issue of specific verbal intervention tips for that person and how they would fit into a crisis intervention plan.

Here are some strategies to help:

- Use as few words as possible.
- Be nonjudgmental.
- Don’t get frustrated that you just dealt with this same type of issue yesterday. It may seem like the same issue, but to the person it’s likely a completely unique and unrelated crisis.
- Be extra attentive to your nonverbal communication. The person with FASD may not understand all the words you’re using when they’re going through a crisis, but they are likely tuned in to your appearance and sound.



## ODP invites you to the 2019 Technology Innovation Conference



The Office of Development Programs 2019 Technology Innovation Conference will demonstrate the latest innovations, inventions, and ideas to build a strong support foundation for individuals with disabilities throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The conference will take place in two locations: Tuesday, Oct. 8, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, and Thursday, Oct. 24, at the Valley Forge Convention Center, King of Prussia. The event is free, however lunch will not be provided.

John Martin, former Director of Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, will present “Searching for Prophets, Making Ohio a Technology First State.”

Other topics will include “Transportation and Sustainable Technology Solutions,” presented by Shaleea Shields of Merakey; “Becoming a Technology First Provider,” presented by Greg Wellems of Keystone Human Services; and an interactive “Technology Greenhouse” featuring exhibitors demonstrating their services, unique engineering feats, and their impact.

Visit online to get more details and to register:

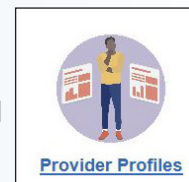
<https://columbus.regfox.com/technology-innovation-conference>.



Brandon recently installed an epic 15-by-30-foot mural on the side of the Stokes Millworks building, corner of Fourth and Sayford streets, Harrisburg. Brandon has worked on his mural for several months through the Center for Creative Works, an art studio focusing on developing creative workplace potential and cultural identity for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Brandon’s work is part of Sprocket Mural Works’ 2019 Harrisburg Mural Festival. [Learn more](#).

## Phase 2 of Provider Profiles Begins

ODP’s Provider Profile Project has launched! Phase 1 of ODP’s Provider Profile Project is live on MyODP.org at: <https://www.myodp.org/mod/page/view.php?id=22049>. Phase 2 has started and ODP is reaching out to additional qualified providers with instructions to complete their Provider Summaries. ODP will send a Provider Profile QuestionPro Survey to provider agencies, using the list of providers whose Quality Assessment & Improvement (QA&I) Cycle 1, Year 1 Comprehensive Reports are also available online on the Provider Profiles website. To provide information about your agency to individuals and families in a timely way, be sure to complete and return your Provider Summary QuestionPro Survey by the due date listed through your email notification.





## Nicole Returns to Penn State



**Nicole Courtney continues her post-secondary education at Penn State Harrisburg this fall, pursuing a certification in customer relations.**

This fall, 25-year-old Nicole Courtney returns to the Penn State Harrisburg campus to continue her post-secondary work in the career studies program. This inclusive post-secondary program, with the support of a grant from the [D.R.E.A.M. Partnership](#), provides the opportunity for students with intellectual disabilities to attend college. D.R.E.A.M. is an acronym for Dreams Realized through Education Aspiration Model.

A certification from the National Retail Foundation is part of the first-year coursework in customer relations, personal management, safety in the work place, marketing and merchandising. In addition, students may attend any academic course offered at Penn State Harrisburg on an audit basis.

Peer mentors are a huge asset to the program as students are learning, studying and organizing together. The peer mentors are full-time students on campus and attend classes with the career studies student. Participation in any campus wide activities is highly encouraged and the mentors play a

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## Information, Events, and Resources

**HCBS-KNOW THE FACTS:** The Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, in partnership with Disability Rights Pennsylvania, Self-Advocates United as One (SAU1), and the Pittsburgh Center for Autistic Advocacy, is offering face-to-face training on the HCBS (Home and Community Based Service) Final Rule. Learn more and register at <https://sites.temple.edu/iodef/forms/hcbs-know-the-facts/>



### **INCLUSIVE DENTAL CARE:** As recom-

mended by the National Council on Disability (NCD), all U.S. dental schools must now revamp their curricula and training programs to be inclusive of patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD). Changes for the predoctoral dental, dental hygiene, and dental assistant programs are required to take effect by July 1, 2020, with changes to the orthodontics programs required by Jan. 1.



## Penn State Student

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large part in this aspect as well.

During the second year, students are working in a practicum locally while attending classes. Job shadows during the first year enable students to select a type of job that might fit their skills and personality. This experience leads to a practicum where they will have a job in the community. Nicole was offered a practicum with the Alumni Development Office on campus. She is very excited about this opportunity because it will allow her to utilize her social skills to benefit the university, possibly expanding awareness of the Career Studies program at Penn State Harrisburg.

Nicole explains that she has Williams syndrome, defined by [WilliamsSyndrome.org](http://WilliamsSyndrome.org) as “a genetic condition present at birth, characterized by medical problems, including cardiovascular disease, developmental delays, and learning challenges. These often occur side by side with striking verbal abilities, highly social personalities, and an affinity for music.” She is a member of Spectrum Friends of Greater Harrisburg and the Phi Mu Fraternity.

A transportation service, which takes Nicole to school by 8 a.m. and back home around 4:30 p.m., has made the whole experience possible for her and her family. Although living on campus is a choice Nicole is not ready to make, she can eat, review coursework, exercise and socialize while on campus.

Is there homework? “A lot,” she says with a sigh and a nod, “but I do it during the day.” Which is a good plan since Nicole needs to have free time when “The Bachelorette” airs on TV. “It’s my guilty pleasure,” she admits.



### International Week of the Deaf (IWD)

September 23-29

**More than 70 million people worldwide are deaf, according to the World Federation of the Deaf.**

**Some ways to support the Deaf Community include:**

- **Spend time with and learning from the Deaf Community about their culture**
- **Study American Sign Language**
- **Learn about types, degrees, and causes of hearing loss, and**
- **Discover resources within your community to support the Deaf Community**

The Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing can assist you with finding Deaf events, ASL classes near you, Deaf resources in PA, and provide consultations. Reach out to [ODHH@pa.gov](mailto:ODHH@pa.gov). For any questions on the Communication Corner, please contact the Special Populations Unit at [RA-ODPDeafServices@pa.gov](mailto:RA-ODPDeafServices@pa.gov)

**Save  
the  
Date!**

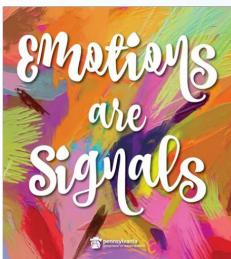
The Everyday Lives Conference will take place Tuesday, Jan. 7, through Thursday, Jan. 9, 2020, at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, 325 University Drive, Hershey, PA. (Jan. 7 pre-conference day). More details to come!



## 2019 Dual Diagnosis Event: ‘Recovery is possible’



Clockwise, from top left: Jarred Ebert (ODP), Asia Pecora (Lancaster County Behavioral Health and Developmental Services), Jessica Lesniewski (Westmoreland County BH/DS), and Michele O’Toole (ODP) present “Communication Collaboration: Supporting Transition Across the Lifespan” at the statewide Dual Diagnosis Conference; keynote Julie P. Gentile discusses advances and possibilities for the use of technology (telepsychiatry) in treatment; Amy Alford (ODP) presents “Navigating the Complexities of Meaningful and Functional Communication, presented with ODP’s Krista Lewis; and Dr. Cherpes (ODP), Gina Calhoun, Lori Young (of Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery) and Marlinda Smith (ODP).



The statewide Dual Diagnosis Conference took place August 21 and 21 in Altoona, PA. The Office of Developmental Programs and the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services presented the two-day capacity-building event for those who help support individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, including autism, and mental health challenges as they lead everyday lives. ODP Deputy Secretary Kristin Ahrens kicked off the event with a message emphasizing that recovery is possible. She shared information about collaborative initiatives such as the Certified Autism Peer Specialists, Dual Diagnosis Treatment Teams, and a Residential Treatment Facility pilot program.

Keynote speakers included Julie P. Gentile, M.D., a professor of psychiatry and project director for Ohio’s Coordinating Center of Excellence in Mental Illness/Intellectual Disability; Angela Moreland, Ph.D., assistant professor at the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center at the Medical University of South Carolina; and Gina Calhoun, Doors to Wellbeing Program Director. Find dual diagnosis resources at [myodp.org/course/index.php?categoryid=207](http://myodp.org/course/index.php?categoryid=207).

If your organization is hosting webinars that anyone can attend, please send information to:  
RA-PWODP\_OUTREACH@pa.gov



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



1. ODP 19-101 [PATC 2019 Registration is Open!](#)
2. Temple Hiring: [Adjunct Instructor: Medication Administration](#)
3. ODP 19-102: Now Available: [Amendments to the Consolidated, Community Living, and P/FDS Waiver Submitted to CMS](#)
4. ODPANN 19-103 PA Community of Practice Work Groups 2019-2020 (AE only)
5. ODP 19-104: [Agency with Choice \(AWC\) Financial Management Service \(FMS\) Organization Listing](#)
6. ODP 19-105 [Office of Vocation Rehabilitation \(OVR\) Contact Information for ID/Autism Coordinators Updated 8-14-19](#)
7. New Issue! [Positive Approaches Journal: Meaningful Community Engagement](#)
8. ODP 19-104 REISSUE: [Agency with Choice Financial Management Service Organization Listing](#)
9. ODP 19-108: [Medication Administration Fall 2019 Classes and Outage Ending](#)
10. ODP 19-107: [Now Available Version 3 of the Community Participation Support Question and Answer Document](#)
11. 2019 [PATC Full Announcement Updated](#)
12. ODP 19-110: [e-CIS Business Partner Access Key Registration Dates](#)
13. [Listening Tour Announcements 2019](#)
14. ODP 19-109: [Office of Developmental Programs' Virtual Training Offerings September 2019](#)
15. ODP 19-111: [ODP Responds to Nationwide Shortage of Tuberculin Skin Test Antigens](#)
16. Department of Human Services Announces [Three-Year Plan to Close Two State Centers](#), Transition Residents to Community Living

## Autism Resources Expand Outreach to Share ODP Information

The Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations (BSASP) and ASERT hosted a resource table at the recent [PA Community on Transition Conference](#) and all attendees (about 715) received information about ASERT in their conference packets. Also, ASERT hosted a Live Facebook Training called "Transition Resources for Individuals with Autism" on the first night of the conference. This Facebook Live appeared in 4,100 people's timelines, with more than 1,680 unique viewers. BSASP presented the "Importance of Skill Building to Support Seamless Transition to Adulthood for Individuals with Autism" on Day 1 of the conference. Next steps include dissemination of ASERT Transition Resources and outreach to Transition Coordinators, Intermediate Units, and County Administrative Entities Offices in collaboration with other ODP offices, and determining other partners (i.e. County Assistance Offices) to assist with dissemination.