



*We are essential*

***At Home. At Work. At Play***

September 21, 2020  
Volume 2 - DSP Week

# A Word from CEO, Jake Jones



## DSP Week 2020

In a tumultuous and turbulent year, the Direct Support Professionals at The Arc Gloucester have been steadfast in their commitment to the agency. This week, we recognize how essential they are to our Mission and Vision. We celebrated #DSPWeek2020 last week and are so excited to share some of our efforts in this eNewsletter.

Our DSPs choose to show up to work each day because they want to make a difference in the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Each day and night, they report to work with energy, enthusiasm, and above all else, love. No matter the circumstance, our DSPs provide reliability and stability to the individuals we serve, and we could not be prouder to call them our DSPs. We are fortunate that so many of our DSP staff members have been with The

Arc Gloucester for so many years. For example, we shared Samantha Smith-Domerski's story on our blog on Thursday. She has been a dedicated staff member for many years, beginning as a DSP and ascending to now the Manager of Heather Ridge! Samantha is a great example of our commitment to promote good staff members where there are opportunities.

There is, however, a very real shortage of DSPs nationwide. This is the number one issue in our industry. The national turnover rate of DSPs remains extremely high as the industry struggles to recruit and retain these essential employees. Industry leaders are working hard to advocate for better wages, development paths and global recognition of the important/vital roles DSPs have in the daily support of the individuals we serve.

Without our DSP staff, we would not be able to support the individuals we serve. I am proud to lead an agency with such amazing DSPs and am proud to have been a part of the DSP recognition efforts last week!

Thank you to the DSPs of The Arc Gloucester; and everywhere there is an individual in need of supports.

Yours truly,  
Jake J. Jones, CEO

### Highlights in this edition

● We recognize our DSPs

● Important Facts about DSP Staffing Today

● Samantha's Story: From DSP to Manager



# The Arc Gloucester Leadership recognizes our DSPs

On Tuesday, our Leadership Team visited our residential programs to drop off a sweet surprise and personally thank our DSPs for all they do. Below are some pictures of the visits and some of the personal thank you notes from our ELT!

"A big **THANK YOU** to all of the DSPs at The Arc Gloucester for your continued efforts and outstanding care provided to the individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities entrusted to your care. Your commitment and dedication is appreciated by everyone!"  
-Brenda Powell, Assistant Executive Director

"I can't thank our DSPs enough for their hardwork, day in and day out. In my previous position as Dir. of Public Affairs, I had the opportunity to see our individuals interact with DSPs at special events and activities. Now, as Assistant Executive Director, I have the ben-

efit of working closely with our family support programs. In every instance, it is clear how much our DSPs genuinely care about the individuals who utilize our programs and services...Thank you so much for all you do!"

-Lisa Conley, Assistant Executive Director

"I want to take this opportunity to **thank each and every one of you for your outstanding care** and support of our Arc Gloucester individuals....You have been working in a global pandemic that we could never have fathomed. This agency has maintained amazing care and safety of our individuals because of you. There is nothing we can do to thank you enough for what you do day in and day out!"

-Sandee Miller, Chief Compliance Officer





# The DSP Staffing Shortage

## A National Crisis

It is no secret that DSP staffing in the US is at a critical level. We struggle to find and retain DSP Staff, and they are an integral part of our agency.

- The National Turnover rate for DSPs is 45%\*
- Approx. 574,200 new DSPs are needed each year to combat this turnover.
- 9% of all DSP positions go unfilled

Without adequate DSP Staff, The Arc Gloucester cannot function at optimal levels. As an agency, we are constantly seeking ways to remedy the shortage on both an agency and national level. We've done some research, and found the following eight steps to recruit and retain DSP staff!

1. Treat Your DSPs like Partners
2. Increase Transparency around the decision making process.
3. Leadership should be visible to DSPs.
4. Consider creating a DSP leadership team.
5. Provide education on the conditions and disorders they may be working with.
6. Provide training for upper management and supervisors.
7. Inform DSPs of opportunities to grow within your agency.
8. Hire the right people.



When you hire the right people, you get a team as amazing as The Arc Gloucester. If you know someone who would make a great DSP, please send them to our website to apply!

[www.thearcgloucester.org](http://www.thearcgloucester.org)



# From DSP to Manager: Samm's Story

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## A DSPs Perspective

Last week, we wanted to highlight a member of our staff who embodies The Arc Gloucester Mission & Vision, and brings extraordinary passion and drive to her job each day. It is important that DSPs know there is growth for them within our agency, and we could think of no better example of such growth than Samantha Smith-Domeraski!

On our blog, you'll read about Samm's incredible dedication and love for The Arc Gloucester. You'll read about her beginning as a DSP in November 2016, and ascending to Manager of Heather Ridge Apartments this year. It is an inspiring and uplifting story you're sure to love!

Samm is a shining example of what it takes to grow in this industry. A "Can Do" attitude, strength to get through tough times, knowledge to lean on her support system, and a desire to learn and grow! Samm says, "I never once looked at any of my positions here as just a job. The amount of love I have for ALL of these individuals is what makes every single step that led me to this position worth it."



## Tips for Current DSPs

DSPs, new and seasoned, know the job is not without its challenges. Willingness and ability to adapt to changing circumstances, new individuals, different conditions and more are needed to thrive in a position like this. We asked Samm for some tips on growing as a DSP.


"We are a family, a team. We genuinely want the same thing--what is best for the individual and for each other." Keep this mindset, she says, and you'll be well prepared for challenges and bumps along the road.

"Even if your hands are shaking and you're afraid of failing, do it anyway! You have a support team right here. Just reach out. Ask the questions. Ask for help. Do NOT let your pride get in the way." Samm reminds DSPs to take it one step at a time. Learn with the agency, lean on your supports, and strive for growth.

For more helpful tips on growing as a DSP in the field, head over to our blog and read Samm's full story!

**The Arc Gloucester is committed to the growth and development of our DSPs. For more information on training and development into a leadership role, contact the Main Office at 856-848-8648.**





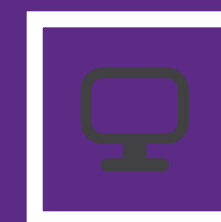
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