

celebrate DSP WEEK

FAMILY SEPTEMBER 9-15

WE ARE WORTH IT NOMINEE

Jennifer Zingone

UCP is proud to nominate Program Supervisor/ Specialist Jennifer Zingone for the PAR "We Are Worth It" award in the category of Frontline Manager. There is no one who more exemplifies the ideals of this award.

Jen has always shown a deep personal commitment to the people she serves and she has consistently made deep, meaningful connections with individuals, their families, and providers throughout her 18 years with UCP.



Carol and Jen, all smiles

A prime example of her approach was evidenced just this year by the above-and-beyond level of support she provided to the family of a young individual attending her program whose health suddenly started on a sharp decline last December. Sadly, precious Molly soon required hospice care. Jennifer provided support to this young woman's shattered parents and regularly visited her in her home as she was far too sick to continue to come to program. Jennifer and her entire team supported Molly and her family by continually visiting after program hours. Because of this, both Molly and her parents found themselves surrounded by people who knew and loved them until she passed on. Jen continues to be a loving support for these grieving parents even after her passing.

This is who Jennifer Zingone is.

Jennifer also spent a lot of time with another individual who had a long history of being very difficult for staff to get along with. Jen and this individual formed a wonderful friendship that transcended the staff-individual level. They both shared a rather edgy sense of humor and spent a lot of time taking "digs" at each other and then laughing hysterically. Jen also became close with this individual's mother as well and when this individual was eventually hospitalized and became very ill, Jen spent a lot of time with her before she passed on. Jen had such a positive impact on this person's life – and her success in her day program – and she taught a lot of other people who just perceived this individual as being difficult to look deeper and see that there was really truly a funny, great person inside.

To provide yet another example of Jennifer's impact on the lives of individuals, families, and staff, Jennifer spent years working with another individual, who at one point was consistently refusing to attend her medical appointments with her residential staff. These appointments were crucial as she was having issues that could have had severe negative long-term effects on her health. Jen and another staff person decided they would take this young lady to her medical appointments – even though they were only the day program staff of a different provider. After much coaxing and joking around and lunches – with pickled eggs and tuna salad (this young lady's favorite) – they were able to get her to all of her appointments and to the necessary surgery that would keep her healthy and insure her continued mobility.

Jennifer and a day program instructor discovered that one of the individuals' mother had left the country without providing notice. This gentleman had been left in the care of an elderly grandfather who was doing the best he could, but was struggling both financially and with providing care to his grandson. Jen and her instructor spent a lot of time – and their own money – making sure that both the individual and his grandfather had appropriate winter clothing, had food in the house, and that they were connected with the right people in the community to help them get the additional supports they both needed.

As a Program Specialist, Jennifer is extremely meticulous and up-to-date on her paperwork. However, she spends a lot of time working directly on the floor with her individuals because it is has been her mission the last 18 years to make sure the individuals she serves get the quality of care they deserve. She is a team player and can intuitively determine the needs of her staff in order to ensure that they have the support they need. Staff describe her as a role model, a champion for people, and a fantastic – and loving – leader.

Jennifer is a leader among her colleagues as well. She has willingly gone to other day programs to help new supervisors learn the many new skills involved in Program Specialist duties. Jen is the “go-to” person for questions about the Promise billing system and has willingly, on a regular basis, stopped what she is doing to walk other supervisors through their challenges when they call. Jen volunteered to be on the company’s quarterly internal audit team because of her incredible eye for detail and her knowledge of the regulations. She does a phenomenal job helping other programs to improve practices, monitor and ensure compliance.

Jen has been a wonderful support and an example to all who have worked with her over the years. She consistently forms great relationships with the people who work for her and strives to develop them so that they can move forward in their own careers. She is always there for them to talk to about problems or issues, and makes coming to work fun for everybody around her. She truly exemplifies UCP’s objective of delivering “Gold Standard” programs and services to participants, families and staff!

Hands down, there is no more consistent role model for the “WE ARE WORTH IT” Frontline Manager award – at UCP Central PA or in any other program – than Jennifer Zingone!

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#itsaboutrelationships
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