

# WASHINGTON WANTS TO KNOW

## Supporting Providers

(NAPSA)—For the hundreds of thousands of Americans with physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities, direct support professionals (DSPs) provide a crucial lifeline to the community through service and advocacy. And now these dedicated individuals need others to advocate for them.

### About DSPs

DSPs provide “hands-on” daily supports, training and habilitative services to persons with developmental and physical disabilities.

One exceptional example is Darlene Ricco of Carson City, Nev. Named 2009 Direct Support Professional of the Year, Ricco believes that society lacks knowledge and understanding of the barriers that people with disabilities must overcome. Through her actions and attitudes, Ricco strives to help people enjoy their lives. In turn, she enjoys learning about life from them and is honored when they seek her out for support and assistance.

### Wage issues

Recently, the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) released the results of a national survey that compared community private DSP wages (\$9.85/hr.) to public DSP wages (\$15.48/hr.). The study clearly illustrates the growing need for increased federal funding for low-wage workers who provide support to people with disabilities.

ANCOR addresses the needs and interests of private providers before Congress and federal agencies, continually advocating for the crucial role that private providers play in enhancing and supporting the lives of people with disabilities and their families.

For more information or to contact your legislators in support of better DSP wages, visit [www.youneedtoknowme.org](http://www.youneedtoknowme.org).