

CPD Salutes "Spirit Of Service" Recipients | CPD Blog

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We started these awards in 2017, and have traditionally given them out at our annual holiday luncheon. They honor a person within each division who goes the extra mile without being asked, who is a tireless worker, but whose efforts largely go unrecognized. This should be a person who is an example of quiet service and dedication, is a self-starter, and is always looking for ways to make a difference...no matter how small. Here are the recipients for 2020.



Services: Drake Rasmussen

The Services Division would like to recognize Drake Rasmussen for his outstanding leadership and steadiness in the midst of this ongoing pandemic. Drake has been the program coordinator for the Developmental Skills Laboratory since 2008. He has put the needs of the participants first and has developed a great relationship with the program participants, families and staff. He has dedicated his time and efforts to growing and developing this program into what it is today. Drake labors in relative anonymity since he is located in his own building and is consumed by the day to day details of running a large service unit. From transportation, day habilitation, respite, employment, training, and inclusion, Drake lives the values of the CPD. Drake has especially taken on the challenge of greater community integration and the new HCBS Settings Rule with thoughtful and intentional leadership and focus. The changes required by this new policy are significant, and Drake has worked to ensure that DSL is a leading provider in the state of Utah in the transformation process required by this new policy.

During this time of the COVID pandemic, Drake has worked tirelessly to try and secure extra funding and retainer payments to allow DSL (now Stride) to continue to function in spite of decreased funds and general chaos in the world. This has required many hours of phone calls, video meetings and advocacy on behalf of the participants and staff at the center. During this time when many other programs and businesses have had to dismiss staff and reduce services, Drake and the staff at Stride have made every effort to continue to offer as many services as possible (which in many cases are essential for families to function normally) and continue to help improve the lives of the participants. During this same period of time, Drake been working with state agencies to ensure compliance with new guidelines and regulations. He has also spearheaded the name change from "DSL" to "Stride" and jumped through many hoops in that process. We really appreciate his work and the work of the staff at Stride!!



Technical Assistance: Laura Lema

Laura Lema is our selection for the "Spirit of Service Award," from the TA Division. Laura is the Dispute Resolution Coordinator at TAESE. Laura is constantly looking for ways to improve every aspect of what we do at the Division and TAESE. A colleague said, "Laura always has a smile and is so dependable and responsible. She is always thinking and trying to find a new and fun way to make everything better for everyone." Another team member comments, "Laura is always ready to volunteer for someone who needs help and is totally dedicated to the vision of the TA Division and TAESE." When Laura is given an assignment, she thinks, "How can I improve how I approach this assignment?" Laura sees herself as part of the team and is ready to do her part to make the activity a success. Laura is always looking for strategies to increase services and revenue for TAESE. She is constantly thinking of ways we can improve current services. A team member commented, "Laura is touched by how the services provided by TAESE impact the lives of children with disabilities and their families."



Administration: Joy Gines

Joy is a key member of the CPD's Business Office, and we would not be as effective or as organized as we are without her attention to detail and her ability to help us balance the books. Joy started at the CPD in 2004 P.B. (pre-Banner),

and has been a key member of our business office since then. This year Joy has risen to the challenge of COVID and has maintained a high level of customer service and has been an invaluable support to both CPD leadership, project directors, and employees. If you were hired and receive a paycheck through the CPD, then you owe your livelihood to Joy! Joy works tirelessly to make sure that all of the l's are dotted, and the t's are crossed so that we can worry about other things! Even though Joy's position is largely behind the scenes, she takes great pride in her exactness as she records deposits, processes payroll, and reconciles accounts. Joy is very mindful of deadlines and takes great ownership in seeing that important tasks and events do not slip through the cracks. Over the past couple of years the CPD has received outstanding marks for our financial management and budget processes, and much of this success can be attributed to Joy's remarkable organizational efforts at keeping our financial records up to date and ship shape. We are lucky to have someone with Joy's background and focus as part of our Business Office and we thank her for her service to the CPD .



Research & Training: Dan O'Crowley

Dan began working part-time for UATP as an AT Lab assistant and when an opening unexpectedly became available for the AT Lab coordinator, Dan very capably filled in as the interim coordinator and shortly thereafter was hired as the full-time coordinator. Dan is a multi-task ninja, balancing school at USU studying Mechanical Engineering, working at UATP's AT Lab in Logan, and preparing to take RESNA certification testing. In addition, when our Salt Lake City warehouse coordinator left, Dan began driving to Salt Lake City two days per week for several months, in an effort to keep our Salt Lake location up and running until we could locate and hire a new coordinator. Dan is always willing to go the extra mile for staff, USU students, community members and others throughout the community and state to receive assistive technology devices. He spent many hours this spring coordinating the 3D printing of face shield components to provide to healthcare workers throughout the state.

Dan is very organized and has people's best interests at heart, whether he is working with clients, students, or employees. "I watch as he serves those who come through the AT Lab with a listening ear and a compassionate heart," a colleague said. "He goes above and beyond to serve people with compassion and care." He truly cares about those that he serves and in return they care about him, which reflects well on the AT program and the CPD.

Congratulations to all who made such a huge impact on the CPD in 2020!