



“We are dedicated to being that instrument, whatever it might look like, so that everyone can experience an awesome life.”

- Maren Gibson, DSP-R

VALUE^{the}
WORK.
RAISE^{the}
WAGE.

Maren Gibson has been a full-time **Direct Support Professional** (DSP) for 12 years. She describes her work as her life’s mission. It’s more than ‘just a job,’ it’s personal. She says “All it takes is one person, one moment, one opportunity to change someone’s life forever.” She talks about a man with disabilities who was physically abusive to his care providers and was hospitalized up to three times a week while taking over 30 pills daily. But, with the help of a highly skilled DSP, he became a man who now communicates with sign language, has built great relationships and is employed in the community. “In this situation,” she says, “everyone wins.” Yet, Maren, based on her income as a DSP, cannot qualify for an average home loan. In fact, she holds two jobs to make ends meet.

The 4% rate increase effective January 1, 2016 allows for an average wage rate of \$11.23 per hour for direct care staff. That’s just over \$23,300 per year. DSP’s are the critical element of care for those who need their assistance to live a full, inclusive life - however, these poverty wages are forcing many to choose jobs with higher pay to support themselves and their families. This is causing critical retention and recruitment issues for service providers across the state. **It must change now.**

DSP

Direct Support Professional

FACTS



14,000 DSPs provide essential care, services and support for over 6,000 Oregonians with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

DSPs are the lowest paid care givers in the IDD system yet, provide the same level and depth of service as those paid much more.

DSP positions top the list of the projected fastest-growing occupations in the country, making the current reality a crisis.

There are over 1,200 open positions for DSPs right now.



Oregon service providers have absorbed the rising cost of a DSP position - including yearly increases when they could - without additional state subsidy or COLA since 2009.

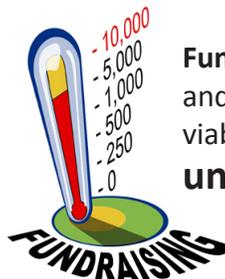


6,459 employees

working in Oregon residential agencies who serve individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities received

\$20M in public aid* to make up for the gap in wages.

Average cost to train new DSPs is **\$10K**



Fundraising for wages and benefits is not a viable option due to its **unpredictability.**

Average DSP annual income with 4% increase

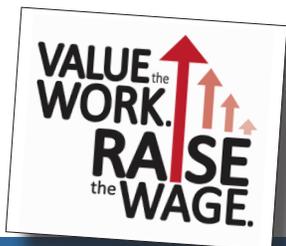
\$23,358

Average cost of living in Oregon

\$47,000**



DSP care includes **dispensing, tracking and regulating medications** as well as other medical needs.



“All it takes is one person, one moment, one opportunity to change someone’s life forever. We are the in-between step before the hospital, before the police officer, before crisis or death happens.”

-Maren Gibson



oregonrehabilitation.org

ValueTheWork.com

*As reported by the 2013 Oregon Workforce Report issued by the University of Oregon Labor Education and Research Center.

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