



## Main Story 02.02.09

### Auburn Day Hab Profiles CIS Doreen Vanacore For NYSACRA Direct Support Campaign



Doreen V and day hab  
consumer Brenda Nelson

**AUBURN** – Unity House’s Cayuga County Day Habilitation (‘day hab’) management staff have nominated long-time day hab CIS Doreen Vanacore for the 2009 New York State Association for Community and Residential Alternatives (NYSACRA) Direct Support Professional Profile Campaign.

Now in its eighth consecutive year, the statewide campaign features photographic and narrative profiles of outstanding direct support professionals and showcases their dedication and competencies on a daily basis. In demonstrating the major impact these professionals have on the lives of the consumers they support to all N.Y. State legislators and Governor David Paterson, each of whom receives each of the 300 profiles, NYSACRA (of which Unity House is a full-fledged member) helps communicate to them just how indispensable the profession is to thousands of individuals and their families.

Cayuga County day hab manager Angie Dudley and her assistant managers (Jackie Bragan, Jade Francis, Jennifer Hilts) made an eight-photo collage of Vanacore working with various day hab consumers that was accompanied by a two-page narrative extolling Vanacore’s multiple virtues on behalf of day hab consumers and families. NYSACRA took that effort and formatted it to its two-page, direct support professional profile template for inclusion with its 299 other profiles.

In featuring Vanacore, Dudley and her assistants related how her hard work and dedication reflect the agency’s mission of empowering lives and securing futures, and how her work ethic as a whole is reflective of the professionalism of direct support care at the program.

“An employee of day hab for close to seven years, in a field where turnover is potentially quite high, Doreen is someone who can be counted on and ultimately is motivated to be dependable – because her job intrinsically rewards her,” they wrote in their narrative profile. “She takes on so much and is so good with these consumers. Her thought and selfless work make supporting another person’s life a natural priority, without recoil. She puts dedication and compassion into every job. She is so enthusiastic it can almost make you ill on a Friday morning! Our selection of Doreen came natural and without a second thought, just like the positive and everlasting effects on the quality of life of every one she’s cared for.”

Part of the association’s direct support professional profile campaign this year also included invitations to direct support staff to share their views on the value of the state’s Healthcare Enhancement and the need for it to be trended. Those views also are being delivered to legislators and the governor’s office. The enhancement, now in its third phase

and scheduled to be upgraded to a fourth and fifth phase upon passage of a 2009 state budget, is provided to certain eligible direct support staff to offset their out-of-pocket health care plan premium costs and reduce other various out-of-pocket medical expenses.

Auburn day hab assistant manager Jade Francis penned a letter to the governor and state legislators urging them to not only continue the enhancement but also trend it so that its benefit keeps pace with recipients' costs.

“In a field where funding is not always optimal and wages are not always increased, direct support professionals *need* this enhancement to maintain their own well-being and henceforth the well-being of the individuals with disabilities that we serve each and every day in N.Y. State,” she wrote.