

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING THROUGH THE COLLEGE OF DIRECT SUPPORT

Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, Virginia Department of Business Assistance and System Stakeholders Partner for Increased Direct Support Professional Training through the College of Direct Support

The Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, the Virginia Department of Business Assistance and System Stakeholders are partnering to kick-off a six-month interactive, web-based training program for direct support professionals working for community services boards, state training centers and private providers. This six-month demonstration program will provide on-line courses through the College of Direct Support, a nationally recognized, validated training program designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of direct service professionals.

A number of providers from across Virginia will participate in this demonstration program, including: Community-Based Services, Inc; NHS Mid-Atlantic, Inc.; Lumzy's Residential Services; Richmond Residential Services, Inc.; Dan-Poe-Dil, Inc.; Association for Retarded Citizens, Petersburg Area, Inc.; Virginia Baptist Children's Home & Family Services, Inc; SOC Enterprises; ServiceSource; Chesterfield Community Services Board; Henrico Area MH&R Services; Rappahannock Area Community Services Board; Region Ten Community Services Board; Valley Community Services Board; Southside Virginia Training Center; and Northern Virginia Training Center. With the assistance of the Virginia Department of Business Assistance, private providers across Virginia are afforded the opportunity to participate in this valuable program.

The College of Direct Support demonstration program offers participants an array of training modules designed to deepen and enhance the important roles of caregivers, teachers, mentors, counselors, community connectors, and friends in the lives of the people with developmental disabilities. Eleven modules, or fifty-six lessons, will be made available to employees of participating organizations. Courses will cover such topics as Developmental Disabilities, Positive Behavior Supports and Individual Rights and Choice. Over the next six months, the partnership will evaluate the feasibility of implementing this distance education learning tool on a statewide basis.

More information on the College of Direct Support can be found at www.collegeofdirectsupport.com or by contacting India Sue Ridout, Workforce Development Manager at DMHMRSAS, at 804-786-4089 or india.ridout@co.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov.