

Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals

Our Mission:

The Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals is a network of people committed to strengthening the quality of human services by empowering ourselves to increase our own dignity and respect.

Our Goal and Activities:

Goal: Enhancing the status of direct support professionals in Michigan

- Activity 1: Secure better wages, benefits, retirement and job security
- Activity 2: Access to quality education
- Activity 3: Provide community outreach and publicity about our work

Our Membership:

The Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals is open to anyone who supports our mission, goal and activities. Individuals who are not currently employed as Direct Support Professionals are welcome to join but are ineligible for holding leadership positions within the organization. People with disabilities and family members are especially welcome in the Alliance.

Our Meetings:

The Alliance holds rotating monthly meetings from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. For those unable to attend meetings, we invite you to participate through our ListServe. You can sign up for membership at <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/Michigan-DSP/>

Date	Location
Thurs. February 15, 2007	Developmental Disabilities Institute, 4809 Woodward Ave, Ste. 268, Detroit, MI 48202
Friday June 1, 2007	Seventh Annual MADSP Forum, Macomb Comm. College, Clinton Twp., MI
Thurs. August 16, 2007	Developmental Disabilities Institute, 4809 Woodward Ave, Ste. 268, Detroit, MI 48202
Thurs. Nov. 15, 2007	Developmental Disabilities Institute, 4809 Woodward Ave, Ste. 268, Detroit, MI 48202

Our Accomplishments to Date:

With a membership of over 200 individuals the Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals has:

- Developed a mission statement, selected objectives, goals and defined related activities to meet the goal.
- Produced a sample Letter to the Editor that members can use to describe the importance of Direct Support Professionals and the increased need for our profession as forecasted by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- Sponsored a workshop as part of our Brown Bag Lunch Series and sponsored two training events by the Wayne State University Developmental Disabilities Institute Empowerment Education Project.
- Established an electronic List Serve at <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/Michigan-DSP/> where minutes, files and messages and announcements from MADSP members are posted on-line.
- Agreed to serve as the Advisory Group to the federally funded *Empowerment Education: Consumer-Driven Training for Michigan Direct Support Professionals* housed at the Developmental Disabilities Institute at Wayne State University.
- Discussed a variety of issues including voluntary credentialing, participation with The President's Committee on Mental Retardation, self-advocacy, legislative education, and participating in conference planning committees to promote the continuing educational needs of Direct Support Professionals.
- Exchanged information and ideas with The National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals.

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Accomplishments continued...

- Contributed information for an article on Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals for the Wayne State University Developmental Disabilities Institute Empowerment Education Project newsletter.
- Worked to develop a website which is hosted at http://www.ddi.wayne.edu/michigan_alliance.php
- Sponsored ten members of the Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals to attend various conferences around the state concerning issues related to the profession.
- Sponsored the first Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals Forum to which 180 professionals and consumers attended. Issues related to recruitment and retention and ideas for increasing wages and benefits were the focus and comments were compiled into the *Conference Proceedings*.
- Released for sale *Conference Proceedings* for the first Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals. Each person who attended received one as part of registration.
- The second Direct Support Professional Forum brought 104 people from 15 counties and was held on October 12, 2001. Direct support professionals, self-advocates, family members, supervisors and administrators attended and it was co-sponsored by over 15 advocacy, self-advocacy, provider, trade, funder and university partners.
- Hosted a guest speaker, Hollis Turnham, at our April monthly meeting who facilitated a workshop on state and federal tax credits that benefit low-wage workers. Ms. Turnham's work was part of an outreach effort sponsored by The Michigan Budget and Tax Policy Project of The Michigan League for Human Services with support from The Ford and Charles Stewart Mott Foundations and United Way.
- Initiated a letter writing campaign directed toward all Michigan State Senators and legislators highlighting pertinent issues affecting Direct Support Professionals and the people they work for in the field.
- Seventy-five direct support professionals attended the Third Annual Direct Support Professional Forum on October 11, 2002. Ten counties were represented. The format was changed to a luncheon and many direct support professionals were awarded for their dedication to the profession. Members from the Community Integration, Personal Assistance Services and Supports Grant ran focus groups to gather information to incorporate into their research and outcomes.
- The Fourth Annual Direct Support Professional Forum was held on October 10, 2003 and was attended by 72 people hailing from over 15 Michigan counties. Ten individual Direct Support Professionals were recognized with certificates for their dedication to, and hard work in, the field of direct care. Amy Hewitt of the University of Minnesota and the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals delivered the keynote address dealing with various hot topics in the field of direct support.
- The MADSP recently held its Sixth Annual Direct Support Professional Forum. Over 75 DSPs, policy makers, and other professionals from around the state attended the very well received event. This year's keynote speaker was State Rep. Rick Shaffer who spoke in regards to the development of a One-Stop Service system in the state of Michigan. The Sixth Annual Forum was also held at a new location this time – the beautiful University Center at Macomb Community College in Clinton Twp., MI. Thank you to all who attended the event.
- The MADSP monthly meeting format was changed to a rotating schedule. Since this change, meetings have been held throughout Southeast Michigan and membership and interest have increased as a result. Future meetings will be scheduled in new locations around the state so that the Alliance can reach as many direct support professionals as possible.
- Members of the MADSP helped to facilitate the first ever Direct Support Professional Training Forum in Lenawee County in 2006. Local providers and advocates hosted a day of speakers and DSP interaction at Jackson Community College in Adrian, MI on November 17th and the event was very well attended with over 60 DSPs enjoying keynote speaker Dr. Scott Shepperd and a catered luncheon. The event was held in the JCC@VOC-TEC building.

For more information regarding the Michigan Alliance of Direct Support Professionals contact any of these members:

Kathy McGeathy (810) 742-1800

Michael Bray (313) 577-6684

Paula Wells-Baker (734) 242-2038