



DDS

LIVING THE MISSION



EMPLOYEE NEWS

State of Connecticut

Governor Dannel P. Malloy

Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.

Message from Commissioner Macy

By now, most communities have recovered from our latest in a string of challenges, a historic blizzard. This was an extraordinary weather event and it brought out an equally extraordinary response from our entire "Community of Providers." Thousands of public and private staff performed their jobs while overcoming what to many would seem insurmountable challenges.

My most sincere appreciation to all the staff who worked multiple shifts to ensure that consumers were well taken care of and reassured throughout the storm. Your dedication is truly exemplary.

In times like these, the heroic work of so many dedicated staff can be lost in a sea of competing headlines. I am in awe of the courage and focus exhibited by numerous staff. While this storm may not have lasted as long as some others Connecticut has experienced, the number of lives impacted will be chronicled for years to come.

I'd like to share the following story to highlight the level of dedication exhibited by our workforce during the recent storm. It is important to note that as important as these vignettes are, there are countless other staff who exhibited identical dedication to, and focus on, the individuals who rely on our service system. I invite you to share other stories regarding exemplary efforts to care for others during the storm. It is important that we take the time to recognize moments in our lives when uncommon acts of kindness become the norm. Thank you to everyone for your efforts throughout and after the storm.

Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.



STS Resilient Facing Blizzard of 2013

It was mid-afternoon on Friday, February 8, 2013 that **Steven Hinckley** started his journey that would extend over the next 54 hours and 230 miles in a blinding snowstorm. He operated the largest snow plow at Southbury Training School (STS) and only stopped for breaks and to check on his colleagues that he would pass along the way. The hours alone are amazing but the miles traveled back and forth on the 1500 acre campus are mind boggling. If Mr. Hinckley had traveled in a straight line, he would have ended his journey in places like Atlantic City, New Jersey, Lancaster, Pennsylvania or Lake Placid, New York.

During the biggest snow storm to hit Connecticut since the late 70's, Mr. Hinckley was not alone at STS. Unit Director **Patricia Panasci** and Program Supervisors, **Adam Buster** and **Jeanne Hager** worked throughout the storm coordinating staffing while Nursing Director **Kerry DiPietro** managed nursing services. The **Fire Department** personnel responded to medical emergencies during the storm and were able to safely transport residents who needed additional medical care to local hospitals.

A special thank you in appreciation to all STS employees who worked long hours providing a safe environment for the residents and especially to the direct care support that traveled to work during the blizzard.

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STS Battles the Blizzard *continued from previous page*

“By all accounts, the STS Ground crew did a better job at plowing our campus than most towns were able to do for themselves, and it was done with scarce resources,” said Jackson Pierre-Louis, Assistant Regional Director. “Keeping up with this snow storm was a huge challenge to all of us and we feel very fortunate to have such a cadre of competent and dedicated individuals working with us to carry out and to live the mission of the department.”



Dempsey Staff Keeps NR Going

The John Dempsey Staff would like to give a public thank you to our maintenance crew here on campus. The infamous blizzard left quite a mess but you would never know it here on campus. On Wednesday as staff arrived walkways were cleared and sanded and parking was available to all as they had worked several days shoveling and plowing – this speaks not only to the Dempsey Center but all of our group homes here in the North Region. This occurs all year long with these men, always willing to help us out whatever the need be.

Thank you to **Jamie, Paul, Ralph, Steve and Todd** for all you do all year long.

*Start Living the Mission-
Today!*

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Ella T. Grasso Staff Brave Blizzard

Contributed by Duane Dyer and Frances Stemper

Several essential DDS staff braved conditions not seen in the State Of Connecticut since the Blizzard of 1978 to ensure that the residents of Ella T. Grasso Regional Center in Stratford were safe and received necessary care during the storm.

The following staff spent an entire three day weekend on campus and worked together through long shifts to provide our folks with the 24 hour care vital to their health and well being: **Unit B: Kristy Harlow, Allan Harvey, Ellen Kamm, Barbara McLeod, Carol Sanders and Bruce White; Unit D: Ivette Hernandez, Amy Morales, and Jeffrey Sanzo; Unit E: Tony Coles, Tammy DeBarros, Brenda Denson, Sandra Febles and Evadney Walters.**

When contractor plows broke and snow rose beyond three feet in height, area roads became parking lots of stranded vehicles and transportation to and from campus was difficult to impossible, these staff stepped up to the plate and did whatever necessary.

Jeffrey Amoroso, Unit E, came to work when others could not and stayed through the weekend to assist another Unit.

Donna Wellner, Unit B, attempted to brave the elements and walk to work, carrying a briefcase prepared with clothing to stay as long as necessary and, when that proved impossible, she found a ride. She waded through more than three feet of snow down her unplowed street to get to the main road for her ride to pick her up. And again, once on campus, she waded through the deep drifts to get to Unit B, as EGC's campus was not plowed, because the contractor's plows were not working and provided much needed relief to the staff.

These staff are heroes and all in our department are grateful and recognize them as such!