

# VODEC

REACH FULL POTENTIAL

# The VOICE



## Who are Direct Support Professionals, anyway?

- by Joe Bosco, HR Director

A Direct Support Professional (DSP) is an exceptional human being with an enormous heart who cares for other people. Their heart tells them if they give unconditionally of themselves, another person will improve because of it. It's amazing how you can just see their very being saturated with passion.

Without a shadow of a doubt, they are extraordinary individuals. DSPs build that special bond with the consumer and learns what makes them happy, excited, sad, or anxious. They understand the consumer and can see the opportunities that will help them be successful, like a teacher who knows a student will be great as a mechanic, teacher, or politician. A DSP

is safe, just like grandma. The consumer knows the DSP will always be there for them, they can rely on them, and they can trust them at all times. A DSP is the only one that is capable of helping others in reaching their full potential. A director, manager, or even supervisor does not have the skills nor the talent to guide consumers to success like a DSP can.

A person chooses a career in the DSP field because they have an inner desire that needs to be fulfilled. They can honestly say they value life because someone special taught them how to provide for others, a desire to give back, and joy in making others feel included. But, being a DSP is more than just a job. It's a career choice, a calling, a

life's ambition. Kind of similar to a woman who just knows she will make a remarkable mom. A DSP is everywhere you go and everywhere you are. They are understanding and supportive in even the minute things that need done. A DSP knows things will get done on the consumers time.

Now that you know who Direct Support Professionals are, let me tell you what the process is for a DSP to work with VODEC's consumers.

The first step is to submit a complete employment application which needs to pass the minimum qualification test. Then, DSPs endure an intense 30 minute telephone interview. This interview process

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## From the Desk of the CEO, Steve Hodapp

### We have some of the best direct support staff

The week of September 7 to 13, 2014 is "National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week." This week recognizes Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) for

their commitment to supporting individuals and promoting community-inclusion for individuals with disabilities of all ages.

National Direct Support Professional Recognition Week is celebrated annually

across the country with special events and ceremonies earmarked to honor the tens of thousands of workers who enable our most fragile citizens and their families to live healthy community-oriented lives.

On September 11, Nebraska

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# From the Desk of the CEO, Steve

## Hodapp—We have some of the best direct support staff

(continued from pg 1)

Governor Dave Heineman signed a proclamation honoring DSPs and their contributions supporting persons with disabilities in Nebraska.

engagement by another. On behalf of all the non-DSP employees and the Board of Directors of VODEC I echo the praise of the Governors and the Senate for DSPs. I am so proud of VODEC's DSPs and of what they do every day here. They are role models for the rest of us in patience and fortitude and grace in the performance of their duties.

# Who are Direct Support Professionals, anyway?

(continued from pg 1)

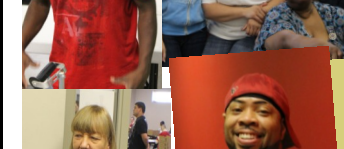
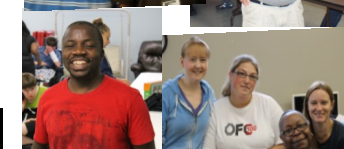
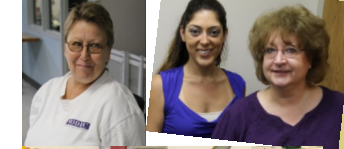
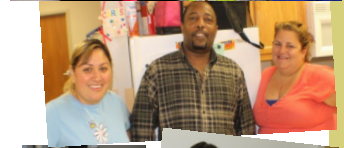
helps to identify the candidates that stand out from all others. Are they applying because they want to make a difference in the lives of others or work in the field of psychology? Does the candidate have a positive attitude, friendly personality, show enthusiasm for VODEC's mission? Are they able to demonstrate constructive criticism and professionalism? Did they raise any "red flags"?

Once the candidate passes the telephone interview, they are scheduled a face-to-face interview. If they are qualified, they are required to go through eight different background checks and a medical screening.

If the candidate has passed both interviews, all eight background checks (see list in upper right corner), and the medical screening they are offered the position. When hired, the Direct Support Professional then has a multitude of training programs to attend before they are allowed to work alone with a consumer.

VODEC has a total of 253 employees in which 5,706 trainings are completed in a

<b>Types of Background Checks Required by VODEC</b>
<b>Nationwide Criminal Check</b>
<b>Nebraska Adult and Child abuse request for information</b>
<b>Iowa Adult and Child abuse request for information</b>
<b>Iowa criminal record check</b>
<b>Nebraska criminal record check</b>
<b>DMV Driving Record Report</b>
<b>Office of Inspector General Exclusion List - Nationwide</b>
<b>Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) - Nationwide</b>



calendar year. A DSP is required to complete 18 separate trainings before they are authorized to work with a consumer alone. Six of those trainings are provided during orientation and the other 12 need to be completed within the first 30 days of hire. During the first year of employment, DSPs will complete a total of 34 trainings. For each consecutive year, they will complete 22 training courses on an annual basis.

**Did you know that VODEC has received 1,450 applications in the past year, in which only 53% moved on to a telephone interview?**

**Out of 768 telephone interviews only 51% received a face-to-face interview.**

**Out of 390 face-to-face interviews only 26% were offered the position?**

**Knowing your loved one is safe and secure... priceless!**



**"We get the best of the best"**  
**- Joe Bosco, HR Director**

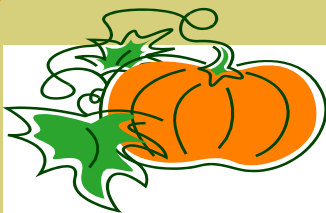
**"Since 2007 the U.S. Senate has annually designated a week in September as National DSP Recognition Week"**

Since 2007, the U.S. Senate has annually designated a week in September as National DSP Recognition Week recognizing DSPs on a country-wide basis.

Nothing gets done in a service provider organization without DSPs. They are the front line of service provision. So many times when there are questions about a service plan for a consumer it is the DSP who is consulted for input about what has worked to help the consumer work towards a plan goal.

Who knows a consumer better than a DSP? I will tell you - no one perhaps except a consumer's family member or guardian. How does that happen? By investing themselves in the care of a consumer. By teaching and modeling the same task daily for as many days as it takes to enable a consumer to experience the feeling of full

On August 5 Iowa Governor Terry Branstad also signed a proclamation noting the importance of DSPs and the role they play in serving Iowans with disabilities.



## The 4th Annual Halloween

**Dance** Mid America Center Thursday October 16th 6:00pm until 8:00pm.

The moon is full and the wind is chill, so join us for a night of thrills. Dust off your costume and be prepared for an eventful evening with plenty of scares. This night is sure to be ghoulishly fun, there will be music, dancing, and refreshments for everyone.

There is no charge for required provider staff.

We look forward to seeing you there!

## Thank You

for your support

Kenneth & R. Ann Trinkle  
 Carolina Apicella  
 Paul Strawhecker  
 Carol Leeper  
 Steve Hodapp  
 Mark Stromer  
 Alena Sorlien  
 Chado Carrillo  
 Jamie Brown

*This list reflects donations received between 8/27/14 and 9/19/14*

## The IA CARES and ATP Programs are in need of the following materials for special projects.

- Pillow cases
- Old t-shirts
- Old CDs
- Glass cups
- Baby food jars and tier lids
- Mason jars
- Recycled aluminum cans and glass jars w/w.o. lids (i.e. used salsa jars)
- Empty wine/beer bottles
- Size S-L shorts or sweat pants
- Old silverware
- Old picture frames
- Cassette tapes

Please contact Felicia Williams or Chado Charrillo at (712) 328-2638 with any questions.

## Severe Winter Weather Procedures for VODEC's Day Programs

Because VODEC is concerned about the safety of its consumers the following procedures should be followed:

**In Iowa**, when the Council Bluffs Community School District (CBCSD) closes for the day, consumers should not report to Day Programs in VODEC's Development Center. VODEC employees should report to their normal work site at normal starting time. Transportation will not be provided or arranged for consumers by VODEC.

When the CBCSD announces a late start consumers should report to the Day Programs in VODEC's Development Center per the late start announcement (i.e. if CBCSD announces a 10a.m. late start, consumers should report by at least 10a.m.—use good judgment, please). VODEC employees should report to their normal work site at normal starting time. The normal transportation will be available as provided or arranged for consumers by VODEC as close to adjusted time schedule as possible.

Consumers will be excused as early as safely feasible when there's a CBCSD early dismissal (i.e. if CBCSD announce a 1 p.m. early dismissal then consumers will be excused from VODEC by 1 p.m. or no sooner than transportation is available for them whichever can safely be accommodated

first). There will be VODEC employees present until the last consumer leaves. VODEC employees should plan to work through their shifts but may be released early at the discretion of the CEO or designee.

**In Nebraska**, when the Omaha Public Schools (OPS) closes for the day consumers should not report to Day Programs in VODEC's Development Center. VODEC employees should report to their normal work site at normal starting time. Transportation will not be provided or arranged for consumers by VODEC.

When the OPS announce a late start consumers should report to Day Programs in VODEC's Development Center per the late start announcement (i.e. if the OPS announce a 10 a.m. late start consumers should report by at least 10 a.m.—use good judgment, please). VODEC employees should report to their normal work site at normal starting time. The normal transportation will be available as provided or arranged for consumers by VODEC as close to adjusted time schedule as possible.

Consumers will be excused as early as safely feasible when there's an OPS early dismissal. (i.e. if OPS announce a 1 p.m. early dismissal then consumers will be excused from VODEC by 1 p.m. or no sooner than transportation is available for them whichever can safely be accommodated first). There will be VODEC employees present until the last consumer leaves. VODEC employees should plan to work through their shifts but may be released early at the discretion of the CEO or designee.

## Special notice to consumers and care givers -

A consumer or his/her care giver is also responsible for calling the consumer's transit provider if the consumer will not be using the transit service on any given day, regardless of weather or reason. A morning route should be cancelled before 6 a.m., an afternoon route should be cancelled before 1p.m. Failure to cancel by required time may result in a fee for the consumer equivalent to cost of the ride not cancelled.

## Special notice to employees -

If the CEO or designee decides that VODEC's Development Center should be closed due to extraordinary severe winter weather the CEO or designee will contact media as early as possible to announce such decision. Employees will also be notified through VODEC's Emergency Broadcast System. Employees may still report to VODEC's Development Center but would not be required to do so. An employee may be paid for lost time from work due to these severe winter weather procedures if he/she has available vacation leave time and requests to use it. VODEC employees should refer to current personnel policies for option of unpaid administrative leave.

**ATTENTION: VODEC Iowa and Nebraska Residential Programs do not close due to severe weather.**



# VODEC

REACH FULL POTENTIAL

612 S. Main St.  
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Return Service Requested

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**Help us "go green"  
and sign up for The  
Voice online. Contact  
cconolley@vodec.com  
or call 712.328.2638**



The mission of VODEC is to provide services to persons with disabilities in order that those persons may live, work and participate in the community in the least restrictive environment to achieve their full potential.

VODEC is a private, non-profit 501 © (3) corporation. Donations may be tax deductible. VODEC is an equal opportunity employer. Applicants for services or employment are considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability. We are a certified provider of day and residential services by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. We are approved to provide vocational services by the Nebraska Department of Education. We are approved by the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise to provide waiver services to individuals with intellectual disabilities, brain injuries and we are an approved habilitation service provider. We are a provider of Host Home services in Iowa and Extended Family Homes in Nebraska. We have an accreditation from CARF for Community Employment Services, Organizational Employment services, and Community Integration.



VODEC is a proud member of:

1. Be at least 16 years old for any vocational program
2. Have behavioral needs within VODEC's scope of service
3. Have medical needs within VODEC's scope of service
4. Have transportation needs within VODEC's capability to provide
5. Have adequate funding in place (including service hours' authorization or private payment in place) for services being requested
6. If applying for an in-home service, the applicant's home must meet basic health and safety requirements

### VODEC Service Criteria

**GoodSearch**  
You Search, We Give!

VODEC IS ON GoodSearch!

Goodsearch is a Yahoo! search engine that pays charities you select a penny per search! Go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and add Goodsearch to your browser. Then select VODEC as your designated charity! Please pass the news on to your friends and family! Over 15,000 searches have benefited VODEC so far! It's easy and it works!