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**Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)**

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**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 11, 2016**

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**Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) to Honor Frontline Workers Who Support People with Disabilities During**

**National Direct Support Professional Recognition Week**

Old Bethpage, NY – Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) will present certificates to over 1000 of their direct support professionals (DSPs) during National Direct Support Professional Week, September 11-17, 2016, to honor them for providing services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our community. DSPs are the backbone of the system of supports who help individuals with disabilities to live self-directed, meaningful lives, as independently as possible.

“Our direct support professionals are the backbone of our organization,” said Robert S. Budd, CEO, FREE. “They are a key ingredient in our efforts to provide the highest quality of care and to cultivate the talents and dreams of individuals we are honored to support each day. On behalf of everyone at the Family of FREE network, we want to show our appreciation and let our DSPs know they are making a difference in the lives of the individuals we are privileged to support every day.”

More...

Direct Support Professional Recognition Week is part of the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) [National Advocacy Campaign](#), whose mission is to enhance the lives of all people with disabilities who rely on long-term supports and services by obtaining the resources to recruit, train and retain a highly qualified and sustainable workforce.

“DSP Recognition Week is one way we try to say, “thank you” to the people who turn the intentions of our laws and regulations written to provide opportunities for people with disabilities into actions,” said Barbara Merrill, CEO of ANCOR. “It’s also a very important reminder to our legislators and policymakers that this workforce is essential, and their wages and training deserve attention as states set rates for IDD services.”

Direct Support Professional Recognition Week is celebrated annually across the country with special events and ceremonies like these earmarked to honor the tens of thousands of workers who enable people with intellectual, developmental and other significant disabilities and their families to live healthy lives in their communities.

[Several states have issued Gubernatorial Proclamations](#) declaring the week of September 11-17 as the 2016 National Direct Support Recognition Week. A U.S. Senate Resolution led by Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) is anticipated soon.

#### **Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc.**

Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE), founded in 1977, benefits and proudly supports more than 4,000 individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, mental illness and traumatic brain injury. It is the mission of FREE to assist individuals of all abilities realize their full potential. FREE provides a diverse array of supports and services including: housing; recovery services; transition to work; employment; day, community and family services; respite; crisis services; education and after school support; specialty health services; and advocacy.

FREE also collaborates with a variety of diverse 501(c)(3) nonprofit partners on educational, vocational, rehabilitative and a myriad of other creative initiatives to enhance the local communities and the lives of more than 25,000 people that reside within them. Each of the valued partners of the Family of FREE Network has a unique mission, vision and strategic goals that are aligned in purpose, and embody the spirit of the meaningful work we do every day. For more information, please call 516-870-7000 or visit [www.familyres.org](http://www.familyres.org)

The American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) is a national trade association representing more than 1,000 private providers of community living and employment supports and services to more than 600,000 individuals with disabilities. ANCOR provides organization, professional, leadership development and networking opportunities and services and is continually working toward partnerships and collaborations that support our mission,

which is to advance the ability of our members in supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to fully participate in their communities.

Through its National Advocacy Campaign, ANCOR seeks to enhance the lives of all people with disabilities who rely on long-term supports and services by obtaining the resources to recruit, train and retain a highly qualified and sustainable workforce. [www.ancor.org/NAC](http://www.ancor.org/NAC)

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