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National Disability Provider Association Names Stella Cain Recipient of 2023 ANCOR DSP of the Year for Maine Award

Recognition honors excellence in workforce providing long-term supports and services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

BANGOR, ME – The American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) has announced Stella Cain, a direct support professional at OHI, has been named the recipient of the 2023 ANCOR DSP of the Year for Maine award. Cain joins 53 other recipients of ANCOR’s 2023 Direct Support Professional of the Year Awards, chosen from a record-breaking pool of more than 350 outstanding nominees.

Cain is the fifth OHI DSP to win the national association’s award in addition to a leadership award winner.

“OHI is overwhelmingly proud of Stella, for her award recognition of course, but more importantly for her dedication and commitment to true community inclusion for the people we support” said Mindy Ward, OHI president and CEO. “We cannot think of anyone who more clearly demonstrates the transformative power of community-based supports, and we’re so grateful that ANCOR has recognized Stella with this high-profile honor.”

Since 2007, ANCOR’s annual DSP of the Year awards recognize outstanding direct support professionals (DSPs) who deliver long-term services and supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The awards celebrate the important role DSPs play in ensuring people with I/DD have what they need to thrive and be included in the community. These awards also seek to raise awareness about a direct support workforce in crisis. Inadequate investments in this essential workforce have led to a decades-long severe shortage of DSPs, which has only been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic and has accelerated into a crisis that threatens access to critically needed services.

“From voter education and self-advocacy initiatives to supporting people to pursue their career aspirations and so much more, direct support professionals like Stella make clear the crucial role this workforce plays in communities across the country,” said Diane Beastrom, president of ANCOR’s Board of Directors and president and chief executive officer of Koinonia, a disability service provider based in Independence, Ohio. “ANCOR is proud to celebrate Stella and the 53 other professionals who comprise the 2023 class of outstanding honorees.”

Barbara Merrill, chief executive officer for ANCOR, added, “For 17 years now, ANCOR has presented the Direct Support Professional of the Year Awards to recognize the outstanding professionals who power community inclusion for people with [intellectual and developmental disabilities]. The



outstanding DSPs being honored this year deliver life-enhancing supports amid no shortage of significant challenges, not the least of which is a long-standing crisis in the ability of providers to recruit and retain qualified DSPs. Through it all, these professionals demonstrate an unwavering commitment to community inclusion and to the people they support. That's why we feel honored to celebrate Stella and the 53 other DSPs who exemplify excellence in our field.”

The 2023 DSP of the Year awards will be presented in a ceremony at ANCOR's 2023 Annual Conference in Chicago next Wednesday, April 26 at 2:30 p.m. CDT. Members of the press interested in attending the awards presentation should contact Sean Luechtefeld, Vice President of Communications for ANCOR, at sluechtefeld@ancor.org or (571)-207-9108.

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About ANCOR

For more than 50 years, the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ancor.org) has been a leading advocate for the critical role service providers play in enriching the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). As a national nonprofit trade association, ANCOR represents 2,000+ organizations employing more than a half-million professionals who together serve more than a million individuals with I/DD. Our mission is to advance the ability of our members to support people with I/DD to fully participate in their communities.

About OHI

OHI provides 24-hour residential supports and various community-based services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism and autism-spectrum disorders, and mental illness. The agency provides permanent housing for adults and families with a history of homelessness and mental illness. OHI conducts professional development training not only to its employees and affiliated people, but other similar social services agencies in the Bangor region. It operates the Brewer Area Food Pantry (BAFP) supporting people who are food in security in the region as well as the Eagle's Nest Clubhouse servicing Hancock and Washington counties. Its community-based services for adults with disabilities include case management, community integration and rehabilitation, skills development, personal supports, peer and natural supports, and behavioral health. OHI currently supports about 600 adults, young and old, through its residential and community-based services.

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