

# Abilene State Supported Living Center



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I started working for AbSSLC in April of 2012 as a DSP 1 on 6750. What is a **DSP**? **Direct Support Personnel** work “**directly**” with people Developmental Disabilities, we “**support**” (Help) them to be independent or “**support**” (care) for them with their daily needs, and we are “**Personnel**” (staff, employees, labor force, manpower, people, men and women, crew, team) who care for the people we serve. DSP’s are the back bone of the facility. Quickly I learned that “supporting” the people were more than just meeting their needs, it was about trying to understand their wants, trying to help them grow and be more independent. Quickly I realized that this was the place for me. I could grow and be who I wanted to be. My grandmother once told me “If you do something out of duty it will deplete you, but if you do something out of love, it will energize you”.

So onwards and upwards I went, in April 2013 I became a **Home Activity Specialist (HAS)**. Man was this a great position! I could be creative, have fun, and help “my” individuals. **HAS’s** help the Individuals with daily activities such as going to church, dances, the movies, shopping, hygiene, work, or just activities on the home like Arts & Crafts, playing games, manicures, and grooming. This was right up my alley. I loved helping them, my mind was using its creative side, and I was learning different ways of communicating and understanding.

In June of 2014 I had that drive to do more, being a **HAS** was fun, but I needed more and wanted to help these individuals grow, so onwards and upwards I went. Now I am a **PNMP-C (Physical Nutritional Management Plan Coordinator)** which is also a **DSP 2**. Working in the Habilitation Therapy department directly under Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapist, Speech Language Pathologist, and Dieticians to ensure the Individuals are cared for as their PNMP states. My position is to coach, train, monitor and assist as needed, which can be very rewarding and difficult at the same time. I love helping in the gym/homes and seeing the Individuals grow, regain strength, and learn new skills. Teaching staff how and why we do the things we do is rewarding. **PNMP-Cs** have multiple homes, assist in NEPT, assist at Dances and community outings like TSO, and work with all departments; we get around,

Working at AbSSLC has been the best career choice I could have made, and I see myself retiring from here. I do see education in my future and I’m glad to know that at AbSSLC my career options are very bright and prosperous. Choose AbSSLC as a career not a JOB (Just Over Broke), and love what you do!

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