



TEXAS  
Health and Human  
Services

Abilene State Supported Living Center

**OUR MISSION:**  
To empower people to make choices  
that result in a life of dignity and  
increased independence.

**AbSSLC News**

Abilene SSLC

Week of August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## HHS Standing Ovation for Excellence in Direct Care Award

*Feliciana Hernandez (DSP III @ 6522 Peach) was nominated for the HHS Standing Ovation for Excellence in Direct Care Award by her supervisor Lori Ellerd. She was one of only two in the State to win! The award submission tells her story.*

I met Feliciana almost a year ago when I became the new Home Supervisor at 6521 Peach. Staffing was at a record low for the first 2 shifts. Feliciana was my only 6-2 staff and we had 2 staff that worked 2-10. I watched Feliciana work day after day, working holdovers and every day she came in with the same beautiful, comforting smile as if she was just coming back from a couple of days off - not what you would expect from someone working like she was. I wondered, how does she do it? I'm exhausted after a couple of weeks of those back-to-back days, but she had been doing this same routine for months. I watched her with the Individuals, there was nothing hurried about the care she gave to them. There was nothing to show the exhaustion I know that had to be there. There was only that beautiful smile, and the feeling of comfort, security, and peace.

The struggles are still here for the home and we are still short staffed, although not to the extent it was. Feliciana's pace hasn't slowed down, her smile hasn't faded, and her dedication to those she proudly serves hasn't wavered. Teaching the new staff that arrive at the home that our service to the Individuals should be done with pride. Never hurried, and always patient and kind.

Feliciana recently promoted to being shift lead for the 2-10 shift, and I couldn't be happier for her. She is the meaning of being a Direct Support Professional, taking a job to the other side and filling it with love and care for all those that she serves.

I watched Feliciana work with the Individuals and although they couldn't say anything verbally to her, she knew exactly what each needed - she has a different and special way of communicating with each person in the home. Watching their smiles, gestures, and eye gazes said it all. You could that each resident, in one way or another, was so happy to see her. I could feel and see the love and comfort Feliciana's presence provided to the Individuals, creating a relaxing environment for all.

Curious at how she keeps going with the long days and the physical exertion her body must feel I asked her. She simply said, "They need care, they are like my family, they can't help we are short staffed." "I am going to care for them as I would my family and I know things will eventually get better here staff wise." "I am going to give them the best care I can, it doesn't matter to me if I'm tired, their being taken care of is what matters most to me." Tears filled my eyes as well as hers, I knew with my she was sincere with her words, and they were straight from her heart.

No matter how tired she is, Feliciana greets all with a beautiful smile daily. She's positive, thoughtful, compassionate, and strong. She looks for the good in all of us and focuses on building staff in the areas that they are strong in and pushes past the areas where they may struggle. With patience and kindness, she lets staff know, "You will get it I promise, don't be so hard on yourself, I got you."



(l to r), Yvonia Paige, Linda Hinshaw, Feliciana Hernandez, Chris Campbell, Jeff Branch, David Daniel

If you **see** something, **say** something<sup>®</sup>

You make a difference for those we serve – every single day

# Shout Outs!

Special thank you to all the Human Rights Committee members that show up every week! **Leslie Riggins, Stacia Ellison, Debbie Cagle**, and **Lisa Miller** are in there nearly every week without fail, listening to restriction after restriction. They never complain (well except **Debbie** but she is a Q 😊) and always have a smile on their faces. Thank you to all the other committee members that show up on a rotating bases and are always willing to jump in and cover when someone else is unable to attend. I know I tell y'all each week thank you, but I want to make sure that y'all know that I really do appreciate each of you and your dedication to the committee and to the individuals that we serve.

I want to give a huge shout out to **Chris Martinez**. Thank you so much for covering some of our 6521 Peach meetings and helping out where you have been needed. We appreciate you so much for being so willing to help. Even when we needed you to cover a meeting at the last minute, you were so kind and helpful.

Shout Out for **Maggie Moore** at 6330 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for her willingness and ability to provide information concerning an adaptive equipment device for one of the Individuals serves. She helped answer some puzzling questions and gave input even while interacting/communicating with the individuals. You are a rock star Maggie!

Fantastic, tremendous and super-duper SHOUT OUT for **Debbie Cagle**, LEAD QIDP, who is always willing to help explain and/or provide guidance in writing Widgets. Her help is invaluable especially since Widgets can be a great mystery to the less knowledgeable. A Widget can be finicky and not user friendly, but Debbie helps troubleshoot wording to help staff know what they are to record. Thank you, thank you, thank you Debbie!

Thank you to **Jana Cowart** and **Ashton Sikes** for all the times you have covered HRC and helped me out with taking notes and keeping me on track!

Shout Out to **Mike Horton**, AbSSLC Chaplain! He has gone above and beyond the call of duty. He visits sick folks in the hospital, provides comfort to staff that are going through a hard time, calls the families of the Individuals when their time has come and is there when they grieve, and recently has been doing individualized services on the homes of the medically fragile folks. He sings with them, prays with them, brings them kindness, joy and laughter. He is always ready to help. I really cannot say enough good things about him. We are so blessed to have such a nurturing & caring person that has filled the shoes of Chaplain Bill.

Thank you to **KeriAnne Kuykendall** and **Justin Comparini** for volunteering to help when I had to schedule a last minute HRC meeting. To **Melissa Ramsey** for staying on the meeting to help present a Behavioral Plan when her coworker had technical difficulties and couldn't participate. I appreciate all of you helping so that we can get things reviewed timely.

I just wanted to give a huge shout out to **Yvonia Paige** for always staying on top of things for us at 6521 Peach while not having a home supervisor. She has helped to arrange coverage for anything going on and ensure we have our meetings covered. I appreciate you so much Yvonia!

I also want to give a huge shout out to **Marnie Shaw**! She has really been our rock through this. She is the 6521 Peach HAS and has been such a huge help in covering IDT meetings, ISPs, and preps while not having a home supervisor for the home. She has been patient with our process and is always engaging the conversation to give our Individuals the best information for the meeting so we know where it needs to go. She knows our folks so well and isn't afraid to share her knowledge and opinions or ideas. Thank you Marnie you have been a God send for us!

Thank you to the **staff at 6521 Peach** for everything you do. Even when life is so busy and can be chaotic you ensure that the residents are cared for and engaged to make their day meaningful. Thank you for being on top of things so their day goes better and they are kept as healthy as possible. YOU GUYS ROCK!

## Let's Shout Out and recognize others!

Text your Shout Out to 325.370.4525, Email your Shout Out to Jeff Goza, Reply to any AskAdmin text or use the **feedback** link @ <https://www.absslc.org/feedback/>

# Photo Explosion!

## ABILENE SSLC



The Psychiatric Department put together a meaningful and creative Improvement Board. Pictured from left are Jennifer Evans, Marcos Perez, Pam DeMone and Kevin Copeland.

## ABILENE SSLC



After 22 years of service, Nurse Educator Scottie Myers retired. He is pictured with Director Linda Hinshaw during a reception on July 19.

We made the State Office Friday Photos – Twice!



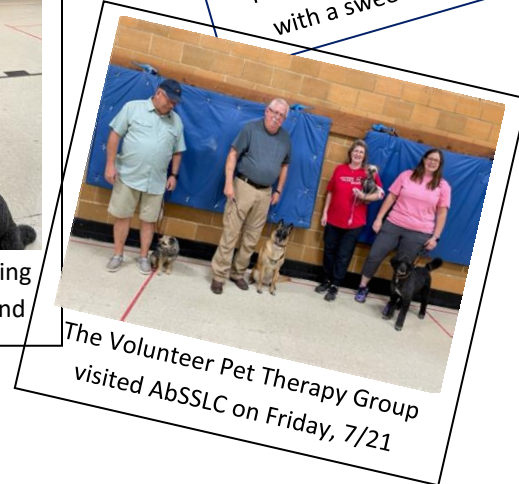
Sharon Culbert with 2 new furry friends



Patty Mahan pictured with a sweet visitor



Dalton McKee spending time with a new friend



The Volunteer Pet Therapy Group visited AbSSLC on Friday, 7/21



Have you seen our pictures from the past?  
<https://www.absslc.org/pictures-from-the-past/>