

**Project::** [Creating a DSP Career Path - YEAR 2](#)

**Applicant::** Boggs Center, NJ UCEDD

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**Partners:** Allies, Inc.,  
ARC of Atlantic,  
ARC of Somerset  
ARC of Warren Counties  
Matheny Medical and Educational Center  
Bancroft Neurohealth  
Partnerships for People  
United Cerebral Palsy of Hudson County

**Council Funds:** \$84,740.00

**Match Funds:** \$46,000.00

**Abstract:** In New Jersey, with one of the highest costs of living in the nation, the fundamental challenges for both agencies who employ DSPs as well as individuals/ families who hire and supervise DSPs are: (1) recruiting and retaining high quality staff to provide the hands-on, day-to-day care and support of individuals with disabilities. (2) low wages (3) high turnover and (4) lack of opportunities for advancement through competency-based training for these frontline workers.

The voluntary career path process being piloted through support from this grant utilizes the online College of Direct Support in combination with onsite mentors and tiered, competency-based salary increases. We believe this process will provide incentives to people who want to remain in direct care, thus contributing to a reduction in turnover while also enhancing professional skills.

The grant will also support evaluation of the Career Path by New Jersey Community Colleges to determine if the curriculum meets the standard necessary to count as college credit toward an Associate's and/or Bachelor's Degree.