

Skills of Central PA Receives Gold Award for Health Leadership Excellence

STATE COLLEGE, PA (May 13, 2019) – Skills of Central PA—one of the region’s largest human services agencies serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities—recently received a Gold Award for Health Leadership Excellence from Mainstay, Inc., creator of the *My25* wellness program. Skills received the award based on its commitment to enhanced nutrition, preventive health, and clinical health improvements in the people it supports including body mass index, hemoglobin A1c (a measure of average blood sugar level over several months), medication usage/dosage, and acute care visits. The program, used in many of Skills’ community-based homes throughout the region, helps the organization support people with disabilities who have health issues such as diabetes, over- or under-weight, gastroesophageal reflux disease, lactose intolerance, allergies, gluten-free needs, difficulty swallowing, and more.

“We are honored to receive this recognition,” said Rebecca Aungst, President and CEO of Skills of Central PA. “As a person-centered organization, everyone at Skills is dedicated to empowering the people we support so they can accomplish the goals that are important to them. The *My25* program is built on the same philosophy, which makes it a powerful tool for helping people accomplish their health, wellness, and nutrition goals. The outcomes achieved by the people we support illustrate the power of a person-centered approach. Skills of Central PA is pleased to be a health and wellness advocate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.”

Sylvia Landy Vail, Chief Operating Officer of Mainstay, Inc. agrees. “Mainstay’s *My25* team is incredibly pleased to recognize Skills of Central PA for its dedication to the health and wellness of the people they support,” she said. “By incorporating the *My25* program and its person-centered focus on nutrition into its community-based homes, Skills is among the nation’s most proactive human services providers. Changing longstanding habits and routines is hard work when it comes to eating the right foods in the right amounts, and it requires unique commitment and follow through on the part of the organization as a whole, a cultural shift that can only be spurred by strong leadership. As an organization uniquely accomplishing substantial clinical and social health outcomes among people with intellectual and developmental disabilities—something the mainstream struggles with mightily—Skills of Central PA deserves this recognition for its innovation and materially benefitting constituents, the broader community, and society as a whole.”

About Skills of Central PA

Skills of Central PA is a non-profit health and human services organization that provides services and support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; mental health disorders; substance use disorders; and problem gambling. The organization was founded in 1960 in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, as a small day program to provide people with opportunities to have paid work, gain social skills, and become more independent in the community. Today, Skills is one of the largest human service providers in central Pennsylvania, providing services in 17 counties throughout the region and employing more than 1,100 people in a variety of professional, clinical, and direct support roles. Learn more about Skills of Central PA at www.skillscentralpa.org.

About Mainstay

Mainstay and its choice-based *My25* programs are the primary accelerator within the human services industry regarding health outcomes improvement related to overweight/underweight status, diabetes, hypertension, associated chronic conditions, and social determinants of health. Mainstay’s *My25* program substantially improves clinical and social health for people with disabilities via tailored content focused on person-centered nutrition enhancement, education, and engagement. *My25*’s foundational guidelines were established through collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and professionals from Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine. The *My25* team is comprised of human services, nutrition, preventive health, disease management, culinary, and technology professionals. To learn more visit www.my25.com.

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Editor Note: Health Leadership Excellence award logo is attached.