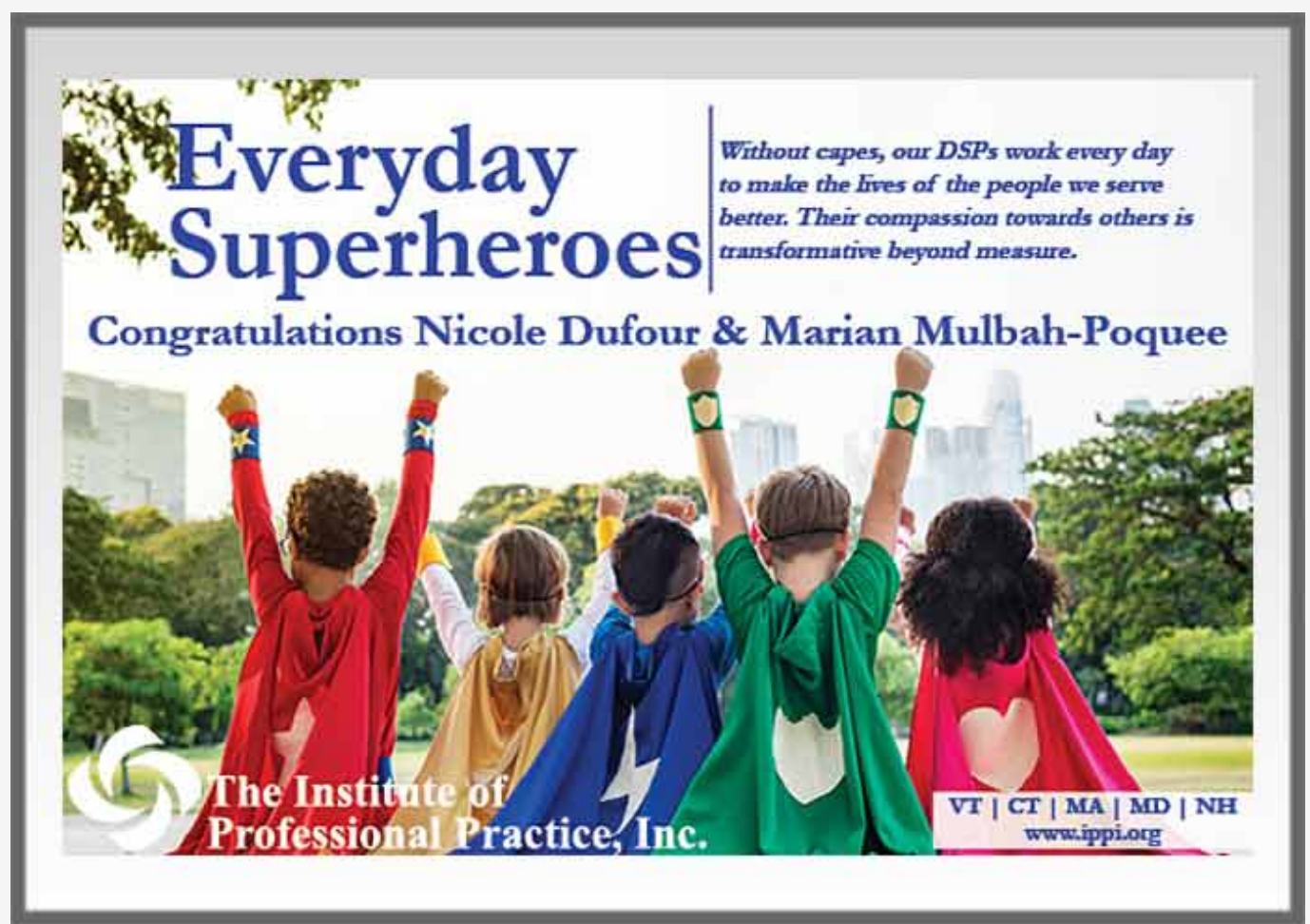


# National Disability Provider Association Names Nicole Dufour and Marian Mulba-Poquee Recipient of 2019 DSP of the Year Award

MONTPELIER, Vt., April 22, 2019 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – This morning, the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) announced that Nicole Dufour and Marian Mulba-Poquee, both Direct Support Professionals at The Institute of Professional Practice, Inc., have been named the recipient of the 2019 DSP of the Year award.



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Dufour and Mulba-Poquee join more than four dozen other recipients of ANCOR's 2019 Direct Support Professional of the Year awards, chosen from a field of nearly 350 outstanding nominees.

"IPPI is overwhelmingly proud of Nicole Dufour and Marian Mulba-Poquee for their award recognition of course, but more importantly for their dedication and commitment to true community inclusion for the individuals we support," said Lou Giramma, IPPI CEO. "We cannot think of two people who more clearly demonstrate the power of person-centered supports, and we're so grateful that

ANCOR has recognized both Nicole and Marian with this high-profile honor.”

Awarded annually since 2007, ANCOR’s Direct Support Professional of the Year awards recognize outstanding professionals who provide long-term supports and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The awards and the accompanying presentation at ANCOR’s Annual Conference were created to celebrate the important role Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) play in ensuring individuals with I/DD can be included and empowered in their communities, and to raise awareness about a direct support workforce in crisis. Nationally, turnover rates near 50 percent amount to a significant shortage of DSPs.

“I started my career in the field of disability supports as a DSP, and so I know just how critical DSPs are to supporting individuals in their quest to live their best and most fulfilling lives,” said Robert Budd, President of ANCOR and Chief Executive Officer at FREE, Inc, in Old Bethpage, New York. “DSPs rarely receive the recognition they deserve, and for that reason I’m proud of our association for recognizing Nicole Dufour and Marian Mulba-Poquee and all of their significant contributions to the lives of the individuals supported by The Institute of Professional Practice, Inc.”

Barbara Merrill, ANCOR’s Chief Executive Officer, added: “I often describe DSPs as ‘community navigators.’ Far more than just caregivers, DSPs do it all. From navigating civic life to supporting individuals to create a sense of community around them, DSPs make magic in their communities every single day. These awards represent just a fraction of the recognition that individuals like Nicole Dufour and Marian Mulba-Poquee deserve.”

The 2019 Direct Support Professional of the Year awards will be presented in a ceremony in Portland, Oregon, on May 8, 2019, at ANCOR’s Annual Conference, Bridges to Better Outcomes. Members of the press interested in attending the awards presentation should contact Sean Luechtefeld, ANCOR’s Director of Communications, at [sluechtefeld@ancor.org](mailto:sluechtefeld@ancor.org) or 703.535.7850, ext. 100.

#### **About ANCOR:**

For nearly 50 years, the American Network of Community Options and Resources 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 1,600+ 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. Learn more: <https://ancor.org/>.

#### **About The Institute of Professional Practice, Inc. (IPPI):**

The Institute of Professional Practice, Inc. provides services and supports to individuals of all ages who experience developmental disabilities. Founded nearly 40 years ago, IPPI’s mission to build strong communities by empowering individuals permeates the work of the agency, providing highly individualized care to everyone who turns to IPPI for support. IPPI’s service footprint spans throughout New England and in Maryland. Learn more about the

transformational work happening in a community near you at  
<https://www.ippi.org/>.