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Support, Inc. expands opportunities for disabled adults in Loveland



Heather Duncan, a longtime client of Support, Inc., shares a laugh with Direct Support Professional Sean Moore during grand opening celebration for the organization's new day center in Loveland on Thursday. (Jocelyn Rowley, Loveland Reporter-Herald)



By **JOCELYN ROWLEY** | jrowley@prairiemountainmedia.com |
Loveland Reporter-Herald

When Loveland resident June Miller has a question about public transportation, there's just one source she turns to — Raymond Standley. As a prolific bus rider, Standley knows not only how to get around the city using mass transit, but also how to navigate routes to Fort Collins, Greeley, Denver and even far-off locales like Black Hawk.

“He will tell you anything and everything you want to know about bus routes and transportation,” Miller said with a laugh. “And he will tell you his feelings about the transportation system.”

Miller and Standley connected through Support, Inc., a company that helps developmentally or intellectually disabled adults live more independent lives.

Miller works as a Direct Support Professional, or DSP, providing mentoring, either in group settings or on a one-on-one basis. That can include assistance with money management, arranging transportation, grocery shopping or even just companionship for more social outings and activities.

The two have been paired for about six months, meeting two or three times per week to go bowling, take trips to the library or join local Bunco games. Standley also works with a behavioral counselor through Support, Inc. and gets regular visits from a case manager.

“They have people who come and check on us, to make sure everything is going well,” Standley said.



For Standley's mother Michelle, Support, Inc.'s services have been an excellent fit for her son's needs.

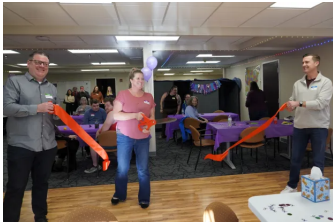
"I love them," she said. "I know there are other agencies, but I like Support, Inc. because they've been, well, so supportive."

Support, Inc. was founded in Aurora in 1989 and has since expanded to locations across the state, including Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Loveland and Sterling.

The company offers a wide range of services such as behavioral or therapeutic counseling, case management and residential services. It also has a home-host program that matches disabled adults with trained families, ensuring care for those whose caregivers are aging or absent.

"We jokingly refer to ourselves as 'matchmakers,'" explained Intake Specialist Cathy Laws. "We aim for long-term matches, and we want it to be a good, successful fit for both parties that are involved. It's like foster care for adults."

Support Inc.'s Loveland location opened in 2010, but a surge of demand following the COVID-19 pandemic prompted a move to bigger quarters. On Thursday, Miller and the Standleys were among the dozens of people celebrating as company executives officially cut the ribbon on a large office on West Eisenhower that includes a new day center providing daily activities ranging from fitness classes, to community field trips to games and



Support, Inc. Vice President of Operations Brian Farestad, Director of Day Operations Brandi Rende, and Senior Director of Operations Erik Nielsen cut the ribbon to officially open the organization's new day center in Loveland on Thursday. (Jocelyn Rowley, Loveland Reporter-Herald)

Among the newer staff members helping meet that growing demand is Sean Moore, a recent college graduate who joined Support, Inc. as a DSP just a few weeks ago. Moore grew up with two autistic siblings and has seen firsthand how daunting the world can be for adults with developmental or intellectual disabilities.

“My older brother, he’s 30 now, and he really struggles finding jobs,” Moore said. “So I’ve grown up seeing those kinds of barriers that they face and have a passion for wanting to help with that.”

Although Moore has only been on the job for a few weeks, he has embraced his role, whether it’s helping build communication and motor skills through basketball at Chilson Recreation Center or teaching about budgeting during trips to the grocery store.

“I really, really love connecting with our clients and making their day,” he said. “Just figuring out what they enjoy doing — because sometimes they can’t really advocate for themselves — and then actually seeing them get to do that has really been awesome.”

The day center opened in a “soft launch” two weeks ago and is already gaining devoted attendees, said Nikki Harris, the center’s manager. As the weather gets warmer, staff plans to add visits to Lake Loveland and the nearby Dwayne Webster Veterans Park to the rotating list of activities for clients.

But the ultimate goal at Support, Inc., she continued, is helping clients learn to live a life that has dignity and meaning, however they define it.

“They’re adults who have every right to live their life in a way that’s meaningful to them,” she said. “And our job isn’t to tell them what’s meaningful. It’s to help them fulfill that meaning.”

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