The Positive Wave

Support Services of Virginia, Inc.

2026 Issue 2

Latest News

Community Engagement Is Growing in Hampton Roads!

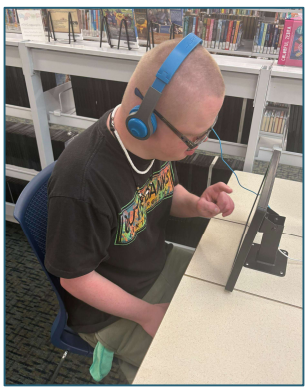
Exciting things are happening at Support Services of Virginia, Inc. (SSVA)! Since our last newsletter, our Community Engagement Program has grown to 8 participants, and we have room for more!

People get out and explore their community in small groups of 2 to 3 people. These groups offer personalized experiences, meaningful interaction, and greater community involvement.

Opportunities include volunteering, building relationships, developing social skills, discovering new interests, increasing independence, and working toward personal growth. Activities help people become active participants in their communities through experiences that are meaningful to them.

Convenience is another benefit. SSVA staff pick people up directly from their homes and return them home after community activities. There is NO Day Center involved. The focus is on making connections, trying new experiences, and having fun out in the community!

We are excited about the continued growth of Community Engagement in Hampton Roads and look forward to welcoming even more people.



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Stay Connected

ssvainc.org

Facebook: SupportServicesVA

DBHDS services

thearcofva.org

vbpd.virginia.gov

Chip Chat

Greetings SSVA Team,

As we move through the fall season, I want to tell you how much I appreciate what you do. Much of the most important work at SSVA happens when nobody is watching — in everyday moments when a DSP shows patience, offers encouragement, helps someone try again after a setback, or simply shows up day after day as a reliable source of support. Those moments may seem small, but over time they can completely change a person's life.

Over the years, people have come to SSVA facing significant challenges and limited opportunities. Through the dedication, compassion, and persistence of our team, many have gone on to build fuller, richer, more independent lives. The progress rarely happens overnight — sometimes it takes years — but when we look back and see how far someone has come, we are reminded why this work matters.

Recently I visited each division for our birthday celebrations, and I thoroughly enjoyed seeing everyone. This year marks **32 years of service** for SSVA. Since 1994, countless employees, customers, and families have been part of our journey, many of them for a large portion of those 32 years. Thirty-two years is more than a number: it represents decades of relationships, trust, hard work, and commitment.

A sincere thank you to the teams who planned and organized the parties. From the food and music to the games and activities, it was clear how many people worked behind the scenes to create an experience everyone could enjoy. Your efforts reflected one of our core values — creating fun experiences — and I am grateful.

As always, we remain committed to building a strong, sustainable organization that can support both our customers and our team for years to come. Most importantly, the value of what you do is impossible to fully measure. Every day, you help people build confidence, gain independence, strengthen relationships, and create better lives. That is our mission. That is our purpose. And that is why I am proud to stand alongside you.

Thank you for everything you do, every single day. Together, we will continue to **realize success by helping others realize theirs**.

Positive Scoop with Andie

Our Voices Matter

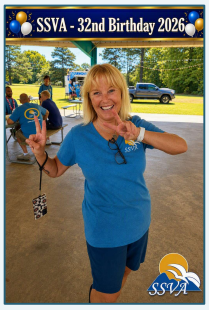
As we enter the fall season and prepare for the holidays, it's important to remember the power of our voices. Decisions made at the local, state, and federal levels directly impact Medicaid funding, waiver services, affordable housing, transportation, and workforce supports that help people with disabilities thrive in their communities.

One issue receiving increased attention is the future of the **Olmstead decision**, which protects the right of people with disabilities to receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. Challenges to these protections could mean fewer community-based options, longer wait times for services, and reduced opportunities for people to live, work, and participate fully in their communities.

That is why staying informed and participating in the voting process matters. Voting is one of the most effective ways to advocate for the services and supports that promote independence, inclusion, and opportunity.

As you make plans for the holiday season, I encourage you to also **make a plan to vote** and help ensure the disability community's voice continues to be heard.

"Every vote helps shape the future of services that support independence, inclusion, and opportunity."



Human Resources Happening from Jenn

Enhanced Mileage Reimbursement Program

Employees who transport people receiving services in personal vehicles may qualify for $0.60 per mile instead of the standard $0.40 rate. This helps offset costs of community participation.

Transportation supports community participation, relationships, skill development, and access to resources.

To qualify, employees need authorization to provide transportation and current automobile insurance with business-use coverage on file with Human Resources. Prior approval is required. Otherwise, the standard rate applies.

Keep current insurance on file and submit mileage through the standard payroll and supervisory approval process. Contact Human Resources about eligibility, insurance, or reimbursement.

New ADP Assist Features

ADP Assist now gives faster, more detailed answers about pay and personal information, instead of just directing you to statements or profile pages.

Ask it to compare pay statements, explain pay changes, show taxes or paid hours, confirm pay rates, and review addresses or emergency contacts.

Select the ADP Assist icon in the upper-right corner of ADP Workforce Now® or use it in the ADP Mobile App.

Try plain-language questions for answers without searching multiple screens.

Training Updates

New Ways to Learn and Grow

We're adding new training shorts to ADP for easy access through the ADP app. These short lessons will give you another way to build your skills.

Writing Workshop

The updated Writing Workshop will roll out online before the end of the year as a self-paced course for everyone, so you can work through the material at your own pace.

More Training Before Year-End

We'll offer Autism and Behavioral Competencies and PCT training before the end of the year.

What Would Help You Realize Success?

We want to hear your ideas for future training shorts. What topics or everyday challenges would you like us to cover? SCOM Andie with your suggestions for training that will help you realize success.

Scan to Download ADP APP

Regional News

Danville Dispatch from Samantha

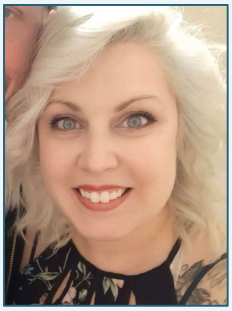
Our Danville team has had a busy and exciting few months, with plenty of opportunities to connect, recognize our employees, and enjoy time together. Our company birthday party was a great time, with good food, fellowship, and plenty of smiles and laughter. It was especially meaningful to recognize the individuals we support and the many years they have been a part of our company and our Danville family. It was wonderful to take a moment to reflect on those years and the relationships that make our work so meaningful.

DSP Week was also an eventful week for our Danville Division. We enjoyed finding different ways to recognize and thank our Direct Support Professionals for the important work they do each day. From special activities and treats to opportunities to simply show our appreciation, it was a great week of recognizing the employees who play such an important role in the lives of the individuals we support.

As we head into the final months of the year, we are already looking ahead and planning our upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas events. We're excited to have more opportunities for our team to come together and enjoy time connecting. It's hard to believe how quickly 2026 has gone by, but we are looking forward to ending the year on a positive note and carrying that same energy into the new year. Thank you to everyone who continues to make the Danville Division a great place to work!

Spotlight On – Dallas King

"My name is Dallas King, and I have been working as a DSP at SSVA for a little over a year. Before coming to SSVA, I worked from home for 10 years and owned my own custom cookie business. I applied for the position because I was looking for a change of pace, and I definitely found that working as a DSP!



I came into this position with no experience in the field and had no idea how much I would come to love it. I have spent the majority of my time at Danville Day Support, where I have had the opportunity to get to know and genuinely care for so many of the individuals we support. I have learned that it takes a special kind of person to open their heart and truly care about the people we support.

I have so much admiration for my coworkers and the work they do every day. I have learned so much about myself and about a part of the community around me that I was unaware of before becoming a DSP. I am proud to now be an advocate, a friend, and a source of support for the individuals I work with every day."

Hampton Roads News from Patsy

A Season of Celebrations at SSVA!

SSVA Hampton Roads has enjoyed a memorable 2026 filled with dancing, food, games, swimming, fellowship, and employee appreciation!

May: Annual Gala. Our 2026 gala at Emmanuel Lutheran Church brought everyone together for great food, music, dancing, and connection.

June: Founder's Day. We honored Kay Mirick and the vision behind SSVA at Great Neck Park, gathering for music, food, games, and time together as a community.

September: SSVA's 32nd Birthday. We celebrated another year at the KOA Holiday Campground with food, games, music, and an opportunity to go swimming.

DSP Week. We continued the September celebrations with a full week of appreciation for our amazing Direct Support Professionals! Special activities and surprises included hand massages, SSVA swag, breakfast, a meet-and-greet evening, and goodie bags.

What a season of shared memories! Thank you to everyone who made each occasion special. We look forward to celebrating the people who make SSVA extraordinary!

Same great people. Stronger community. Brighter days ahead!

Upcoming Events in Hampton Roads

The holidays are approaching! SSVA looks forward to bringing everyone together for friendship, great food, dancing, and holiday cheer. Save these dates for our Hampton Roads celebrations.

Halloween Dance Party

Thursday, October 29
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Peaceful Waters (Day Center)

Come ready to dance and enjoy a fun evening with friends!

Annual Golden Corral Thanksgiving Luncheon

Wednesday, November 25
11:00 AM to 2:00 PM
Golden Corral

Join our annual tradition of good food, great company, and gratitude.

Winter Holiday Celebration

Holiday Dance
Friday, December 18
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Santa's Wassail Party
Wednesday, December 23
11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Both events take place at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Santa will join the December 23 celebration to pass out gifts and spread holiday cheer!

Angel Tree

SSVA's Angel Tree will be located at the main office to make the season even more special.

Eastern Shore Highlights from Twila

Fall brought friendship across Eastern Shore's Community Engagement, Community Coaching, and Sponsored Residential programs. Outings included Onley YMCA workouts, Music Bingo at Off the Rails/G-Spot, Parksley Fire Department Bingo, and bowling at Eastern Shore Lanes. Stops at Louise's, Jaxson's General Store, and local libraries, shops, and restaurants strengthened community connections.

Each week, a group from SSVA collected used eyeglasses from about ten Lions Club boxes across Accomack County, building responsibility and pride in giving back. VA250 Mobile Museum visits, seasonal celebrations, and live music created more lasting memories.

We welcome Tasha Tankard as Assistant Site Coordinator and Maya Smith as a Direct Support Professional. Their enthusiasm and dedication already make a positive difference.

We'll miss Onancock Taphouse when it closes, a favorite gathering place for live music, friendship, and great pizza.

Lynchburg Latest from Lashana

Lynchburg's year has been full of fellowship! Monthly Friday Fundays bring laughter and lasting memories. June's KayDay at Smith Mountain Lake brought friendship and fun in the sun with our Danville friends.

September's SSVA 32nd birthday celebration at West Lynchburg Baptist Church featured our favorite, BINGO! Participants enjoyed friendly competition, fun prizes, and special drawings for experience-based prizes.

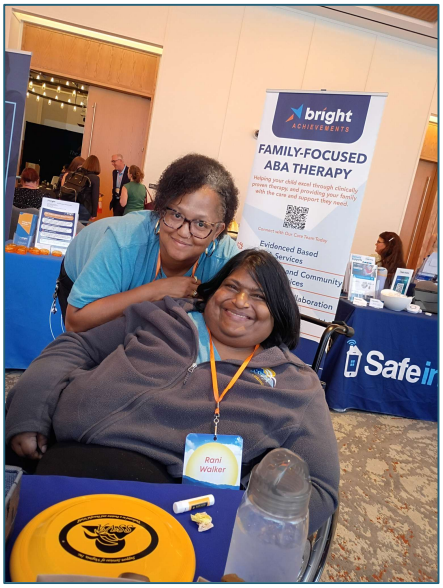
During DSP Week, we celebrated our incredible Direct Support Professionals. Their dedication and compassion make a difference every day. Thank you for all you do!

Next, enjoy food and fellowship at our Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon at Golden Corral. Then, show off your festive attire at our Winter Celebration and Ugly Sweater Contest!

Thank you for a special year. Here's to more unforgettable memories together!

ARC Conference 2026

We Rise Together – Jill Jennings



SSVA team members Karen Buxton, Twila Camden, Kathleen Farmer, Regina Alexander, and Jill Jennings attended the 2026 Arc Conference, joined by Rani Walker and, on the second day, Lashana Wesley. Over three days, the group gathered practical resources, advocacy tools, and new ideas for supporting meaningful, self-directed lives.

A Powerful Opening Message

Opening speaker Richard Prangley shared his journey from 15 years in the Coldwater State Home to independent living and disability advocacy. With decades of encouragement and practical support from his friend Manfred Tatzmann, Richard learned essential life skills, bought his own home, and built a life of purpose. His story reflected the conference theme: We rise together when we empower one another.

Breakout sessions addressed complex care systems, ABLE accounts, connection and inclusion, the 2027 legislative agenda, Medicaid changes, self-advocacy, and health care communication—offering ideas we can apply directly in our work.

Organizing Information for Better Outcomes

Another key takeaway was the value of keeping medical, service, administrative, personal, and follow-up information organized and accessible to strengthen continuity, advocacy, and outcomes.

Moving Forward Together

The conference strengthened collaboration and renewed our commitment to choice, independence, and community participation. Our team also shared SSVA's mission and services with families, self-advocates, and professionals from across Virginia.

Cheers to You!

Celebrating April – September Work Anniversaries

Caroline Austin, Donna Braun, Crystal Earley, Ahmed Elsayed, Ann Gordon, William Gordon, Jaakobha Harding, Denise Harrison, Erica Houchens, Timothy Harris I, Dallas King, Breanna LaDoucer, Naysheelia Mitchell, Coleen Norman, Autumn Roberts, Theresa Vermillion, Candy Wilford, Kathleen Williams, Tashama Woodberry	**1 Year**
Regina Alexander, Patricia Booker, Samantha Morris, Crystal Raldiris, Grace Weber, Letitia Young	**2 Years**
Lisa Blankenship, Cheikh Diop, Jessica Eanes, Kathleen Farmer, Nikia Hatcher, William Lane, Robin Mbonisi, Denae Rathbun, Joshua Rathbun	**3 Years**
4 Years - Indina Booker, Za'Riya Booker, Jerquale Bryant, Tina Bryant, Candice Evans, Patricia Garris, Maria Hansley, Michael Hansley, Krystle Hill, Olamide Kehinde, Krysta McFarland, James Moye, Margaret Nganga, Dawn Petterson, Deandra Rivers **5 Years** - Robin Doss, Dominique Forbes, Donald Pritchard, Kimberly Pritchard, David Schreiner	**4–5 Years**
6 Years - Annie Ansley, Tiffinie Hines, Janice Johnson, Shanna Stetson, Pamela Wright, Phillip Wright **7 Years** - Rebecca Burlage, Michelle Covert, Nikita Crawford, Melissa Harvey, Anthony Pistorio, Laveria Stewart, Sharrel Wiggins **8 Years** - April Bonner, Yvonne Jamison, Thelma Richardson, Sherry Studley **9 Years** - Twila Camden, Katrina Slagle, Roxie Stone, Jeanine Wivell **10 Years** - Karen Buxton, Jeanne Cullison, Eileen Schleif	**6–10 Years**
11 Years - Whitney Dear-Reyes, Jill Jennings, Carolyn Tyler, Marianne Ward, Richard Ward **12 Years** - Jeanine Wivell **13 Years** - Vicky Graves, LaShana Wesley, Michael Wood **14 Years** - Angela Ferguson **15 Years** - Andrea Anderson, Sandra Beard, Tommy Fitzgerald Jr, Holly Glass, Deborah Griffith, Elaine Harding, Valerie Johnson, Sophie Lovell, Cynthia Nunnally, Jacqueline Osborne, Linda Palmer, Donnie Shelton, Necomous Williams	**11–15 Years**
17 Years - Jennifer Ansley, Glen Kanode, Tanalea Kanode **18 Years** - Renee Charity, Mary Richardson, John Tomlin **19 Years** - Mary Lovell, Melonese McCallister, Lola Stewart **20 Years** - Connie Williams	**16–20 Years**
21 Years - Georgia Jones, Miriam Kurtyka, Signet McCallister **22 Years** - Clodiatter Bradbury, Heidi Williams **23 Years** - Philip Dodd **27 Years** - John Bass **29 Years** - Camille Pitts **30 Years** - Dawn Brenneman **31 Years** - Dana Read **32 Years** - Jeanne Cullison	**20 Plus Years**

Our Mission:

Realize success by helping others realize theirs.

Our Vision:

A positive and peaceful world for all.

Our Core Values:

We pursue learning and growth
We build relationships
We do the right thing
We care about others
We create fun experiences