



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services



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February 21, 2013

Message from Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.

By now, most communities have recovered from our latest in a string of challenges, a historic blizzard. This was an extraordinary weather event and it brought out an equally extraordinary response from our entire "Community of Providers." Thousands of public and private staff performed their jobs while overcoming what too many would seem insurmountable challenges.

My most sincere appreciation to all the staff that worked multiple shifts to ensure that consumers were well taken care of and reassured throughout the storm. Your dedication is truly exemplary.

In times like these, the heroic work of so many dedicated staff can be lost in a sea of competing headlines. I am in awe of the courage and focus exhibited by numerous staff. While this storm may not have lasted as long as some others Connecticut has experienced, the number of lives impacted will be chronicled for years to come.

I'd like to share the following story to highlight the level of dedication exhibited by our workforce during the recent storm. It is important to note that as important as these vignettes are, there are countless other staff that exhibited identical dedication to, and focus on, the individuals who rely on our service system. **I invite you to share other stories regarding exemplary efforts to care for others during the storm.** It is important that we take the time to recognize moments in our lives when uncommon acts of kindness become the norm. Thank you to everyone for your efforts throughout and after the storm.

STS Resilient Facing Blizzard of 2013

It was mid-afternoon on Friday, February 8, 2013 that Steven Hinckley started his journey that would extend over the next 54 hours and 230 miles in a blinding snowstorm. He operated the largest snow plow at Southbury Training School (STS) and only stopped for breaks and to check on his colleagues that he would pass along the way. The hours alone are amazing but the miles traveled back and forth on the 1500 acre campus are mind boggling. If Mr. Hinckley had traveled in a straight line, he would have ended his journey in places like Atlantic City, New Jersey, Lancaster, Pennsylvania or Lake Placid, New York.

During the biggest snow storm to hit Connecticut since the late 70's, Mr. Hinckley was not alone at STS. Unit Director Patricia Panasci and Program Supervisors, Adam Buster and Jeanne Hager worked throughout the storm coordinating staffing while Nursing Director Kerry DiPietro managed nursing services. The Fire Department personnel responded to medical emergencies during the storm and were able to safely transport residents who needed additional medical care to local hospitals.

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A special thank you in appreciation to all STS employees who worked long hours providing a safe environment for the residents and especially to the direct care support that traveled to work during the blizzard.

“By all accounts, the STS Ground crew did a better job at plowing our campus than most towns were able to do for themselves, and it was done with scarce resources,” said Jackson Pierre-Louis, Assistant Regional Director. “Keeping up with this snow storm was a huge challenge to all of us and we feel very fortunate to have such a cadre of competent and dedicated individuals working with us to carry out and to live the mission of the Department.”