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Press Release

Nonprofit Westchester and Elected Officials Salute Nonprofit Staff for Providing Essential Services at Congregant Settings

White Plains, New York April 20, 2020 - Thousands of dedicated essential workers in Westchester County have worked tirelessly, and at risk to their own health, to help those in great need since the start of the COVID-19 crisis. Direct-service staff at Westchester's congregant settings are providing residents with the care they need, from people with disabilities at group residences to the homeless and previously homeless, older adults in independent and assisted living and nursing homes settings, individuals with mental illness and children and youth in residential settings. Nonprofit Westchester members and elected officials salute these workers for their professionalism and compassion as they care for some of our county's most vulnerable residents, many of whom are at increased risk for the virus.

"We are tremendously grateful for the dedication of these essential workers who are critical to helping New York State fulfill its obligation to care for our most vulnerable residents. We owe these workers - who show care and compassion every day as part of their job and put themselves at risk - tremendous appreciation and respect. On behalf of all of New York, thank you!" said New York State Senator Shelley Mayer.

"To do what we all do on a normal, daily basis takes tremendous courage and character, and now our society needs us more than ever. Because we see things in people that others do not. We see how precious our elderly are. I have never been more proud to be a health care worker," said Ed Grano, Director of Rehabilitation, who himself is one of close to 400 staff members providing direct care at Bethel which provides a continuum of residential services for seniors in Westchester.

County Executive George Latimer said: "You can't define the term 'essential' without including Direct Care workers who provide lifesaving services each and every day to some of Westchester's most vulnerable residents - a population that needs our support more than ever as we face this pandemic. I join with all of Westchester to thank these hardworking folks who have continued the vital work they do no matter the unrepresented challenges they are facing."

Seth Diamond, CEO of WJCS which operates thirteen group residences for people with disabilities stated, "Close to 200 WJCS employees at 13 residences for people with disabilities are doing heroic work against great obstacles. These direct-care staff members, who do not have the option of working from home, have shown tremendous commitment as they continue to serve our developmentally disabled residents."

“We are all especially grateful for the doctors, nurses and other health care workers who are directly treating COVID-19 positive patients during this pandemic while many of us are able to socially distance ourselves from this risk. We also acknowledge the courage and commitment of the many staff in shelters, supportive housing and other residential programs who continue to serve their clients - including those who are COVID positive- despite the risk to themselves,” stated Anahaita Kotval, President of Nonprofit Westchester and CEO of Lifting Up Westchester, which aims to restore hope to Westchester County's men, women and children in need by providing them with food, shelter and support -and lifting them to greater self-sufficiency with dignity and respect.

“I am so inspired by the work of all our nonprofit organizations, and am very humbled as we recognize the direct care staff in congregant settings who are providing these essential services during this unprecedented crisis” said Nonprofit Westchester Executive Director Jan Fisher.

About Nonprofit Westchester

Nonprofit Westchester (NPW) is Westchester’s only membership organization dedicated solely to advancing and advocating for the needs and interests of the county's nonprofit sector and the people and communities they serve. Representing 180 nonprofit organizations and business members, the mission of NPW is to strengthen the visibility, capacity and impact of the nonprofit sector in Westchester County. For more information, visit www.npwestchester.org.