

# *In the* Spotlight

## *Direct Support Professionals*

### **Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week**



James Bova of Huntington has been a direct support professional for UCP of Long Island for 14 years. He works at the agency's facility in Hauppague, NY.

Bova has always had a passion for helping others, so he knew that working as a direct support professional was the right fit for him. "In high school I always loved volunteering and giving back to my community," he said. "It was then that I discovered that I wanted to spend my life helping others."

UCP of Long Island participants and staff admire Bova because of his kind spirit and energetic personality. "James goes above and beyond for our individuals," said Patricia Dalrymple, Assistant Director of Day Habilitation. "He is always encouraging participants to be their best and to follow their dreams. He does incredible work."

Bova spends his day assisting UCP of Long Island participants in the Independent Living Program and much more. He begins his day at 8:30 a.m. and moves nonstop. "Each day I ensure that our individuals have access to resources that enable them to live as independently as possible."

Bova also facilitates The Brushstrokes Art Program, a program in which participants express their thoughts and feelings through painting. "I enjoy watching our individuals grow and improve artistically," Bova explained. "Some have never painted before, but are now producing amazing work."

Many of the Brushstrokes artists said that Bova is not only a great instructor, but a good friend as well. "He makes the program so exciting that I don't want to go home," Artist Dan smiled. "He is very compassionate and he treats us all with respect."

Bova said that in order to be a good direct support professional, one's heart has to be in it. "You have to have an open mind, a compassionate heart and the ability to reinvent what you do on a regular basis to maintain a fresh and positive environment for the individuals you serve," he declared.