

Dorchester Reporter

TWO FROM DOT CITED FOR WORK AT DIRECT-CARE GROUP FACILITIES

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Elise Eckelkamp, MAB training consultant; Reynissa Prince; and Anastasia Kanistras, director of Day Programs and Quality Management.

If passion for direct care services to those with disabilities is a requirement, then Dorchester residents Reynissa Prince and Ifeoluwa Alabi have gone well beyond that evaluation and as result, they recently received 2023 Maxo Joseph Direct Care Awards with \$5,000 bonuses from their employer, MAB Community Services. They were honored last month in a ceremony with several other providers who served clients in the same way.

“We’re very grateful for the opportunity to celebrate our hardworking direct care staffers with much deserved recognition through these awards,” said Barbara Salisbury, CEO of MAB Community Services.

Prince, 27, a native of Grenada, and was working at a Starbucks while contemplating what to do with her life when she was recruited by a customer who works for MAB. Now, she works at the MABWorks day program in Brighton as the assistant director. She said her passion for the job has only increased since starting her career there in 2017.

“I enjoy the feeling of accomplishment I get when I do administration work, but it also allows me to implement and develop things that are in the client’s interest and help them reach any goals they want to succeed in,” she said. “Seeing them happy and loving the activities or trips they planned to Boston, I love seeing them come back happy.”

She added: “I tell others that if they have a heart that really cares about people and want to give help to people who want to succeed despite their disability...and have a passion for helping people, this is the field they should look into,” she said.



Omoniyi Kareem, residential coordinator; Ifeoluwa Alabi and his wife Ruth Alabi.

Photos by Darlene DeVita Photography

For Alabi, he had always been involved in service to the community and got a job in direct care while in college.

“When I got this job in college, I became attached to it because it’s another form of service and help to guys I think need so much help...and to make them feel like they’re part of the community and help them live their life as best as they can,” said Alabi, 38, who started at MAB in 2019.

Working at a group home in Belmont, he often takes his clients out on the town to basketball games or other community events. He often gives them extras, like haircuts and shaves, going above his expected role in case management and direct care.

“It makes them happy, too, and it’s part of what I like to do,” he said. “They are my friends. I spend about eight hours a day with them. They are like my second house and there’s a bond between us. That’s a great aspect of this job – you gain family wherever you work.”

The awards are named for Maxo Joseph, a dedicated caregiver who served residents at MAB for more than 19 years before dying from complications of Covid-19 in 2020. Since 2021, the awards have celebrated Maxo Joseph’s legacy by rewarding individuals who uphold the dedication that Joseph had to direct care excellence.