



Incentivizing Excellence:

Our NADSP E Badge Strategy

Lindsay Menough MA, Deputy Director and Kerrienne Rigney, Director of Day Program Services

Special Guest, Joe Macbeth Founder of NADSP

Introductions



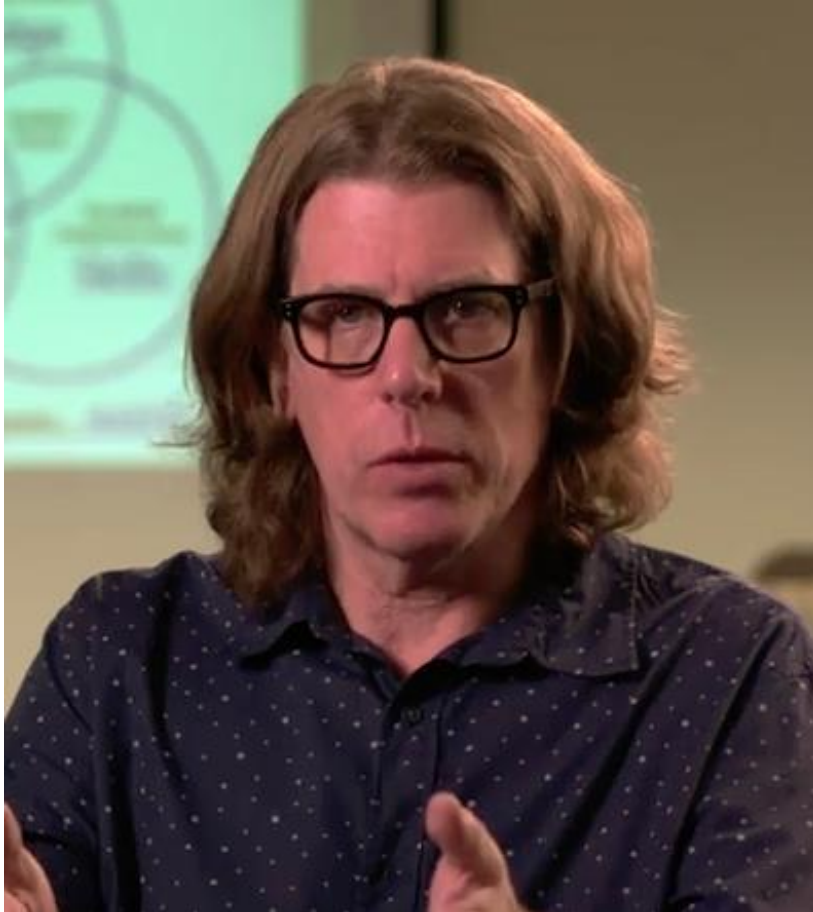
Lindsay Menough, MA
Deputy Director DDRC



Kerrienne Rigney
Director of Day Program Services DDRC



Introductions



Joe Macbeth

President and CEO of
National Alliance for Direct
Support Professionals
(NADSP)

What is NADSP?

NADSP is the leading national organization advancing the professional development, recognition, and credentialing of Direct Support Professionals.

Its mission: elevate the status of DSPs by improving practice standards, promoting system reform, and advancing their knowledge, skills, and values.

The goal: better outcomes and quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



Making a world of difference
in people's lives



What NADSP Offers the Field

Training and professional development

Nationally recognized certifications and credentials

Ethical, person-centered practice standards

Advocacy for workforce recognition and system reform

Career advancement pathways for DSPs

NADSP E Badge Academy



An online platform where DSPs and frontline supervisors build competencies and earn electronic badges.



Completing the academy earns a nationally recognized NADSP certification.



Two tracks: DSP and Frontline Supervisor (FLS).

A Brief History of DDRC Training and NADSP

DDRC was using a combination of in person and Relias trainings across the organization

November 6, 2023 DDRC signed our first NADSP contract for the E Badge Academy

25 users per year

The first year there was little to no interest in the E Badge Academy. Staff were already asked to take a long list of trainings that had minimal correlation to outcomes

We had to ask ourselves if our training was more than just a compliance check mark

The answer was clear. We needed to breathe some life back into our training. Thankfully everyone had taken CPR!



A Renaissance Story



One of the members of our HR team saw an opportunity with a new audience when I joined DDRC in October 2024. It also happened to be time to resign our NADSP contract.



I was 16 days into my new role at DDRC when the first meeting was scheduled to talk about what to do with the E Badge Academy.



Over the course of the following three weeks we had several meetings to craft the vision for the E Badge Academy



By December we had a plan



April 2025: We Put Incentives Behind It

We launched our NADSP
incentive and sent a flier to
every DSP:
One-time awards
Pay increase
Policy & Procedure
Committee seat
Spark Leader designation
Alliance Summit registration

Calling All DDRC Direct Support Professionals

Get Rewarded for Earning NADSP E-Badges & Certification!

At DDRC, we understand your work can make a real difference - and now it can reward you even more. As proud members of the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), we value our DSPs as true professionals. With our new DDRC NADSP E-Badge Academy Incentive Program, you can earn financial incentives, enhance your knowledge, and elevate your impact across the DDRC community!

Here's How it Works:

- ▶ When you complete Level 1 of the Academy you get a \$1,500 bonus.
- ▶ When you complete Level 2 of the Academy you get a \$1,500 bonus.
- ▶ When you complete Level 3, you get a percentage increase in pay of 5% and you'll also:

- **Be designated** a "Spark Leader" and mentor DSPs about person-centered supports and best practices.
- **Earn a seat** at our new policy committee to review policies and procedures from a DSP's perspective.
- **Get a spot** at the next Alliance Summit after completing the program.
- **Receive public recognition** for your achievement and dedication.

Interested?
Talk with your supervisor for more information and guidance about enrolling.

See more about the NADSP E-Badge Academy here:
<https://nadsp.org/services/the-nadsp-e-badge-academy/>

 *Be your best. Get rewarded.*





Congratulations to Meghan Maxwell, DDRC's very first e-badge earner with her Level 1 badge! You're on your way, Meghan!

From 2 Active Learners to a Full Roster



2024

There was very little knowledge about DDRC's investment with the E Badge Academy

8 people expressed interest in the E Badge Academy

Only 2 ever logged in and earned a badge

2025 to 2026

Increased communication about the E Badge Academy and the incentive program

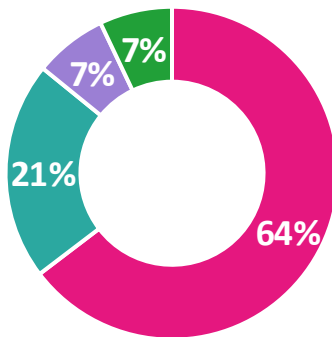
Every seat filled, with standout months:

- 67 badge submissions in December 2025
- 40 badge submissions in June 2026

Why They Enrolled, and How It Fit

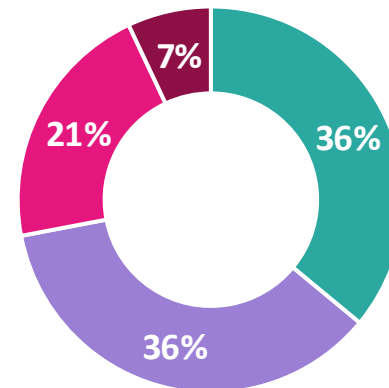
Why did you choose to enroll in the E Badge Academy?

- Build IDD support skills
- Advance career
- Incentives
- Love of learning



How easy has it been for you to work the E Badge Academy into your schedule?

- Extremely easy
- Somewhat easy
- Neutral
- Somewhat difficult
- Extremely difficult



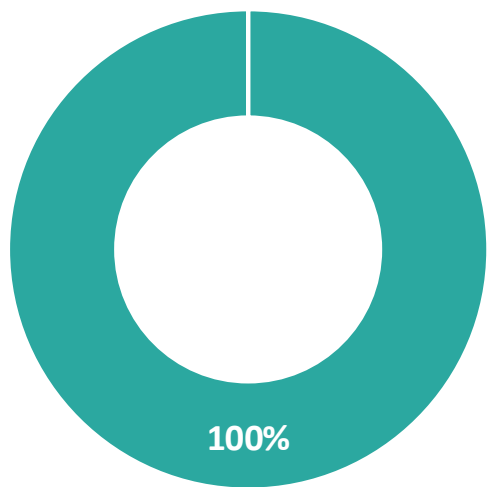
Inside the Academy: What We Asked Our Staff

What skill or practice from the academy changed how you support people or lead your team?

Supervisor Support and Ethics in Practice

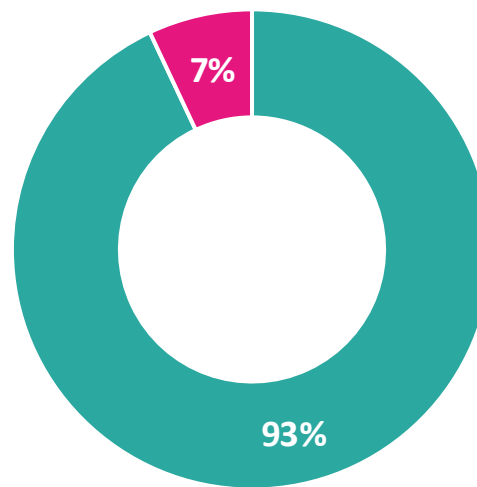
Thinking about the NADSP Code of Ethics, do you intentionally use or refer to them in your day to day work?

■ Yes ■ No



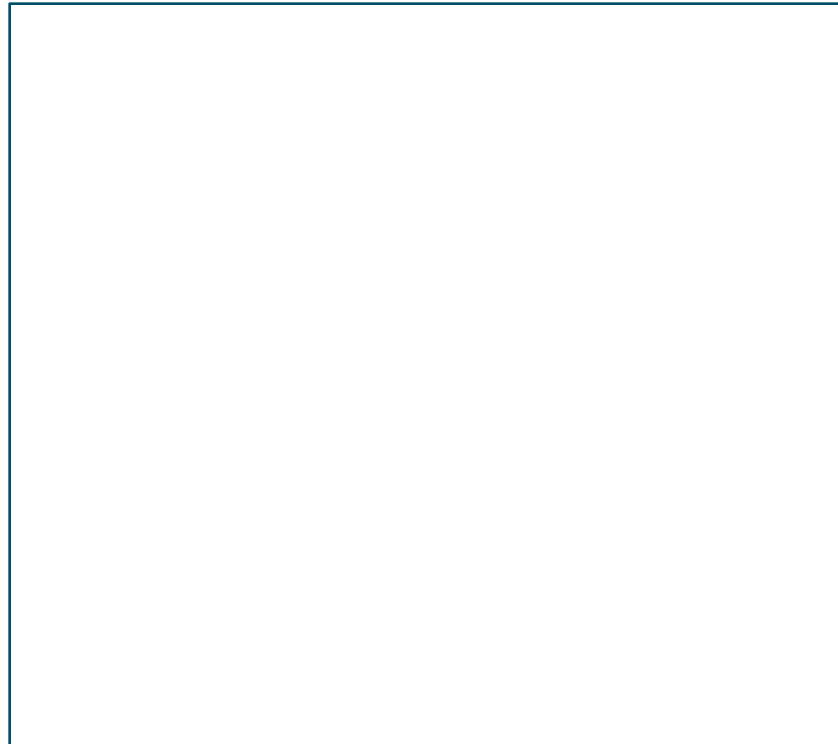
True or False: My supervisor supports my progression through the E Badge Academy

■ True ■ False



Inside the Academy: Staff Motivation

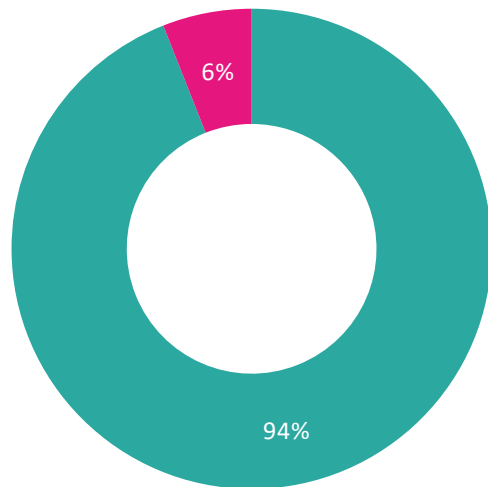
What motivated our staff to participate in the E Badge Academy



Completion and Enrollment Decisions

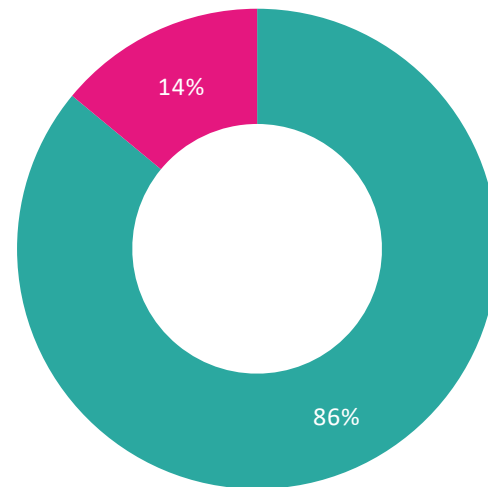
Have you finished, or do you plan to finish, the E Badge Academy?

■ Finished / plan to finish ■ Other



Did the available incentives influence your decision to enroll?

■ Yes ■ No



Inside the Academy: Value

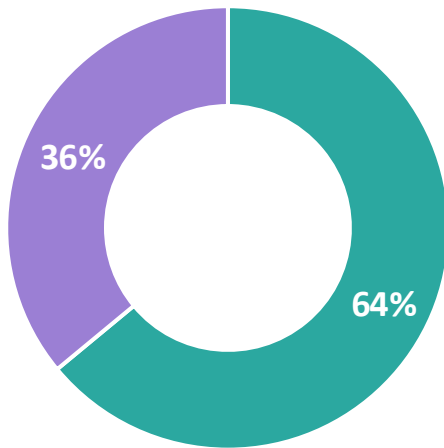
What has been most valuable or meaningful to you, and why?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin dark blue border, intended for a user to write their response to the question above.

Retention: 64% More Likely to Stay

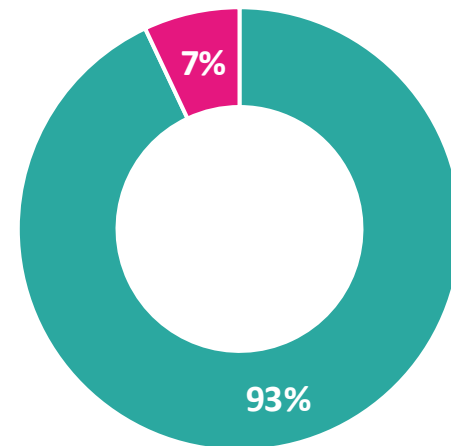
Retention

■ More likely to stay ■ No change



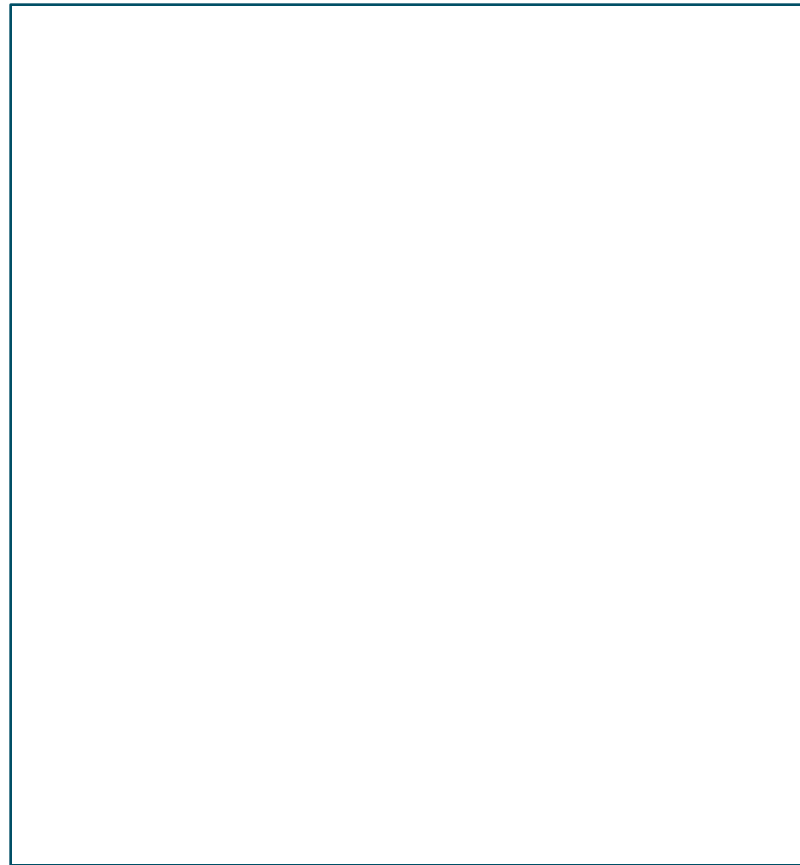
Benefit

■ A great benefit ■ Not a benefit



Inside the Academy: Outcomes

What has changed for the people you support, your team, or the organization?

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What Staff Wanted Most from the Academy

1

Be more effective in helping people with IDD acquire and maintain skills

2

Better understand the role DSPs and frontline supervisors play in quality outcomes

3

Understand how to be a strong advocate for rights and inclusion

4

Enhance my skills to increase my likelihood of a future promotion

5

Better support my teammates day to day

What Incentives Matter Most to Staff



Inside the Academy: One Thing We'd Change

Meghan Maxwell

Residential Direct Support
Professional

First staff person at DDRC to
successfully finish the
E Badge Academy



In Their Own Words

"I am thankful to work for a company that provides and encourages additional training."

"I do not have a favorite lesson, however, writing the testimonials has shifted my perspective to be more person-centered focused."

"I enjoyed the segments on contributions to positive outcomes and working with staff of various demographics."

"Learned how to better support the people we serve by respecting their decisions and providing them with the tools and the opportunity to make choices and have choices."

"One of my favorites was personal centered approaches thinking and planning."

"It's a great opportunity for everyone to have the chance of learned all the topics and courses the NADSP offered."



Empowered to Lead: How NADSP E-Badge Academy Supported Career Advancement

Donna Fuentes

Day Program Manager

3 years with DDRC



What We'd Tell Another Organization



What Worked

Tangible incentives moved people from interest to action

Visible supervisor support kept learners going

Recognition mattered as much as pay

64% told us it made them more likely to stay with DDRC

What We'd Do Differently

Protect time for learning, don't leave it to spare moments

Set a cadence and check in on progress

Start with a small cohort and let momentum spread

Questions?

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