



## **PRESS RELEASE**

Date: December 9, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **PSU Inc. and Starfire Council promote community integration for people with disabilities**

(Lebanon, OH) – Last month, Production Services Unlimited (PSU) partnered with Starfire Council to promote the benefits of social inclusion and community integration for individuals with developmental disabilities. The presentation, led by PSU staff, Jill Mays and Starfire Leader, Tim Vogt, featured community service projects chosen by enrolled individuals with the assistance of a staff member.

Due to a grant authorized by Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities (WCBDD), 19 projects were launched integrating participants in their community. From organizing a donation drive with the Humane Association of Warren County to attending musical concerts, participants, staff, and citizens alike, built strong connections and fond memories. One such memory included, enrolled individual, Tony New being inducted by the Lebanon Division of Fire as an honorary firefighter. Supplementing the title, New was awarded an official certificate and his own helmet.

With a mission of avoiding isolation and loneliness, Starfire Council works one-on-one to uncover an individual's talents and passions so he/she may thrive alongside neighbors in his/her community. Jill Mays, Development Coordinator for PSU commented on the initial challenge it was to avoid the "pre-conceived notions of what this would be like."

Tim Vogt, Director of Mission and Scale for Starfire, provided monthly coaching to PSU staff. Through his mentorship and the willingness of PSU to take a chance, doors were opened. Mays reflected "...I think when people saw the importance of even the small things to the individuals that we worked with, it helped staff's attitude with wanting to do things differently. Mays concluded, "All of our individuals should be given the respect and dignity for risk".

PSU Inc. offers Employment Services through both Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD). Additional services offered include Vocational Habilitation, Group Employment, and Adult Day Services to support individuals while encouraging them to seek employment and build relationships in their communities.

