



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 28, 2019**

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## **STATES LARGEST PRIVATE PROVIDER OF SERVICES FOR DISABILITIES, OAK HILL RAISES MINIMUM WAGE TO \$15 PER HOUR**

Oak Hill, Connecticut's largest private provider of services and supports for people with disabilities has increased its starting wage rate to \$15 per hour for over 900 hourly employees.

Oak Hill, like many, has faced recruiting challenges due to the State's chronic underpayment compared to the cost of providing care. The decision to make the increase is part of the organization's strategic plan to become the lead employer of choice in the specialty health care/social services and special education industry; remaining committed to creating opportunities for employees to build successful and long-term careers at Oak Hill.

"We are grateful to our devoted fundraising board who understands the importance of creating livable wages for our employees," says Barry Simon President & CEO of Oak Hill. "The board recognized the significance of paying wages to help us attract and retain employees who are committed to our mission."

Several corporations such as Target, COSTCO, Whole Foods and Gap have begun to increase their minimum wage to \$15 per hour, despite congressional reluctance to boost the federal minimum wage, a number that hasn't moved since 2009. These larger corporations have made this pledge in an effort to decrease turnover and increase productivity. Oak Hill's goal is to replicate the success from these areas, setting the standard with a stable work force for the social services industry in Connecticut. This move, it is believed, will allow less resources to be put into the cost of turnover and training of new employees and allow for the resources to be used to keep dedicated employees to provide high quality care for the people served.

"For me personally, this increase was a sign of hope," said Shanna York, Residential Program Worker at Oak Hill of 20 years, who helped advocate for higher wages. "This increase was a direct reflection that our voice matters. What we do matters. It made me realize that we can get our political leaders to listen when we stand strong together."

**About Oak Hill:** Oak Hill is Connecticut's largest private provider for people with disabilities, working to break down barriers to independence for the past 125 years. Oak Hill's mission is to set the standard, partnering with people with disabilities, to provide services and solutions promoting independence, education, health and dignity. Oak Hill programs support people of all ages, for all levels of need. For up-to-date information about Oak Hill please visit [OakHillCT.org](http://OakHillCT.org), [www.facebook.com/CIBOakHill](http://www.facebook.com/CIBOakHill), and on Twitter at @OakHillCT. Oak Hill is a IRS recognized 501(c)(3) organization.