

## Romney caregiver honored with state recognition

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Alyssa Malcolm receives her citation and award during the ceremony in Keyser (left to right ) with Delegate Rick Hillenbrand, Delegate Darren Thorne, Malcolm and Delegate Gary Howell. Teresa Thorne Augusta

**KEYSER** — Last week, Romney native Alyssa Malcolm received state honors as the 2023 West Virginia Direct Support Professional (DSP) of the year.

Malcolm is currently a caregiver at ResCare Community Living, but she has been with the company for seven years and has “basically worked every position there is” in that time.

ResCare is a nationwide network that encourages individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities to live more independently and enjoy a greater quality of life.

The clients range in age, starting from 18 and up, and some just need a little help doing things on their own.

“That’s basically what we do. We don’t go in and try to do everything for them; we try to help them do things for themselves,” Malcolm explained.

She shared that she initially started working at ResCare while in school to be a nurse, but ultimately, her clients are what kept her there.

“I have one specific lady that I have been with for the past seven years, and I couldn’t imagine being with somebody else,” Malcolm said.

The job can be stressful, and sometimes clients don’t remember to appreciate the help, so she felt “thankful” and “grateful” for the recognition.

“Sometimes we spend more time with our clients than our families,” Malcolm said, noting that short staffing can shift their schedules to work seven days a week.

Fortunately, her fiancé, though visually impaired, cares for their three daughters while she works, easing their busy schedules.

ResCare has several offices nearby, including Keyser and Martinsburg, but her main “in-home” care facility is in Romney. She has had opportunities to “move up” into higher positions but admitted that she values her clients more than moving up.

“I’m perfectly content with staying in the homes with my clients,” Malcolm said delightedly.

Every year, the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) recognizes nearly five dozen outstanding DSPs for their efforts to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have the support they need to live, work, and enjoy life independently in a community-like setting.

Out of thousands of nominees, Malcolm was chosen for her work empowering her clients. Last week’s appreciation picnic, held Friday, July 21, brought ResCare Community Living representatives – as well as delegates Gary Howell (R-87), Darren Thorne (R-89) and Rick Hillenbrand (R-88).

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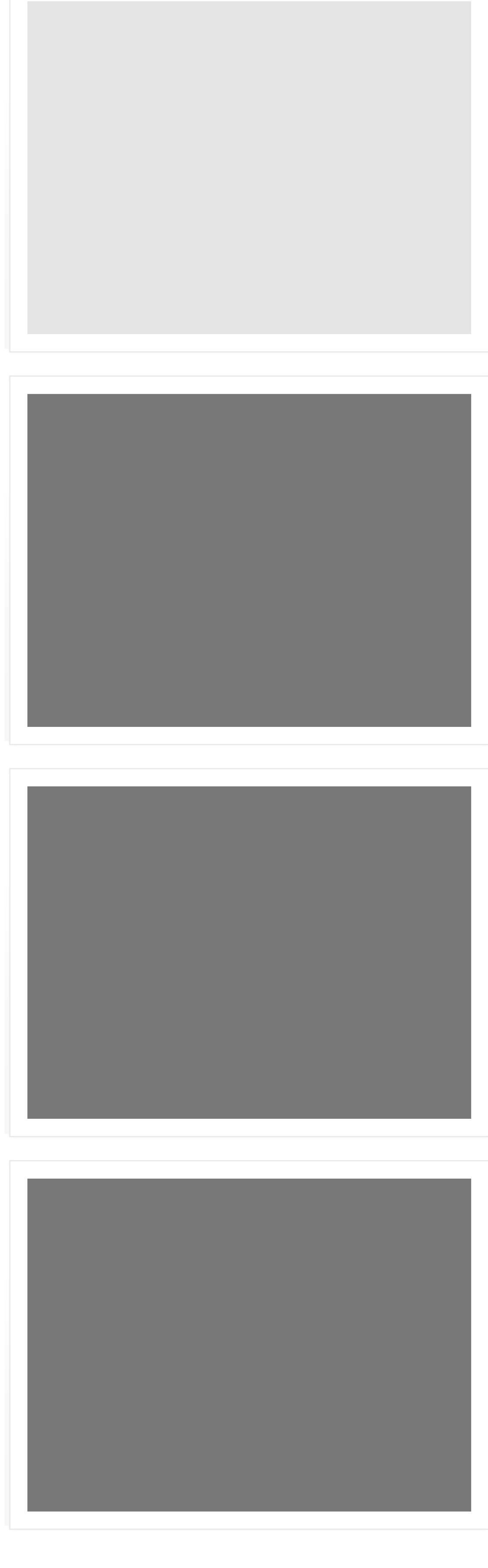
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