



For The Future Of Direct Care.

For The Future Of The Community We Serve.

We Must Advocate NOW.

How You Can Help People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Michigan and their families rely on Direct Care Workers (DCWs) for their daily support, safety, and wellbeing.

Unfortunately, Direct Care Worker salaries in Michigan's mental health system are directly tied to Medicaid funding, which has not kept pace with the needs of our state. Low wages coupled with demanding work and a tight labor market have made it difficult to find Direct Care Workers, whether you are looking for yourself, a loved one, or are hiring an employee for your organization. This leaves our state's most vulnerable residents at risk.

As you may know, MOKA is involved in the Direct Care Worker Coalition. The Coalition is currently proposing a *General Fund appropriation of \$127.0 million in FY 23 which would increase the average starting wage rate in the behavioral health system to approximately \$18.00 per hour.* That's what many entry-level jobs pay across the state right now and is the least we can do to compensate our Direct Care workforce.

With significant amounts of General Fund dollars and pandemic-related federal funding available to the state right now, Michigan has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to address the long-standing direct care workforce crisis in a meaningful and sustained manner.

Please use the [one-click advocacy button](#) to reach out to your local representatives to let them know how important Direct Care Workers are to you and your loved one. Direct support workers are pivotal in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in Michigan and it is our turn to support them!

[One Click Advocacy Button](#)

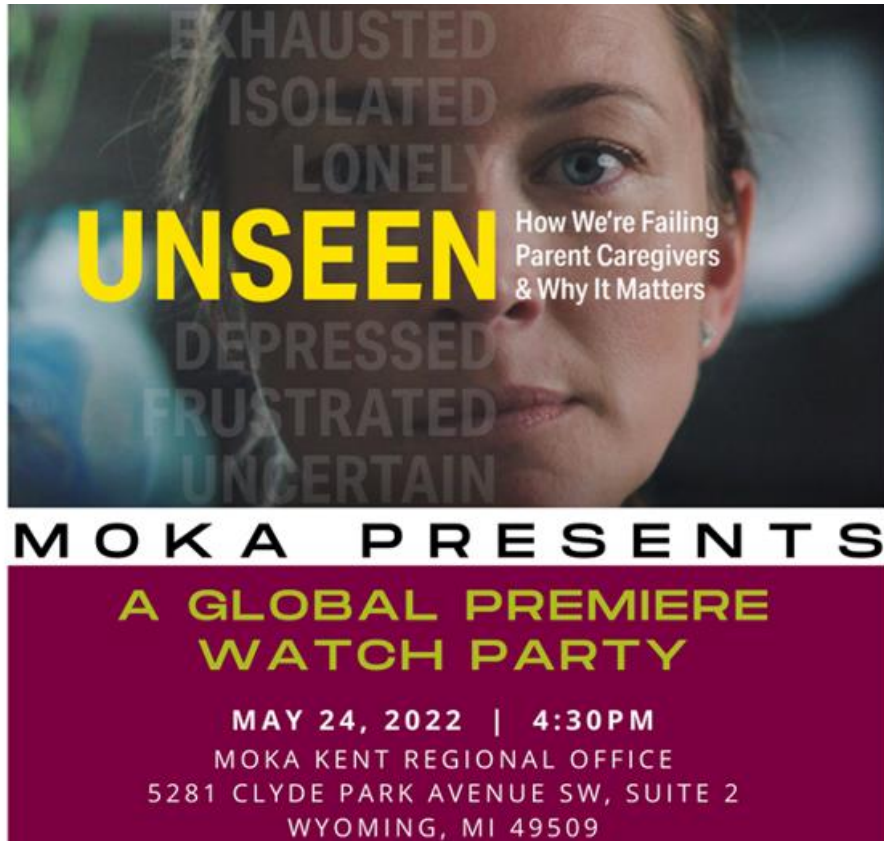
Interested in learning more about the issue of the Direct Care workforce shortage?



A great resource for more information on the issue of the Direct Care workforce shortage can be found in the [2022 Case for Inclusion: Blazing Trails to Sustainability for Community Disability Services](#). This year's report centers around the Direct Care Worker crisis and tells the story of community I/DD services in two parts: one focused on the cracks and faults in the current system, and one focused on policy objectives for rebuilding a foundation of inclusion.

Additional advocacy information can be found at www.moka.org/advocacy

[Click Hear to Read The Full Report](#)



Did you miss the in person premiere of *Unseen*? Not to fear! The Global Online Premiere of *Unseen: Caregiver Documentary* is happening May 20-26, 2022.

You are invited to join MOKA for a Global Premiere Watch Party for the documentary: *Unseen* on May 24th at 4:30pm at our Kent County Regional Office. Please RSVP to Hannah Kater at hkater@moka.org or by calling (800)644-2434 ext. 631

The Lucas Project's *Unseen* Documentary gives an up close and personal view of the lives of parent caregivers and their struggles. This powerful documentary is being used to help advocate for change in the support given to caregivers and their families. The first virtual screening will be accompanied by a Q&A with the filmmakers!

[Can't attend the MOKA Watch Party? Click here to get tickets for the week long Virtual Premiere!](#)

MOKA In The Media

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) Executive Director, Deb Atwood, joined Jordan Carlson on eightWest to talk about the deaf and hard of hearing community and their new location in the Special Olympics Michigan (SOMI) building.



MOKA was thrilled to be part of a shout out to the other organizations in the SOMI building with Deb explaining the advantages of having us all in one place. Including the collaborative work being done to create a highly educational and inclusive environment for the communities we serve.

Click the button below to watch the full interview and learn more about DHHS and the work being done in the SOMI building!

[Watch the full interview by clicking here!](#)



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What really drew me to MOKA was seeing that I could help someone else, which I believe is the most rewarding thing in life: helping others and showing them they can do anything they want. So when I started at MOKA, I instantly knew with the kids in the program and everyone I interacted with that I would go home every day feeling rewarded for the work I did.

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KATHLEEN EPPARD
YOUTH AUTISM PROGRAM ASSISTANT
moka 

Meet Kathleen,

Youth Autism Program Assistant! Kathleen started as a Youth Autism Specialist before quickly transitioning to her current role. She provides direct support to the children in the Youth Autism Program and assists the Program Supervisor with the management of the program.

Thank you for your dedication and life-changing contributions, Kathleen!



[Click Here To See If MOKA Has A Position Right For You!](#)



ARE YOU A STUDENT IN SEARCH OF EMPLOYMENT?

MOKA has **tuition reimbursement** as part of our benefits package!

Find more info on MOKA benefits and careers by clicking the button above.