

The ReSource

March 7, 2006

FOR PERSPECTIVE AND ANALYSIS

The Source of information for providers of community-based services for people with differing abilities.
A member service of NYSRA.

MEMBER ADVOCACY TOP PRIORITY FOR NYSRA

The year may be only two months old, but a lot has happened in those 60-or-so days at NYSRA and RRTI.

And, of course, there is a lot more to come.

During the first two months of 2006 we have seen a great deal of activity. As we reported in our last issue of The ReSource, NYSRA held its Legislative Forum and engaged in productive discussions with members and staff of the State Legislature. Those discussions continue as staff stay in touch with the budget maneuvering and policy positioning that characterize February and March each year in Albany. Fortunately, the budget situation this year does not appear to pose too many serious issues, though we remain vigilant, just in case.

That vigilance will continue this week as NYSRA's policy divisions each meet with us in Albany and spend part of their day here discussing advocacy priorities with staff, as well as visiting the Capitol for our new "mini-lobby days" to bring division-specific concerns to the attention of policymakers.

But there are many other things to work on, of course.

As this is written, it appears that NYSRA efforts to see significant improvements in the area of VESID contracting may be bearing fruit. Through discussions with key VESID personnel, we are hopeful that changes to a new payment system, efforts to streamline the process generally, and clearer guidelines regarding contracted services are already pending. Virtually all of our members who have tried to navigate the VESID process, as well as operate smoothly under that process, know how welcome these changes will be.

Planning efforts are in full swing for major NYSRA events that will occur this year. The Conference Planning Committee, chaired by Mark Foley, has already been actively engaged in putting together what promises to be a September conference offering terrific speakers, workshops and learning opportunities. Vendors are being lined up that will surely offer useful products as well. It's not too early to mark September 18-20 on your calendar as days to be joining us for the Leadership Training Summit.

There is also much activity focused on the June management meeting at Saratoga Springs, which this year will be held June 6 and 7 at the Gideon Putnam Hotel in the Saratoga Spa State Park. Attendees will be hearing the latest on trends in the area of service delivery, management and other topics of interest. Both of these major NYSRA/RRTI events, we hope, are marked on your calendars.

NYSRA's efforts in Albany on behalf of its members are continually pursued, with attention given to everything from the state budget now being considered by the Legislature to the latest regulatory developments at the state agency level.

As of this writing, it appears that legislative leaders and the governor are on course to adopt an on-time state budget for the second straight year. Although in many past years the leaders and executive have had major disagreements over state budget revenues, that is not the case this year. In fact, although the state budget timeline generally calls for a revenue agreement by March 10, this year that agreement came nearly one full week earlier. There is a sense in Albany that the entire budget process this year is cruising along at a faster clip.

Whether the Legislature and Governor come together to adopt an on-time budget by April 1 is still an open question. Still, all parties to budget talks seem to be working toward that goal and it appears likely - though such things are never assured - that the new fiscal year will begin with a state budget actually in place.

As we have reported, the Executive Budget proposed by the Governor on January 17 is one that has been largely well-received by members of the Legislature. The Governor did not choose to make major program cuts, although his plan does call for millions in savings from cutting "fraud, waste, and abuse" in the Medicaid program. We continue to monitor what those savings will entail.

On the program level, in addition to the welcome changes pending in the area of contracting with VESID, as mentioned above, we are closely watching the uneven rollout of the Office of Mental Health's PROS program. Although the program is due to be expanded to several new counties, word is that OMH may be putting on the brakes as it and federal officials further analyze Medicaid issues that are implicated by the program.

As news becomes available, NYSRA will be sharing it with our members immediately.

NYSRA's active advocacy and policy program relies on such communication, but we can't over-emphasize that these efforts rely heavily on communication from our members, as well. Our efforts to make NYSRA the most responsive organization it can be depend on you, our members, engaging with us on several levels - our NYSRA Division meetings, our conferences, our various study groups, and all other discussions. Everyone on the NYSRA staff is here to hear from you and prepared to work on your behalf.

Our success as an organization is the success of our members, and we continue to strive to make NYSRA a responsive, member-driven and service-oriented association that its members call their own.

- Jeff Wise, NYSRA President/CEO

INFORMATION SESSIONS ON NYS IMPLEMENTATION OF IDEA

The Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), New York State Education Department (NYSED), will be presenting information in spring 2006 on State requirements to implement IDEA 2004, with emphasis on new responsibilities for individual evaluations and eligibility determinations, individualized education program (IEP) development and implementation, transition services, discipline, due process and accountability requirements under the State Performance Plan (SPP).

Eleven information sessions* are scheduled throughout the State with a tentative listing of dates and locations as follows:

- * March 13, 2006—Albany
- * March 21, 2006—Hempstead - Hofstra University
- * March 21, 2006—Purchase
- * March 21, 2006—Patchogue - St. Joseph College
- * March 22, 2006—New York City - Marymount College
- * March 23, 2006—New York City
- * March 23, 2006—Potsdam
- * March 28, 2006—Rochester - Rochester Auditorium
- * March 29, 2006—Binghamton
- * March 30, 2006—Buffalo
- * April 4, 2006—Syracuse

*Each session will cover all topics and present the same information. Sessions are tentatively scheduled from 9:00AM - 4:00PM with sign-in beginning at 8:00AM. The sessions are open to the public, however those planning to attend must pre-register for the event. When details are finalized, specific information as to the exact locations, directions and the registration process will be made available at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/idea/home.html>. At that time, pre-registrations will be available through the VESID website.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EXPO

The New York State Governor's Expo on Assistive Technology entitled "*Technology Opens Doors*", is scheduled for Thursday, **May 11, 2006** at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany, New York. The Expo, a coordinated effort by the New York State Interagency Partnership on Assistive Technology and its Advisory Board, is being held with the support of Governor George E. Pataki.

The Expo will feature over 100 vendor demonstrations and informational booths showcasing the latest in assistive technology and universal design! In conjunction with the exhibits, presentations on assistive technology will take place in meeting rooms throughout the day. Visit their website at www.atexpo2006.com for more information on vendors, presentations, and accommodations.

SAMHSA ISSUES CONSENSUS STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration unveiled a consensus statement outlining principles necessary to achieve mental health recovery. The consensus statement was developed through deliberations by over 110 expert panelists representing mental health consumers, families, providers, advocates, researchers, managed care organizations, state and local public officials and others.

"Recovery must be the common, recognized outcome of the services we support," SAMHSA Administrator Charles Curie said.

"This consensus statement on mental health recovery provides essential guidance that helps us move towards operationalizing recovery from a public policy and public financing standpoint. Individuals, families, communities, providers, organizations, and systems can use these principles to build resilience and facilitate recovery."

The 10 Fundamental Components of Recovery include:

* Self-Direction: Consumers lead, control, exercise choice over, and determine their own path of recovery by optimizing autonomy, independence, and control of resources to achieve a self-determined life.

By definition, the recovery process must be self-directed by the individual, who defines his or her own life goals and designs a unique path towards those goals.

* Individualized and Person-Centered: There are multiple pathways to recovery based on an individual's unique strengths and resiliencies as well as his or her needs, preferences, experiences (including past trauma), and cultural background in all of its diverse representations. Individuals also identify recovery as being an ongoing journey and an end result as well as an overall paradigm for achieving wellness and optimal mental health.

* Empowerment: Consumers have the authority to choose from a range of options and to participate in all decisions—including the allocation of resources—that will affect their lives, and are educated and supported in so doing. They have the ability to join with other consumers to collectively and effectively speak for themselves about their needs, wants, desires, and aspirations. Through empowerment, an individual gains control of his or her own destiny and influences the organizational and societal structures in his or her life.

* Holistic: Recovery encompasses an individual's whole life, including mind, body, spirit, and community. Recovery embraces all aspects of life, including housing, employment, education, mental health and healthcare treatment and services, complementary and naturalistic services (such as

recreational services, libraries, museums, etc.), addictions treatment, spirituality, creativity, social networks, community participation, and family supports as determined by the person. Families, providers, organizations, systems, communities, and society play crucial roles in creating and maintaining meaningful opportunities for consumer access to these supports.

* **Non-Linear:** Recovery is not a step-by step process but one based on continual growth, occasional setbacks, and learning from experience. Recovery begins with an initial stage of awareness in which a person recognizes that positive change is possible. This awareness enables the consumer to move on to fully engage in the work of recovery.

* **Strengths-Based:** Recovery focuses on valuing and building on the multiple capacities, resiliencies, talents, coping abilities, and inherent worth of individuals. By building on these strengths, consumers leave stymied life roles behind and engage in new life roles (e.g., partner, caregiver, friend, student, and employee). The process of recovery moves forward through interaction with others in supportive, trust-based relationships.

* **Peer Support:** Mutual support-including the sharing of experiential knowledge and skills and social learning-plays an invaluable role in recovery. Consumers encourage and engage other consumers in recovery and provide each other with a sense of belonging, supportive relationships, valued roles, and community.

* **Respect:** Community, systems, and societal acceptance and appreciation of consumers -including protecting their rights and eliminating discrimination and stigma-are crucial in achieving recovery. Self-acceptance and regaining belief in one's self are particularly vital. Respect ensures the inclusion and full participation of consumers in all aspects of their lives.

* **Responsibility:** Consumers have a personal responsibility for their own self-care and journeys of recovery. Taking steps towards their goals may require great courage. Consumers must strive to understand and give meaning to their experiences and identify coping strategies and healing processes to promote their own wellness.

* **Hope:** Recovery provides the essential and motivating message of a better future- that people can and do overcome the barriers and obstacles that confront them. Hope is internalized; but can be fostered by peers, families, friends, providers, and others. Hope is the catalyst of the recovery process.

The National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery is also available at SAMHSA's National Mental Health Information Center at www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov or 1-800-789-2647.

CENTER FOR PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES SEEKS NOMINATIONS FROM ORGANIZATIONS IN WORKPLACE PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

The Center for Personal Assistance Services is seeking nominations from private and public organizations of promising practices in the provision of workplace personal assistance services (Workplace PAS).

Workplace PAS includes task-related assistance at work, such as readers, interpreters, help with lifting or reaching, re-assignment of non-essential duties to co-workers, and other help related to performing work tasks and may include personal care-related assistance such as helping someone with toileting, eating, or drinking while at work.

If you have provided personal assistance services (PAS) to an employee with a disability or facilitated the provision of PAS in the workplace, then you possess the vision and creativity to meet the needs of a diverse workforce. We understand that recognition is important when you go the extra miles in meeting the needs of your workforce. And, we want to hear about it. We can help share your promising practices with your business peers.

We are looking for Workplace PAS Practices that:

- Have contributed to hiring, retaining, or promoting workers with disabilities.
- Are a part of your organizations written policy, and you agree to make the policy available through the Centers project.
- Have been in place for at least 6 months.
- Reduce or eliminate barriers to workplace PAS.

If your promising Workplace PAS practice meets this criteria, please complete the on-line form found at: <http://157.182.245.35:8555>. A Center for PAS representative will schedule a phone interview to learn more about your success.

If you have any questions about this effort, please feel free to email janmail@mail.wvu.edu.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR NY STATEWIDE DISABILITIES ADVOCACY ASSOCIATION NAMED

The Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) and Support Center for Nonprofit Management are pleased to announce that Kathryn Cappella has been selected as the Executive Director of the New York Statewide Disabilities Advocacy Association. This is a new organization to create an "advocacy network" and strengthen the advocacy system by connecting and coordinating resources throughout the state. Kathryn will work directly with the Support Center, the DDPC and a volunteer Advisory Committee, to develop, launch and lead a statewide association for advocates and advocacy organizations.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Executive Director: Dynamic visionary with successful leadership record sought for CEO position at organization serving individuals with disabilities. REHAB Programs Inc., has an annual budget of over \$23.5 million, employs 500 people and provides educational, clinical, vocational and residential services to over 2300 individuals in the Mid-Hudson region of New York State. Position requires a master's degree in business, management or health/human services field, plus extensive similar senior management experience. Familiarity with pertinent NYS regulations and reimbursement systems required. Excellent salary and benefits.

Send resume with salary requirements to: Director of Human Resources, REHAB Programs, Inc., 70 Overocker Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603; Fax: (845) 473-1270. E-Mail: karensimon@rehabprograms.org



Vision Rehabilitation Teacher, Part-time: Provides vision Rehabilitation teaching for both adults and children in home setting, refers and networks with related agencies. Responsible for developing individualized treatment plan, case management and presentations in the community. Requires Bachelor's Degree in related field, training including Braille I leading to professional R.T. certification. ACVREP certification desirable. Agency will provide on the job training toward cert. Salary commensurate with experience. Send resume/refs. to E.D., Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired of Jefferson Co., 321 Prospect St., Watertown, NY 13601 or for more information call (315) 782-2451.

Sullivan ARC Article 16 Clinic Program Director: Large multi-service human service agency serving consumers with a range of developmental disabilities has an exciting opportunity for a professional interested in working in a cutting edge agency. We are looking for a motivated professional to assist in the daily operation of an outpatient clinic and provide leadership/direction to specific areas of oversight. Minimum of a bachelor's degree in a human service field with management/supervisory experience required.

We have competitive salaries and excellent benefits. Send resume to Human Resources Department, 162 East Broadway, Monticello, N.Y. 12701; fax to (845) 796-3213; or apply online at www.SullivanArc.org.

NYSRA AND RRTI CALENDAR

March 2006

March 7

Vocational Rehabilitation Division - Lobby Day, Albany

March 8

DD Division - Lobby Day, Albany

March 9

RRTI Seminar: Creating a Positive Work Environment, Albany

March 15

NYSRA OPTS TA Conference Call, 3pm

March 21

RRTI Audio Conference: *Resource Ownership & Job Obtainment*

March 16

Partnerships for Youth in Transition (Voc. Rehab Division), Albany

March 22

RRTI Board Meeting, NYC

March 23

NYSRA Board Meeting, NYC

March 29

RRTI Seminar: Compliance Issues for Medicaid and Mental Health, NYC