

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

NYSRA LEADING CHANGE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Below are excerpts from the remarks of Jeff Wise, delivered September 25, 2007 at the Annual Leadership Training Summit in Albany.

NYSRA is fortunate to have a very engaged Board, a progressive chair and slate of officers, a committed staff and – most important – a strong membership. Those are all key ingredients to being successful.

We are working in good ways to take advantage of those key ingredients and use them to the fullest. But there is something more we need.

Change. Not drastic change, really. But refinements to and honing of our skills as we enter a new era of challenge.

Linda Ellerbee touched on this in terrific remarks to the hundreds who assembled at our recently completed Leadership Training Summit in Albany. She mentioned a couple of very significant points: First, she noted that changing things at the very least means there is hope for the future – that there *is* a future.

Second, she mentioned that we often look at change as something “that is done *to* us” or happens to us.

We need, sometimes, to turn that second point around.

Our field is currently undergoing considerable attention on all sorts of issues, ranging from who sets rates, to what programs government may or may not continue to pay for, to what sorts of policies are in place regarding the care of people receiving those services. We need to meet those inquiries head on, make the case for proper reimbursement, remind the government that the services you provide are a proper thing for government to maintain and strengthen, and educate the public to the fact that the people you serve are getting the quality services and compassionate care they deserve.

And if things are going to change, we need to be the ones who are out in front of it, leading the changes in the right direction. It has become popular for organizations like NYSRA to say we are “agents of change.” We should be. But we must be more. We must rework *ourselves*. Instead of merely being an *agent* of change, we also need to be an organization *that can change and be nimble*.



For decades, the work of organizations and advocates has consisted largely of trying to force changes in policies. Every group or population, it seems, has formed an advocacy infrastructure to advance its agenda.

What has resulted is a policy world that has become virtually unmanageable by the policy-makers themselves, no matter how badly they want to manage it. Often, their understandable response is to seek simpler, more efficient solutions. Nearly always, they want those solutions to come from the field. They are more inclined than ever to being listeners, rather than speakers, about what should be done.

So I firmly believe that organizations like NYSRA must recognize that *we* must change, just as we *seek* change.

NYSRA must recognize and internalize that the world of public policy is dynamic and changing. We have worked for nearly 30 years, diligently, to shape and mold policies and priorities that best serve the rehabilitation community, from individuals receiving services to agencies providing services to the volunteers who serve on the boards of those agencies.

But in addition to that role, rather than just working to force policies to fit our operation, we at the same time have to change to make our operation work within a framework that is becoming, at least at some levels, less complex, more straightforward, driven by – as one NYSRA Board member recently put it – “doing the right things right.”

Which means that, even as we work on new strategies and tactics, refine them to become an even more effective voice, hone them to become an even more cutting-edge policy leader, we are still guided by a constant principle that’s been with us, and part of us, from the start:

Doing the right things right.

Fortunately, that is something this community and this association are quite familiar with. I thank you for that, and for being here, and look forward to meeting the coming challenges shoulder to shoulder with the finest providers anywhere.

Inside Edition

National Employment Disabilities Awareness Month..... 3

Leadership Training Summit.....4

NYSRA files CMS Comments..... 5

Upcoming Meetings.. 5

Employment Opportunities..... 6

OCTOBER

National Disabilities
Employment Awareness Month



OCTOBER IS NATIONAL DISABILITIES EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

Congress designated each October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). The Office of Disability Employment Policy has the lead in planning NDEAM activities and materials to increase the public's awareness of the contributions and skills of American workers with disabilities. Various programs carried out throughout the month also highlight the specific employment barriers that still need to be addressed and removed.

This effort to educate the American public about issues related to disability and employment actually began in 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

DISABILITY MENTORING DAY

A Year-Round Program That is Observed Each Year in October.

Disability Mentoring Day is a large-scale, broad-based effort designed to promote career development for students and other job seekers with disabilities (mentees) through hands-on career exploration, job shadowing and internship or employment opportunities, and matching of mentee/mentor relationships. This program is hosted nationally in regions around the country by the American Association of People with disabilities (AAPD), in close partnership with the Social Security Administration, as well as many national corporate sponsors, whose generosity and participation make this program possible.

Each year, Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) is observed in October, in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This year DMD is scheduled for Wednesday, **October 31, 2007**. However the actual mentoring experience can happen anytime in October. Or anytime during the year that fits the schedule of the Mentor & Mentee.

The Goals of DMD:

- To enhance internship and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- To promote disability as a central component of diversity recruitment for a more inclusive workforce.
- To dispel employers' fears about hiring people with disabilities.
- To increase confidence among students and job seekers with disabilities.
- To serve as a launching point to promote a year-round national effort to foster mentoring and career exploration opportunities.

What Happens on Disability Mentoring Day?

ONE-ON-ONE JOB SHADOWING. Mentees with disabilities are matched with work place mentors according to expressed career interests. This enables mentees to learn more from their assigned mentors about a typical day on the job and how to prepare for that particular career.

GROUP VISITS TO WORKSITES. Mentees with disabilities can tour a workplace, meet with its various employees, and learn firsthand about different types of jobs and related opportunities within that career field.

DIVERSE PROGRAMMATIC EVENTS. In addition, the Western New York community also plans a kick-off breakfast for mentors and mentees at the HSBC Center in downtown Buffalo which is followed by one-on-one mentoring at the mentor's workplace. Last year, more than 9,000 students and job seekers with disabilities participated in DMD. They were mentored by almost 1,500 private, non-profit, governmental, and educational organizations.

How To Get Involved

If you are a student or job seeker with a disability who is interested in getting involved as a mentee, or if you are an employer, educator or vocational counselor who is interested in becoming involved as a workplace mentor, Contact Chuck Root, at 716.856-8139 Ext. 3179. Or you can register on line at <http://www.wnyceo.com/DMDMentorapplication1.htm> for a mentor application and at <http://www.wnyceo.com/DMDMenteeApplication.htm> for a mentee application.

2007 NYSRA BUSINESS & INDUSTRY RECOGNITION AWARDS

NYSRA's Vocational Rehabilitation Division salutes businesses that are "employment partners" with NYSRA member agencies in providing full employment for people with differing abilities.

CORPORATE STATE AWARD WINNER

Observer Dispatch (*ARC Oneida Lewis*)

CORPORATE REGIONAL AWARD WINNERS

Buffalo: SUNY Fredonia (*The Resource Center*)

Binghamton: The Hampton Inn (*JM Murray*)

Capital District: Prime Flight Aviation (*Northeast Career Planning*)

Mid-Hudson: Dress Barn, Inc. (*Jawonio, Inc.*)

Manhattan: People Care, Inc. (*Goodwill NY-NJ*)

Long Island: CVS/CCI and Rubie's Costume Co. (*TRI*)

SMALL BUSINESS STATE AWARD WINNER

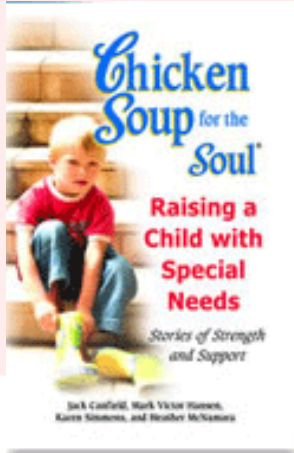
RDS Delivery Service (*Fedcap, Inc.*)

SMALL BUSINESS REGIONAL AWARD WINNERS

Rochester: Ye Olde Pizza Pub (*Madison Cortland ARC*)

Mid-Hudson: Strawton Jewelers (*Jawonio, Inc.*)

Certificates were awarded to 23 Corporate and Small businesses across NYS.



NYSRA extends its thanks and appreciation to its members and friends who volunteered to be Readers for the book, "Chicken Soup for the Soul: Children with Special Needs". Without your assistance, this book would not have been possible.

VOLUNTEERS INCLUDED:

Stacey Antos, Liberty Enterprises, Montgomery County ARC
Lindsey Bailey
Kristin Burns, RN, The Arc, Oneida-Lewis Chapter
Andrea L. Colby, COARC
Robin Collins, Madison Cortland ARC
Kimberly Corbett, JM Murray Center
Patty Dobbins, The Arc Oneida Lewis
Helen S. Edelman, Community, Work & Independence
Concetta Ferguson, People, Inc.
Gayle Farman
Jeanne Frank, Lexington Center
Jennifer Hatch, The Arc, Oneida Lewis
Mary Ingersoll, Onondaga ARC
Kimberly Kadziolka, People, Inc.
AJ Kircher, JM Murray Center
Lynn Klein, The Arc, Oneida Lewis
Emily Marino, YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities
Desiree' Mason, Sullivan ARC
Wendy McCarthy, DDAWNY
Michael Mihaley, Suffolk AHRC
Amy Millard, The Arc, Oneida Lewis
Nancy Miller, The Rehabilitation Center
Sara Miller, Madison Cortland ARC
Brenna Moore, Onondaga ARC
Dr. Beth Mount
Loretta Murray, Millneck Services for Deaf Adults
Denise M. Paszkiewicz, People, Inc.
Sarah E. Phelan
Marguerite Waldron, Schoharie County ARC

EEOC FREEDOM TO COMPETE AWARDS

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), on Wednesday September 26 presented the agency's third annual "Freedom to Compete Award" to five employers from the private and public sectors for best practices that promote access and inclusion. One of the five awards went to NYSRA member Abilities, Inc. in Albertson, New York.

Abilities, Inc. was recognized for its "Experience Counts Program" to assist mature workers with disabilities or age-related limitations to regain meaningful employment. The program aims to educate employers about the value of hiring or retaining older workers and to assist mature job seekers in realigning their careers. The goal of this PWI program is to serve 720 job seekers and to place at least 540 into meaningful jobs. The program operates in the Bronx, New York, Ann Arbor, Michigan and Birmingham, Alabama.

Abilities, Inc. used their Project with Industries (PWI) program for the efforts that were recognized by EEOC. Other award winners were: I-NABIR member, Lion's World Services for the Blind in Little Rock, Arkansas, Emory Crawford Long Hospital in Atlanta for an employment program for persons with disabilities, the City of Norfolk (VA) for its Pathways to Public Service program, and the Johns Hopkins Health systems for several programs including hiring person with developmental disabilities.

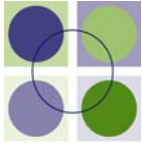


SELF-ADVOCACY CONFERENCE

NYSRA had the honor of facilitating a dynamic panel of presenters at the NYS Self-Advocacy Conference on September 7. Panelist spoke to fellow self-advocates about the jobs/day activities they have and how they found them and keep them to make them happy.

We would like to thank Keisha Saunders from C.O.O.L. Speakers Bureau from Liberty Enterprises in Amsterdam, New York who came on her day off to join her peers, share her story and offer tips and techniques for self advocates to encourage others to speak up for themselves in the face of choosing "work" - whatever that is for them.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGING TIMES



New Partnerships for changing times was the theme for this year's Leadership Training Summit. A theme echoed in the addresses to attendees by NYSRA President & CEO, Jeff Wise; Keynote Speaker, Linda Ellerbee; Plenary Speaker Richard Pimental, and one that permeated throughout the more than 50 training sessions.

NYSRA's Leadership Training Summit pleased the palates of more than 500 registered attendees.

We were able to bring to our attendees, for the first time ever, a MGM movie premier of the "Music Within". The "Music Within" is an awe-inspiring story based on the life of NYSRA conference plenary speaker, Richard Pimental. It is a "must see" movie about inspiring belief, action and change. It is scheduled for nationwide release later this winter.



**2007 ART IN MOTION WINNER
ROBERT J. KAPLAN - FEDCAP**

People's Choice Winner - Color
Angel Crawn - Mountain Lake Services

People's Choice Winner - Design
Walter Rolf - UCP Suffolk

People's Choice Winner - Originality
IPRT Writers - Northeast Career Planning

Honorable Mentions
Larry Deskiewicz - Aspire WNY
Colvin Ave Consumers - NECP
Western Day Hab - Center for Disability Services
Joe McAuley - REHAB Program
Larry Neals - FEDCAP
Jackie Seindenberg - DDI
Donna Wachtel - Center for Disability Services
Rolf Walter - UCP Suffolk

NYSRA's second annual Art Show held during the conference tapped into the artistic repertoire of individuals who receive services from NYSRA member agencies.

More than 150 pieces of artwork were submitted for the art show. Robert J. Kaplan's painting was recognized as NYSRA's 2007 Art In Motion Winner and it donned the highly coveted spot on the cover of the Conference Awards Brochure. Conference attendees were able to actively participate in the art show by voting for People's Choice Winners and Honorable Mentions.

During the conference, awards were presented to individuals who have made significant accomplishments in the disability field.

NYSRA was pleased to recognize New York State Senator Thomas P. Morahan, Chairman of the Senate's Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Committee as NYSRA's 2007 Public Official of the Year; Aaron

Liebowitz, Executive Director of ACLD received the Adrian Levy Award; Marisol Getchius, Advocacy Assistant at UCP Suffolk received the Thomas A. Maul Self-Advocacy Award and Theresa Pirraglia affiliated with Devereux NY received the Martha Fitzpatrick Citizen Advocate Award.



NYSRA was the proud recipient of a poem and letter from Northeast Career Planning regarding the 2nd Annual Art show held during the Conference. The letter reads as follows:

Thank you for the "People's Choice" Ribbon for Originality. We are grateful and privileged to be chosen for the award by the people who attended the "Art In Motion" exhibit. We also wish to thank you for even having an exhibit like this, in which to display artwork. The art was so beautiful; none of our art experiences were more exciting than being at Art In Motion. Its dedication was obvious, and the caliber of entries was so high, that we're proud of doing well.

NYSRA's Art In Motion Exhibit has given us a new measure of the value of group work and teamwork. We began as individuals and finished together; we experienced what it's like to go to an art exhibit; we came to know other artists and how they approach their work. Here's something for you:

Once again, thank you very much.

*Sincerely yours,
IPRT Writers*

A POEM FOR ART IN MOTION

**The Artists were fascinating
And we were overwhelmed
To submit our work**

**Art is pretty, art is witty
Art can be sometimes silly**

**Art is in beauty
Art is in sand**

**Art is there when you need it
For expression, for a hand**

~ IPRT Writers

THANK YOU TO OUR CONFERENCE SPONSORS!

PLATINUM SPONSORS



GOLD SPONSORS



~ 2007 Art show Pictures

NCD REPORT ON EMPLOYMENT

The National Council on Disability (NCD) released a report that presents the best practices in the public and private sectors and the promising public policies and initiatives that increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The employment rate of working age people with disabilities remains only half that of people without disabilities (38 percent compared with 78 percent in 2005).

The report, Empowerment for Americans with Disabilities: Breaking Barriers to Careers and Full Employment, www.ncd.gov/newsroom/publications/2007/NCDEmployment_20071001.htm comprehensively reviews the issues integral to the employment of people with disabilities. It has two broad aims: 1) to summarize the existing knowledge regarding the employment of people with disabilities in a series of short issue briefs; and 2) to present new information on the perspectives of employers, people with disabilities, and disability specialists on the key barriers and facilitators of employment.

According to NCD chairperson John R. Vaughn, "For Americans with disabilities, no less than for all other citizens, the opportunity to earn a living and be self-supporting is a universally held goal. Yet in perhaps no area of public policy has the expectations gap so stubbornly resisted our efforts to achieve equality. Whatever set of statistics one chooses from among the varying estimates of disabled Americans' employment rates, the rate and level of employment for this population remain far too low. These employment and earnings gaps are a substantial public and policy concern. A lack of employment opportunities limits the ability of many people with disabilities to fully participate in society, since employment plays a number of important roles and functions for individuals."

To read the complete press release, including NCD's recommendations for improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities, go to: <http://www.aapd.com/News/empissues/071001ncd.htm>

IRS ONLINE TRAINING COURSES FOR 501(c)(3)s



The IRS EO has launched a website providing 5 important training courses for 501(c)(3)s. The courses include:

- How to keep your tax-exempt status (30 minutes, approx)
- Unrelated business expenses and taxable income (30 minutes, approx)
- Employment issues related to tax purposes (30 minutes, approx)
- Form 990 and filing an error-free return (60 minutes, approx)
- Required disclosures for 501(c)(3)s (30 minutes, approx)

The training provides the tools and knowledge to help organizations keep their exempt status intact. It consists of five interactive courses, which you can take individually and in any order.

Courses are free. Visit <http://www.stayexempt.org/>.

NYSRA FILES COMMENTS WITH CMS ON REHAB REG

The Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has issued a proposed rulemaking that could have serious repercussions for service providers. The rule, issued, in August, would make changes to the so-called "state rehab option" and preclude many programs from qualifying for Federal Medicaid dollars and shifting all costs of those programs to the states.

The period for comments on the regulation concluded October 12. NYSRA filed its formal comments with CMS electronically on October 10.

We are, of course, strongly opposed to the adoption of this regulation. A copy of our comments can be viewed by visiting our website at www.nyrehab.org.



Meanwhile, you may also recall that Congress inserted a moratorium in the recent S-CHIP bill reauthorizing the children's health insurance program. The moratorium would postpone this regulation at least until May 2008. However, the S-CHIP bill was vetoed by the President. A veto over-ride vote may occur next Tuesday, but it is not at all clear that sufficient votes are in hand to over-ride the veto.

We will continue to pursue a dual strategy on dealing with this regulation: 1) Respond to CMS formally with comments and input on its regulatory activities; and 2) Pursue legislative remedies through Congress in order to keep services in place.

We will keep you updated on these issues and efforts.



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

OCTOBER 2007

- 24: OPTS – CONFERENCE CALL
- 29: MENTAL HEALTH DIVISION – ALBANY

NOVEMBER 2007

- 1: DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES – ALBANY
- 8: PARTNERSHIP FOR YOUTH IN TRANSITION – ALBANY
- 15: EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS COMMITTEE – ALBANY
- 16: VOCATIONAL REHAB DIVISION – NYC
- 21: OPTS – CONFERENCE CALL

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Director of Employment Services:

Dynamic visionary with proven track record needed to supervise an Integrated Employment Program and a Vocational Training Program in a Sheltered Workshop in a 25 million dollar diverse organization serving disabled individuals. Must be able to guide departments in attaining the highest quality goals of the organization, forecast needs and trends, provide leadership in the expansion/development of services, enhance bottom line performance and efficiency, and supervise management of multi-site facilities. Position requires a bachelors degree with a minimum of 10 years senior management level experience in a broad array of human service programs dealing primarily with people with disabilities. (or Masters degree in a relevant field or MBA plus 5 years experience). The successful candidate must be highly motivated, strong team leader/team player, demonstrate a successful track record in communication and problem-solving, and be committed to ensuring the successes of our participants through dedication and perseverance. We offer an excellent salary and benefit package including health, dental, four weeks paid vacation per year. Send resume with cover letter and salary requirements to: Human Resources Department, REHAB Programs, Inc., 70 Overocker Rd., Poughkeepsie NY 12603, fax: 845-473-1270, e-mail: karensimon@rehabprograms.org AA/EOE.

Direct Care:

Work with individuals with traumatic brain injury. PT, days/eve./wknds. Buffalo, Niagara Falls and suburbs. HS Diploma/GED and car required. PCA/HHA certification preferred but will train. EOE. Call 716-332-5008, ext. 262

Medicaid Service Coordinator:

PT flexible. Coordinating services for individuals w/DD/TBI. BA+2 years experience of case management or HS with 3 years experience. Knowledge of community resources required. Car required. EOE. Call 716-332-5008 ext. 279.



Phoenix Frontier, Inc.
100 Leroy Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14214



Saratoga Bridges offers the following employment opportunities:

Assistant Residential Manager

Behavior Specialist

Day Hab Assistants

Licensed Practical Nurse

Physical Therapist

Program Coordinator

Registered Professional Nurse

Residential Counselors

Residential Managers

Shift Supervisor II

Saratoga Bridges offer a pleasant work environment, paid training, and excellent full-time/part-time benefits (health/dental insurance, generous time off, retirement plan, and more). For more information, visit www.saratogabridges.org or contact Human Resources at 518-587-0723.



Post your agency's employment opportunities in **The ReSource**.

The Resource is circulated to more than 300 individuals in the Rehab Field.

Posts are free for NYSRA Members.

Email your submission to Jennifer@nyrehab.org



Mark Your Calendar!

October 24, 2007
NYSRA/HSBC Employee Plus
Conference Call
Dial-in-number:
888-409-0010
pin#: 8989

June 3-4, 2008

Executive Team Management Meeting
The Gideon Putnam, Saratoga, New York

September 22-24, 2008

Leadership Training Summit
The Desmond, Albany