



The Source of information for providers of community-based services for people with differing abilities.

October 2011

NYSRA is pleased to recognize and celebrate the many and varied contributions of workers with disabilities as well as our members who provided invaluable supports, and the businesses who invest in all individuals.

LINKS FOR LEARNING

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[US Department of Education release report on transition from high school for young adults with Disabilities](#)

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The wide-ranging systems change beginning to envelop the world of rehabilitation programs was the major theme of this NYSRA Rehabilitation Summit for 2011. Workshops, presentations, expert panelists and many others brought considerable energy to the dozens of sessions and events. Attendees heard a stimulating discussion from a panel comprising OPWDD Commissioner Courtney Burke; F.E.G.S COO, Behavior & Health Services, Jonas Waizer, Ph.D.; NYATEP Executive Director John Twomey; CQCAPD Chair Roger Bearden; and Abilities! President/CEO John Kemp (photos, upper right and center).

Members also heard a State of the Association message from NYSRA CEO Jeff Wise (center right), and assisted NYSRA in honoring the winners of our Annual NYSRA Awards. Public Official of the Year Senator Roy McDonald, chair of the State Senate's Committee on MH/DD, discussed policy with Jeff Wise and NYSRA Board Chair Francoise Dunefsky, of Gateway Community Industries, before delivering remarks displaying his passion for serving people with disabilities (center). Other award winners included Citizen Advocate of the Year JR Drexelius (lower left), Self-Advocate of the Year ChShone Bailey presented with his award by Board Member Linda Turner of Goodwill Industries (lower center). NYSRA's highest honor, the Adrian P. Levy Award, was presented to Michael Goldfarb, longtime executive of AHRC-New York City (lower right.) Also honored was Art in Motion Award Winner George Morton of Waryas House Art Garage of Abilities First.

Again this year the Summit was augmented by the annual Employment Institute, which focused on the myriad issues of employment of people with disabilities and new models being explored to increase work opportunities for individuals served by our member agencies.

NYSRA is grateful to all our partners - exhibitors, advertisers, as well as Platinum Sponsors NISH and Camelot Print & Copy Center; Gold Sponsors The Bonadio Group, Hiscock & Barclay LLP, and Loeb & Trober LLP; marketing sponsor EOS Technologies, and Employment Institute reception sponsor Marvin and Company, PC. As always, we warmly thank our close partners at NYSID for once again assisting in a successful, informative and important conference addressing the ever-mounting issues of the day.

President Proclaims October 2011 National Disability Employment Awareness Month

President Obama's proclamation urges all Americans to embrace the skills and talents that individuals with disabilities can contribute to the workforce. [Click here to read the proclamation.](#)

Federal Benefit Payments soon to go Electronic

All federal benefits will soon be paid electronically and individuals with disabilities and their caregivers will need to sign up for **direct deposit** to a bank or credit union account or to a **Direct Express** "Debit MasterCard" card before the March 1, 2013 deadline. Recipients are urged to begin the switch now to electronic payments. [Learn more about this.](#)

OPWDD, University of Rochester Awarded Grant

Partnership Grant to Help Agency Further its Goal of Doubling NY Employment Opportunities

The grant will be utilized to create new partnerships between state agencies that provide services to youth and young adults with developmental disabilities-efforts will focus on young adults and youth transitioning from secondary school and day programs into employment that is meaningful for their life goals. [Read More.](#)

Inclusive Employment Model gaining steam

Inspired by Walgreens' efforts to bring people with disabilities into the workforce, another Fortune 500 company supporting inclusive employment.

Proctor & Gamble opened a packaging facility in Auburn, Maine where at least 30 percent of employees will be people with physical or developmental disabilities. Employees with special needs at the site will work side-by-side with those who are earning the same wages and will be held to the same standards, company officials said. [Read more.](#)