



# The Bridge

Connecting individuals with disabilities and their families with resources, support and information

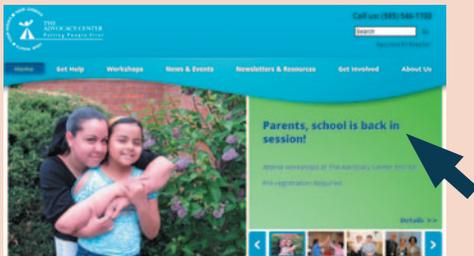


See The Advocacy Center's new website!  
[www.advocacycenter.com](http://www.advocacycenter.com)

The new format better reflects who we are and offers us more ways to provide you with up to date information. Please visit the site soon and let me know what you think at paul@advocacycenter.com.

*Paul Shen*

Executive Director,  
 The Advocacy Center.



## What's Inside...

This issue of *The Bridge* highlights **Art Therapy: How making art express, heals, reveals, celebrates**

Fall Lineup of Workshops and Events including:

**Walk, Run or Roll with Us!**  
 October 6

**Unity Day**, October 10

**William Stillman**, October 17

**Challenging Behaviors, Positive Solutions workshop**, November 30, and more!!

## UPFRONT & PERSONAL: Thomas DePew

By Maria Schaertel

*Wearing his blue New York Giants t-shirt and a smile, Thomas DePew recently shared his thoughts about art therapy.*

"This is mistake-free art," Thomas explains one of the differences between previous art classes he participated in as a child and his current art experience.

Thomas meets weekly with Art Therapist Sara Corona, at The Pieters Family Life Center in Rochester, NY. Each art project focuses on achieving a personal goal or exploring an idea through art. When asked what he enjoys most, Thomas replies, "It depends on the project we are working on. Each project has different ideas to think about."

Sara comments, "That is how art therapy differs from a regular art class. While Thomas learns a lot about art-making, there is always a point behind the art."

For example, in a project dedicated to his friend who recently passed away, Thomas learned to stretch a canvas, apply gesso to the canvas; learned

painting techniques, decided which painting technique to use, learned about colors, explored what colors mean to him, and chose colors for the project. In the process, he also expressed his emotion through the work. Sara explains, "When he first started this painting, his friend had just passed away, so Thomas had a lot of emotions going on. That was a tough day, but art helped Thomas get all his emotions out. He did very well picking up colors that represented those emotions. He put a lot of thought into this piece.

At the same time, Thomas also composed a song in memory of his friend. He recently performed several songs here in the café at a Wellness Wednesday event. The last song he sang was the one he wrote in memory of his friend, and the painting was on display while he performed it. "

Sara explains that art therapy may be used to work on other goals besides

*continued on page 7*





# Is there an Advocate in the House?

**QUESTION:** My 8-year old daughter has a new teacher this year, and I am so worried about the teacher not understanding my child's needs. The old teacher has been working with her for a few years and knows her well.



**Laura Arrington**  
Training Coordinator  
for Finger Lakes Region  
Parent Education  
Specialist,  
The Advocacy Center



**Jenny Hutkowski**  
Parent Center  
Coordinator  
The Family-School  
Partnership at  
The Advocacy Center



**Laura:** Teachers get to see our children's IEP (Individualized Education Program) in advance, but we know there's a lot more to our children than what is on the IEP. We want them to know their personalities, their likes and dislikes, what motivates them. So by sending the new teacher a one-page description of your child with a picture, this helps to get to know your daughter beyond the IEP. So that is step one. And I think it's great to do that at ANY time – it's never too early...it's never too late.

And then, always give the teacher 2- 3 weeks. Then contact the teacher by email or phone and ask, "Do you have any questions about my daughter's IEP or 504

Plan?" Let the teacher know you are there to support her and that you are comfortable answering questions about your child. You also want to be sure that the teacher has read the IEP, and if there are questions, you have given the teacher an opportunity to ask.

Within that conversation, you also want to ask about communication. Ask the teacher what form of communication he wants to use: email or phone? So together, you are developing a plan - a proactive plan where you decide *how* to communicate, *how often*, and have reasonable expectations *depending on your daughter's needs*. Maybe communicating every day is not an option, but every three days might be.

Let the teacher know if your child has specific issues and how you would want to be notified if that issue comes up. In this way, you are being *proactive* as opposed to *reactive*.

**Jenny:** Right now, you are the one to initiate communication. But as your daughter gets older, maybe in middle school and especially if she can clearly communicate her needs, be sure to give her an opportunity to communicate her needs; give her practice in advocating for herself.

By high school, you may decide with the teacher that you will communicate only if there's a problem or something specific you need to share. If not, maybe you

decide that communication will take place mostly between your child and the teacher.

Also, along the way, start to move toward that student /teacher communication model as you can. It will be different for different kids.

**Laura:** Yes, in this way, we are teaching our kids to be independent. We are helping them to discover what they need and to advocate for their needs. For example, they may speak to the teacher about test accommodations or homework needs.

**Jenny:** And be sure to attend those open houses and school events. Make that connection with the teacher. What we have discussed so far is really about communication- we began with pre-communication, then moved to planned communication in the form of periodic emails, for example, and then continue that throughout the year and add other forms of communication, such as a quick check-in as needed.

**Laura:** If you are worried about a new teacher because of a past difficult experience you and your child have had, we like to tell parents to begin each school year fresh. Check your baggage at the door... and then get ready for a great year.

## Nominations for

Community  
Awards

accepted year-round!

Do you know someone who stands out in service and commitment to people with disabilities? Or maybe a self-advocate whose work and life direction you admire? The Advocacy Center now accepts nominations for Community awards year-round. Award winners are honored at our annual fundraising event. Don't miss the opportunity to honor a special parent, teacher, community member, or self advocate! Please contact Rick Wright for further information at (585) 546-1700 or [wright@advocacycenter.com](mailto:wright@advocacycenter.com).

# Advocacy Center Upcoming Events & Workshops



## Walk Run and Roll with Us

This is how WE ROLL!



**It's not too late to participate!**

**Saturday, October 6, 2012**

**8:00 am – 9:30 am**

George Eastman House,  
900 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607

Join The Advocacy Center in the second annual George Eastman House Photo Finish 5K, a.k.a. "The Philanthropy Challenge." The goal of the race is to raise funds for both George Eastman House and many other cultural, educational, community, and health organizations.



**Join us in whatever way you can:**



**Register to walk, run, or roll:**

**Walk up registration is \$25 and available** October 4-6, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at George Eastman House Curtis Theatre (900 East Avenue). *Please enter through the Café entrance.*

Friday, October 5, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Medved Running and Walking Outfitters (3400 Monroe Avenue).

Saturday, October 6, 6:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. at George Eastman House (900 East Avenue).



**Be a spectator and cheer for our team**



**Join our fundraising team**

– just visit <http://www.crowdrise.com/TheAdvocacyCenterPhotoFinish5K/> and donate – it's easy!

Contact Seneca Brashear at (585) 546-1700, ext. 265 or [brashear@advocacycenter.com](mailto:brashear@advocacycenter.com) for further information.

## Special Education Advocacy Series for Professionals:

A Four - Part Series Ideal for Service Coordinators, Advocates, Attorneys, Social Workers & Transition Specialists  
All sessions held at The Advocacy Center, 590 South Ave., Rochester, NY 14620

**Wednesdays, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

- **October 3, 2012** – Introduction to Special Education
- **October 24, 2012** – Evaluations and IEPs
- **November 14, 2012** – Behavioral Issues and Transition Planning
- **December 5, 2012** – Evaluating Options and Advocating Effectively

Register for individual sessions or the entire series

**To see detailed session descriptions, register and pay online,** locate this event on our website calendar. [www.advocacycenter.com](http://www.advocacycenter.com) or contact Colleen Brown at (585)-546-1700 ext. 267 or email [registration@advocacycenter.com](mailto:registration@advocacycenter.com)

## Risk Management for the Home

**Saturday, October 6, 2012,**

**10:00 am- 12:00 pm**

The Rehabilitation Center,  
1439 Buffalo St. Olean, NY 14760

A must-have if you have a child living at home with autism or other developmental disabilities.

Create a safe home for your child and take home useful tools and suggestions to make community outings successful. To register call (800) 650-4967 ext. 399 or email [registration@advocacycenter.com](mailto:registration@advocacycenter.com)

## Committee on Special Education: Parent Member Training

Please note various dates and locations to choose from:

**October 9, 2012-**

Monroe 1 BOCES, 15 Linden Park,  
Rochester NY, 14625

**October 18, 2012-**

Genesee Valley BOCES,  
80 Munson, LeRoy NY 14482

**November 7, 2012-**

Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES,  
Eisenhower Bldg, 131 Drumlin Ct.  
Lyons, NY, 14513

All Trainings are 9:30am - 2:30pm; please bring your lunch; we will allow time to get lunch.

Learn more about the role of the Parent Member on the Committee on Special Education. This training introduces the role of parent member and offers strategies and techniques that will make you an effective parent member. **FREE to Parents.** Registration is required.

Please register by calling (585) 546-1700, ext 399 or email: [registration@advocacycenter.com](mailto:registration@advocacycenter.com)

## Unity Day- Eat at UNO, Support the Advocacy Center

**UNITE**  
↔  
**AGAINST BULLYING!**

**October 10, 11:30 am – 9:00 pm**

Unity Day is a national event sponsored by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. Support The Advocacy Center's anti-bullying efforts by obtaining a voucher and eating at **any** of the three Rochester area UNO Chicago Grill restaurants.

*Twenty percent of your check will be donated to The Advocacy Center when you present a voucher.*

**Wear orange, the color of Unity Day!**



# Advocacy Center Upcoming Events & Workshops

The Advocacy Center Presents

## William Stillman: Demystifying Autism & other Neurological Differences



Co-Sponsored by Nazareth College  
**Thursday, October 17, 2012**  
**9 am - 4 pm** Registration: 8:30 am  
Nazareth College, The Forum in  
Otto A. Shults Community Center  
(building #4 on the Nazareth  
Campus Map) 4245 East Avenue,  
Rochester, NY 14618

Space is Limited - Registration  
deadline 10/10/12. For more  
information contact: Colleen Brown  
brown@advocacycenter.com

## Me, Myself, and My Learning Disability

**November 9, 2012,**  
**8:30 am – 12:00 pm**

Nazareth College, The Forum in  
Otto A. Shults Community Center  
(building #4 on the Nazareth  
Campus Map) 4245 East Avenue,  
Rochester, NY 14618

Courtney Dolan was diagnosed with  
a learning disability in third grade  
in the areas of reading, writing and  
auditory processing. She went on to  
become the Valedictorian of her high  
school and college graduating classes  
and is now a special ed consultant.

Learn multi-teaching techniques,  
advocacy strategies, and early  
interventions for the classroom and  
home and gain valuable information  
from best practices in the field.

To register and pay online, locate  
this event on our website calendar,  
www.advocacycenter.com. For  
further information, contact Colleen  
Brown (585) 546-1700, ext. 267 or  
brown@advocacycenter.com.

## Challenging Behaviors, Positive Solutions

**November 30, 2012, 8:30 am – 12:00 pm**

Check in at 8:30 am; Conference runs from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm  
The College at Brockport, SUNY, New York Room/Cooper Hall, Corner of  
New Campus Drive and Kenyon St., Brockport, NY 14420

*This half day conference will feature the following topics:*

### Supporting Individuals with Behavioral Disorders

Positive supports, rather than punishment, are essential to the success of  
students with behavioral disabilities:

- Learn how disabilities can lead to behavior issues
- Recognize the difference between behaviors and symptoms
  - Implement positive behavioral strategies

### Discipline and Suspension:

#### Understanding the Rights of Students with Disabilities

- Differences between general discipline procedures and discipline  
procedures for students with disabilities
- Rights of students with disabilities who face suspension
- Due process and procedures when parents and school  
Committees on Special Education disagree

**To register and pay online,** locate this event on our website calendar:  
www.advocacycenter.com. Contact Colleen Brown at  
(585) 546-1700, ext 267 or brown@advocacycenter.com

## Workshop Series for Parents and Family Members of Children With Disabilities

### The Difference Between 504 and IEP

**October 23, 2012, 6:30pm - 8:30pm**

The Advocacy Center, 590 South Ave., Rochester, NY 14620

### Inclusion: Philosophy & Practice

**November 13, 2012, 6:30pm - 8:30pm**

The Advocacy Center, 590 South Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620

All people need to feel that they belong and have value in our society. This  
workshop explores community inclusion.

### Ask The Advocate/Open Forum

**November 15, 2012, 7:00 - 9:00 pm** *Please note different location:*

Webster Thomas High School Library, 800 Five Mile Line Rd, Webster, NY 14580

A unique opportunity to hear an advocate's perspective on the special education  
process, disability services, or other related topics. Designed to be an open forum  
in which participants ask questions in a group setting.

Workshops are FREE to family members. Register for one or more  
workshops online via our calendar at www.advocacycenter.com or by  
phone at (585) 546-1700 ext. 399.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL WORKSHOPS

# Art Therapy



## An Interview with Art Therapist Sara Corona



**Sara Corona,**  
ATR-BC, LCAT  
Art Therapist &  
Magic Paintbrush  
Project Coordinator  
The Pieters Family  
Life Center

### Once I made my decision to become an art therapist I have never looked back!

#### What prompted you to become an Art Therapist?

After a short career as a graphic designer I knew I wanted to use my artistic abilities to help people in some way. After researching some options I came across art therapy. It was a field I had heard of before but didn't know too much about. After looking into it further, I realized that it was exactly what I was looking for in a career. I could use art, something that has always been a passion for me, to help people deal with challenges in their lives. Once I made my decision to become an art therapist I have never looked back!

#### Where did you get your training?

I received my Bachelor of Art degree in Illustration and Graphic Design from Cazenovia College in Cazenovia, NY and my Master of Science degree in Art Therapy from Nazareth College here in Rochester.

#### Do you work just for Heritage Christian Services? How long have you worked there?

Currently I do only work for Heritage. I have been working here as an art therapist for the past 5 ½ years. Before Heritage I spent a year as the sole art therapist at Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES working with their special education grammar school, high school and transition students.

#### Does any aspect of your work surprise you?

What is most surprising to me in my work is how much of an impact my clients have on me. My job is to use my professional skills to have an impact on them and from time to time I end up learning a thing or two from them! These are some of my favorite moments as an art therapist.

I often am also surprised how such simple art activities can have a big effect on a person. There is something special about art making that does something to a person. An example of this is one woman I work with who quite often comes into the art studio angry about something. She'll often act like she doesn't like coming to art therapy during these moments as well. She is non-verbal so her body language is telling me all of this. After giving her something as simple as paper and paint, her demeanor often changes drastically. As she sits at the table quietly painting, you can almost see the anger melting away from her. She'll often choose to paint in silence and once her session comes to an end she is a totally different person than when she arrived at the studio. She usually will be happy and smiling at this time and happy to show off her artwork. It's really an amazing thing to witness – seeing the power simple art-making can have on a person.

#### What do you enjoy most about your work?

I enjoy many aspects of my work but what I probably like the most is helping someone accomplish something they never thought they could do. I'm sure this happens with art therapists working with other populations as well but for me I think this is something extra special when working with people with developmental disabilities. You hear

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### What is Art Therapy?

Art therapy is a mental health profession that uses the creative process of art making to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages. Research in the field confirms that the creative process involved in artistic self-expression helps people to become more physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy and functional, resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, handle life adjustments, and achieve insight.  
-from American Art Therapy Association

#### Sara also coordinates The Magic Paintbrush Project Group Painting Workshop

A group art workshop where each family creates a canvas painting using unique painting tools and activities. Any family with a child with a disability is welcome to join in and work alongside other families creating art and having fun. No art experience necessary. All art materials will be washable but participants are advised to dress appropriately for and please wear something that you aren't afraid to get dirty just in case you get a little messy!

To learn about private family sessions, school workshops, and professional teambuilding workshops; to sign up for a workshop, or for more information on the Magic Paintbrush Project at the Pieters Family Life Center, please call (585) 487-3500 or email [info@pietersfamilylifecenter.org](mailto:info@pietersfamilylifecenter.org)





**Shannon Halligan**  
Licensed Creative  
Arts Therapist

## *An Interview with Art Therapist Shannon Halligan*

### **What prompted you to become an Art Therapist?**

I have a background in psychology and I am an artist. When I graduated from college, I did not want to give up either interest. I found art therapy, and it was a perfect blend of two things that are fascinating and also inspiring to me.

### **Where did you get your training? Degree?**

Nazareth College, M.S. in Art Therapy

### **Does any aspect of your work surprise you?**

Something that is surprising to me is how much I learn and grow from working with my clients. They bring in a lot of knowledge and experiences, and I'm honored that they share that with me to help them grow and heal.

I'm also surprised about how clients have the ability to heal themselves and become healthier people when given the proper support and guidance. Society often thinks that people with mental illness or disabilities do not have the ability to be healthy and happy. In my work I have learned it's the opposite. People who face a magnitude of traumas still find ways to pick themselves up and move forward. It's quite amazing.

### **What do you enjoy most about your work with children who have disabilities?**

I enjoy seeing the changes in them over time as they get more comfortable, start communicating more, and express their unique personalities. It's very rewarding to see a child who was fearful to even enter the art therapy room open up and explore materials, smile, and communicate with others. It's also very rewarding to see the pride parents express when their child succeeds.

I also enjoy being able to play and create with children, two ways in which they naturally learn and grow. It's fun to be able to play and be creative at my job!

### **How are children with disabilities referred to you? How do parents know that art therapy may be a good match for their children? If a parent is interested in exploring art therapy, do you recommend a group or individual session to begin?**

Children are often referred by word of mouth through a family member, friend or professional. Sometimes a teacher or pediatrician may recommend art therapy for children who are struggling to verbally express themselves or their emotions.

I would recommend that a parent and child meet with me to discuss what abilities and interests they have and to see if making art would be beneficial to the child. Art therapy can also address issues such as poor communication, sensory needs, anxiety, ADHD, and behavioral issues. Depending on the needs of the child, individual therapy may be appropriate. In other cases, group therapy can be a wonderful way to increase socialization, cooperation and build relationships.

*"I'm also surprised about how clients have the ability to heal themselves and become healthier people when given the proper support and guidance. "*

Shannon's studio is located at 595 Blossom Road, Rochester NY 14610. Contact her at (585) 770-3323 or Shannon\_halligan@yahoo.com. Visit her website: [www.shannonhalligan.com](http://www.shannonhalligan.com)

## *Works of Art by students of Shannon Halligan*



Monster



Princess Wedding

## Resources



**Art Therapy Express** – see and hear how this organization goes into Delaware schools and makes a difference!!  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRDuJUDYfxl>

**Art Therapy & Autism Spectrum Disorder, Integrating Creative Interventions**  
Developed by the Autism Society of America & the American Art Therapy Association  
<http://arttherapy.org/AutismToolkit/autismtoolkit.pdf>

**Art Therapy Alliance**  
<http://www.arttherapyalliance.org/index.html>

**An Unexpected Life: A Mother and Son's Story of Love, Determination, Autism, and Art** by Debra Chwast, Seth Chwast (Illustrator), Sterling Publishing, 2011

## Upfront and Personal

*continued from page 1*

mental health. For instance, Sara encourages Thomas to work on his physical mobility through his projects. He can practice extending his reach through painting.

Thomas' affection for his family and his great interest in sports is apparent, "I have great support people – my mom and dad are awesome. I get to go to a lot of Red Wings games and use a suite rented by my grandparents and now, by my parents. The last game I went to Frontier Field, they actually won. Monday night is football night at my house. I have gone to Bills games with my dad."

Sara notes, "Since Thomas has so many interests, we find ways to incorporate them into his art. That is another way we get to know each other. It's a good way to personalize his art. For instance, in the painting dedicated to his friend, Thomas

included a New York Yankees logo." The first time he brought a piece of art home, Thomas' mom said, "Did you do that?"

Daryl, Thomas' aide, supports Thomas' interests. For example, since Thomas enjoys abstract art, Daryl introduced Thomas to the work of Jackson Pollack whose splattering technique Thomas admires. Sara says Daryl "goes above and beyond" in his care for Thomas.

Thomas is 27 and lives in Sodus. He participates in Wayne ARC social and recreational activities such as attending local college football games and attending the NYS Fair. He works for Key Industries, a



Thomas' painting, *A Friend Who Passed Away: A New Spin on an Old Song*

division of Wayne ARC. Thomas also enjoys Music therapy at Pieters with Music Therapist Melinda Kurowski and Handwriting Therapy with Noelle Pacer.

In the course of discussing art therapy, Thomas also shares his philosophy on life:

"We want to focus on ability, not in-ability."

## An Interview with Art Therapist Sara Corona

*continued from page 5*

all too often how much a person with a disability cannot do things. When I am working with someone in art therapy and hear that they have a goal in life, whether it is big or small, I try to do what I can through art therapy to help them get closer to that goal. One example of this is an older woman I worked with a few years ago: When she grew up she was placed in a regular school setting even though she had a developmental disability. Compared to the other kids in her school, she

was not good at art. Because of this, her teachers told her to not do art. This woman then grew up thinking just that – she wasn't good at art so she shouldn't do it. Starting art therapy with me, I was able to show her that there were many types of art that she could be good at. Turns out she was a pretty good artist after all! She went on to create several pieces of art and even had the chance to exhibit her artwork in a gallery and sold a piece! It was amazing to be a part of this process with her.



## UNDERSTANDING AUTISM

Two-part series for service coordinators, respite care providers, and other human service providers.

### Sensory Integration and Behavioral Issues for Individuals with Autism

**December 6, 2012, 9am-12pm**

### Communication Considerations for Individuals with Autism

**January 12, 2013, 9am-12pm**

Both sessions will be held at Ontario Arc/ County Complex, 3071 County Complex Drive, Canandaigua, NY 14424

To register and pay online, locate these events on our website calendar, [www.advocacycenter.com](http://www.advocacycenter.com). For information, contact Colleen Brown at (585) 546-1700, ext 267 or [brown@advocacycenter.com](mailto:brown@advocacycenter.com)

Presented by The Advocacy Center and Ontario Arc

# Dad's Corner

## Dad finds a way to give his son driving experience.

By David Schaertel

Many times when we get into the car, Nick says he wants to drive... I have had to say "no" over and over again. Nick is 20 years old and has Down syndrome, and at this point, I don't know that driving a car is possible or safe for him. But I know how much he wants to and I kept thinking it would be so great to give him a chance to drive... but it had to be safe and slow ...maybe a golf cart?



So when I found out a co-worker was throwing out her old lawn tractor, I decided that might provide a vehicle. Nick and I went together to pick it up. I felt energized at the possibility of providing this experience for my son and that's good, because I needed energy to get the tractor running: I installed a new muffler, tightened the engine, fixed the motor, and fixed reverse. Next I need to buy a battery so the electric start will work – it's kind of hard to start it up using the recoil. But I did get it working safely and that is all I needed to begin Nick's first driving lesson.

I showed him all the parts of the tractor and then what to do to get it going: "Hold in the clutch, put in FIRST gear, let out clutch SLOWLY, make it go where you want to go by TURNING the wheel, PUSH IN clutch when you want to stop." I walked with him the first time, helping him to steer around the back yard. First gear was perfect – nice and slow.

I felt a little nervous letting him try it out on his own... but it was awesome seeing him drive for the first time. I stepped in to help out with steering and stopping. I will keep supervising – this is not something he is ready to do totally on his own. That's OK. He is driving and that's what he wants to experience...and what I want for him.



**NYS Partners in Policymaking News**

## Want to Become a NYS Partner?

Go to [www.nyspip.org](http://www.nyspip.org) and fill out the on-line application. Deadline for 2013 class is Nov. 30, 2012.



2012 Partners with Kathleen Martinez, head of ODEP

The NYS Partners in Policymaking program is an innovative leadership training opportunity for individuals with developmental disabilities and family members. During an eight month course, participants gain knowledge, skills, and confidence to make changes in policy, perception, and treatment of individuals with disabilities. Upon completion of the program, participants join a graduate network. The 2013 NYS Partners program is offered as a series of interactive modules and webinars, with one state-wide and one regional meeting. The program focuses on including self-advocates and individuals from diverse backgrounds, and on developing participant's familiarity with technology and on-line communication tools for advocacy.

## From the Editor

I have been thinking a lot about *resiliency*- that quality that lets you "bounce back" after going through some hardship. If you have any stories you would like to share about this, please contact me at [schaertel@advocacycenter.com](mailto:schaertel@advocacycenter.com) or call me at (585) 546-1700 and tell me about it. Maybe we can start printing some of those in *The Bridge*. I know many people who have displayed resiliency and it really is life-changing to witness.

\*\*\*\*\*  
If you have run into any problems or concerns with your child's educational program, this is the time to collaborate with teachers and other school officials to solve the problem. One phone call or email is all it takes to get the ball rolling.

Have a great fall!

*Maria Schaertel*, Editor

## October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

### Do You Know??

**Kathleen Martinez** was nominated by President Barack Obama to be the third Assistant Secretary for Disability Employment Policy and was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on June 25, 2009. As head of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Ms. Martinez advises the Secretary of Labor and works with all DOL agencies to lead a comprehensive and coordinated national policy regarding the employment of people with disabilities.



Blind since birth, Ms. Martinez comes to ODEP with a background as an internationally recognized disability rights leader specializing in employment, asset building, independent living, international development, diversity and gender issues.



THE  
ADVOCACY CENTER  
Putting People First

THE BRIDGE  
The Advocacy Center  
590 South Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14620

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## Newbie Notes

One of the most useful tools you can put in your educational “toolbox” is a vision for your child’s future. The vision statement will help you contribute in a meaningful way to your child’s IEP (Individualized Education Program). The Advocacy Center offers a workshop, *Developing a Vision*, that guides you through the process. When you see this one offered, my advice is to sign up!



If you would like to explore some of the vision questions on your own, please visit our Family-School Partnership website and click on *Developing a Vision*. <http://www.specialedparentcenter.org/modules/docs/>. You will find one document for parents and another for self-advocates.

Have fun with it – it’s nice to have permission to dream for your child!

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[http://financialarchitectsupstate.com/james\\_traylor](http://financialarchitectsupstate.com/james_traylor)



## the Marketplace

### Accessible Home for Sale – 3479 St. Paul Blvd., West Irondequoit

First floor accessible with wide doorways, bedroom and large bathroom with roll-in shower. Three additional bedrooms on second floor includes a huge master bedroom with sitting room off bedroom. Large finished attic. two and a half baths. Deck, ramp and driveway behind home on Winona Blvd. Almost all rooms have hardwood floors. Two beautiful stained glass window. Large double lot. Call for information. Joan 338-2681

To place an ad in *The Bridge*, please contact Maria Schaertel at (585) 546-1700, ext. 271 or [schaertel@advocacycenter.com](mailto:schaertel@advocacycenter.com).