



The Bridge

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



An Evening of ART & JAZZ

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What's Inside...

This issue of *The Bridge* highlights Support Services and Therapies.

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Celebrate 25 years of Partners In Policymaking Page 8

How much good can you do in one evening?

Support a nonprofit that touches the lives of more than 20,000 people each year: The Advocacy Center

An Evening of ART & JAZZ

benefiting The Advocacy Center

Saturday, June 2, 2012, 6:00 to 11:00 pm

George Eastman House, 900 East Avenue, Rochester, NY

Featuring:



Tia Fuller

Drumming Circle beginning at 6:15 pm in the Dryden Theater followed by **Community Awards** beginning at 7:00 pm.



Jimmie Highsmith

Silent Auction, Wine Pull, and Drawing from 6:00 to 9:30 pm.

Admission includes hors d'oeuvres, desserts, a complimentary glass of wine and

Entry into drawing for a pair of Club Passes to the 2012 Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival!

Enter additional drawing for a chance to win: iPad3.0, Blu Ray player, PlayStation Vita, Xbox with Kinect. Drawing tickets are \$10 each.

Music by Tia Fuller and Jimmie Highsmith beginning at 8:00 pm in the Garden, weather permitting.

Free Valet Parking Available

*Please see page 12 for more on Silent Auction!

Admission Tickets: \$50 Adult; \$30 Student.

To purchase tickets visit our website

http://www.advocacycenter.com/fundraising_event.php?event=15 or phone 585-546-1700.

Advocacy Center Upcoming Events & Workshops

Benefits 101: An Overview of Benefits and Supports

**Tuesday, April 17, 2012,
1:00 to 5:00 PM**

Reg. Ctr. for Independent Living (RCIL)
497 State Street, Rochester, NY 14608

Learn about:

Food Stamps, Health Coverage Options, SSDI and SSI.

Presented by: The Advocacy Center, Regional Center for Independent Living, and the Monroe County Legal Assistance Center – A Division of LawNY, INC.

Cost: Self-Advocates and Family members – Free
Service Providers - \$10 per Agency

For more information and to register, contact Jennifer Blais at The Advocacy Center at (585) 546-1700 ext. 254 or e-mail: blais@advocacycenter.com
Space is limited so register now.

Creating a Life After High School Pre-Self Determination ~ Transition Series

Five Thursdays, April 19 to May 17, 2012 - 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Edison School Complex,
655 Colfax St., Rochester, NY 14606
Gain knowledge about the adult service delivery system, accessing services, benefits, entitlements and regulations. Through guided activities, you will begin to develop your own person-centered plan to assist you through your transition from high school to the adult service system. *To be eligible for the program, individuals must live in Monroe County with family and be eligible for services through New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Open to Rochester City School District students first; students of other districts welcome to attend if space allows.* Pre-registration is required.

For questions or to register, call Carrie Burkin at The Advocacy Center at (585) 546-1700 ext. 231



Community Award Nominations Accepted Until April 13.

The Advocacy Center is seeking nominations for our Annual Community Awards which highlight the contributions of people who make a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Please consider nominating someone for one of the following awards:

Self Advocacy Award: An individual with a disability who leads the direction of his or her daily life through advocacy and personal choice

Barbara Bryson Award: A parent of an individual with a disability who has exhibited pioneering efforts on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families

Founders Award in honor of Jeanne Krautwurst: A parent or family member of an individual with a disability who has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life for his or her family member

Community Inclusion Award: An individual or group whose actions have led to the successful inclusion of individuals with disabilities and their families in their communities

Education Award: A devoted individual in the field of education who, through extraordinary efforts, has provided for the educational needs of students with disabilities

Student Award: A student (with or without a disability) whose efforts have made a positive impact on the lives of individuals with disabilities

Community Impact Award: A company or organization which promotes opportunities for individuals with disabilities

Awards will be presented at An Evening of Art and Jazz on June 2, 2012.

Deadline for nominations is April 13, 2012. For more information, contact Rick Wright at (585) 546-1700 ext. 253.

Visit us online for the Nomination form and information packet:
http://www.advocacycenter.com/news/pdf/Award_Nomination_Packet_2012.pdf.

The Advocacy Center Presents: Understanding Autism

A Three-Part Series for Service Coordinators, Respite Care Providers and other Human Service Providers

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

Session One, Thursday, May 10th, 2012, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

“The Basics: How Autism Affects Individuals and Families”

Session Two, Thursday, June 14th, 2012, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

“Sensory Integration and Behavioral Issues for Individuals with Autism”

Session Three, Thursday, June 28th, 2012, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

“Communication Considerations for Individuals with Autism”

****Participants will receive a certificate of attendance.*

*This training may be used to satisfy the MSC annual training requirement.****

Register and pay online at www.advocacycenter.com/cal. To register by mail:

The Advocacy Center, 590 South Ave. Rochester, NY 14620,
Attn: Registration. Please call 585-546-1700 ext. 267 for further information.

Advocacy Center Upcoming Events & Workshops

Free, five-session training for Parents and Caregivers of children with disabilities.

Saturdays, July 7 – August 11
9:45am – 2:45pm

Jones Memorial Hospital,
Wellsville, NY 14895

To request an application, call Linda Chadderdon at 585-546-1700 or 800-650-4967 ext. 225 or email chadderdon@advocacycenter.com
Pre-registration is required by 6/30/12.

Hitchhiker's Guide to Planet Earth: Play Therapy For Kids Who Don't Fit In May 17, 2012 9am-4pm

Days Inn Hotel, 200 Oak Street,
Batavia NY, 14020

(off exit 48 of NYS Thruway/Route 90)

8am-9am Registration,
light refreshments, and agency fair
9am-4pm Workshop; lunch provided

Register and pay online at www.advocacycenter.com/calendar.php
or by mail: The Advocacy Center,
590 South Ave. Rochester, NY 14620,
Attn: Registration.

For further information, please call
585-546-1700 ext. 267

Guest Speaker:

Brenda L. Bierdeman, Psy.D., CPT-P
Professional Fee: \$40;
Parents, Family members: \$10.

Dr. Bierdeman is approved by the Association of Play Therapy to offer continuing education specific to play therapy. These credits (6 hours) will be available on the day of the workshop for an additional \$15. Agencies interested in an outreach table please contact Linda Chadderdon at chadderdon@advocacycenter.com

The Advocacy Center Presents:

William Stillman: Demystifying Autism & Other Neurological Differences

October 17, 2012, 9am - 4pm

More information about registration and location will be available in May Questions? Call Colleen Brown at 585-546-1700 ext 267 or email brown@advocacycenter.com

Preventing Bullying Through Leadership

June 7, 2012 - 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM

St. John Fisher College, Basil Hall, 3690 East Ave,
Rochester, NY 14618.



Keynote address by Kaitlin Monte, Miss New York State 2011. An advocate for safe and supportive academic, social and professional environments, Kaitlin travels throughout the state addressing the topics of bullying, abuse and harassment. Following the keynote, Roger Nellist, Esq. will present key components of New York State's anti-bullying legislation. Representatives from various perspectives, including disabilities, sexual orientation and gender identify expression, and cultural diversity will share information about the effects of bullying and best practices for prevention through a panel discussion. For further information, please call 585-546-1700 ext. 267.

Register and pay online at www.advocacycenter.com/calendar.php.

Is There an Advocate in the House?

QUESTION: Whenever the classroom gets noisy or busy, my 7-year old son withdraws to a corner or sometimes hides under a desk.

He does OK with academics and has a couple of friends.

The teacher suspects sensory problems and now we are getting an evaluation done for him at school.

How do I know the person evaluating him is qualified to do this?



Kathy McCarthy-Proulx



Jean Tydings

Kathy: A question to ask is: How much experience do you have in sensory integration? Remember not all OTs (Occupational Therapist) have sensory integration experience.

Jean: It is not a major part of OT training. All OTs are not certified in Sensory Integration or have had specific experience in sensory integration. Start with some questions for the therapist:
Has the therapist had any training specifically in this area? Is the therapist sensory-certified?

Ask what the evaluation consists of:

Is it a simple checklist or does it include a full sensory evaluation? Am I going to be part of that evaluation?

Kathy: "How will I be part of that evaluation?"

continued on page 4

Save
the
Date

Is There an Advocate in the House?

continued from page 3

Jean: How often have you done this? As a parent, do your homework and you will be able to ask more specific questions such as: *Will my child be recommended a “sensory diet.” Will my child have choices in that? Will I be part of writing that?* You may also ask: *How have you been providing sensory integration services to children? Have you ever worked with a child who has similar sensory needs as my child?*

Kathy: It doesn't necessarily have to be an OT. I know a PT (Physical Therapist) who is an excellent provider of sensory integration therapy. It is a certification and training outside of OT and PT.

I would like to underscore that parents read about it and have a basic understanding. Begin with some of the resources we have here. (see Resources →)

Jean: Kudos to the district for telling you that there is something going on here beyond behavioral issues. That tells me they have some knowledge in this area. The child is crawling under the desk. They are telling you that something else is going on here. A lot of people would say “behavior, behavior” but it is avoidance with a reason: “I can't do it right now. It's not that I won't, but I can't. Give me what I need so I can.”

Kathy: Sensory Integration can be easily confused with ADD – Attention Deficit Disorder.* They are not the same things! Sensory has to do with being over stimulated or under stimulated and how to bring a child's environment into balance so he or she can learn.

Jean: After you get the evaluation and prescribed treatment, you may notice that something is not right here or you don't glean enough information. Maybe the prescribed treatment is something you have tried previously that did not work for your child. Or they may come back and say we don't see anything here. In that case, you may request an independent evaluation from someone who is certified... Although I would like to emphasize that I have seen professionals who are not certified but who have had significant experience in this area

Kathy: This behavior will play out outside of school, at home or in the community. Maybe in a large crowd or when it is thundering, you may already see the signs and be using strategies to help your child.

Jean: In that case, you may also share with the therapist, *This is what I see before he crawls under the table.* Maybe he turns out the lights or puts his head down- give that input to the school. *This is what I do at home to help my child.* They can use that information to help identify your child's needs and provide support before he crawls under the desk.

Kathy: As adults, we may have sensory needs but have figured out how to cope with them. For example, if you are someone who can't stand the feeling of a clothing tag against your neck, you can cut it out. Children don't always know how to help themselves.

**Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is characterized by developmentally inappropriate impulsivity, inattention, and in some cases, hyperactivity.*

SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDERS* RESOURCES

OTAS

Optimal Therapy Associates Services
2495 Main Street, Suite 234
Buffalo, New York 14214
Phone: (716) 836-5929
<http://www.otastherapy.com/contact.html>

The Communication Center

380 Cederwood Office Park
Fairport, NY 14450
(585) 223-5090
<http://communicationctr.com/>

Felecia Thierer OTR/L

(585) 734-1966
Bklynflee@aol.com

Lisa Sykes OT/PT

Strong Physical and Occupational
Therapy Services
4901 Lac de Ville Boulevard
Rochester, NY 14618
585-341-9000

UNYFEAT's (Upstate New York
Families for Effective Autism Treatment)
(585) 248-9011 www.unyfeat.org

Exploring Sensations program gives an opportunity for children ages 3-16, to navigate their body in their environment by engaging in a variety of sensory experiences. This program will be led by Felicia Thierer, OTR/L and volunteers who have experience supporting children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Sensory Processing Disorder Foundation

www.spdfoundation.net

Sensory Processing Disorder Resource Center

www.sensory-processing-disorder.com

The Out-of-Sync Child

www.out-of-sync-child.com

*This is the newest term for, and is used synonymously with, Sensory Integration Disorder or Sensory Integration Dysfunction.

Support Services and Therapies

What is a Related Service?

To help a child with a disability benefit from special education, he or she may also need extra help in one area or another, such as speaking or moving. This additional help is called *related services* on a student's IEP (Individualized Education Program).

EXAMPLES OF RELATED SERVICES

Speech-Language Therapy

Speech-language therapy focuses on 1. receptive language, which is the ability to understand words spoken to you and 2. expressive language, or the ability to use words to express yourself. It also deals with the 3. mechanics (using your lips, tongue, jaw, and throat) of producing words, including articulation, pitch, fluency, and volume.

Parents, you might use the services of a speech-language pathologist for a child if. . .

- you have difficulty understanding what your child is trying to say;
- you think your child is speaking differently from children of the same age;
- your child has difficulty telling you what he or she wants; or
- your child has difficulty understanding what people are saying.

Explaining Speech Therapy to an Older Child:

Speech therapy gets a bad rap – it's a lot of work, too hard, and boring. Yes, working on your speech takes practice, but it can also be a lot of fun. In fact, speech is a lot like playing a video game: ***The more you practice, the better you get... When you get better, it's more fun... When you're doing well, you don't want to stop... You can win.*** It's pretty obvious how to beat a game. How can you win at speech? By using your new sounds all the time, without making mistakes. Just like in a game, it usually takes some time to get there, but it feels awesome after all of the hard work you put in. Keep in mind that speech is a 2-player game. Your speech therapist will always help you get better and better at making your sounds, while having fun. What's the best part? When you're at speech, you get to work on your sounds AND play games.

From *What is speech therapy like for older kids?* By Shannon De Almo, 10/27/ 2011 <http://www.sandltherapy.com>.

Example of a short-term Speech objective on the IEP:

By November, John will expand his utterances and responses to questions by using basic sentence patterns.

Occupational Therapy

OT may include such services as:

- self-help skills or adaptive living (e.g., eating, dressing);
- functional mobility (e.g., moving safely through school);
- positioning (e.g., sitting appropriately in class);
- sensory-motor processing (e.g., using the senses and muscles);
- fine motor (e.g., writing, cutting) and gross motor performance (e.g., walking, athletic skills);
- life skills training/vocational skills; and
- psychosocial adaptation.

Children may benefit from Occupational Therapy if they have:

- Poor coordination
- Decreased balance (“clumsiness”)
- Delayed motor skill development
- Low muscle tone or strength
- Difficulty with handwriting
- Decreased visual skills including visual perceptual skills
- Difficulties with feeding, are picky eaters or are messy eaters



Exploring therapies and services outside of the school system:

Don't forget to research community social service agency resources, parent support groups, university clinics, and also consult with your child's pediatrician and medical specialists.

Examples of Related Services

Parent Counseling and Training

Parent counseling and training is an important related service that can help parents enhance the vital role they play in the lives of their children. Its definition is found at §300.34(c)(8) and reads: (8)(i) *Parent counseling and training* means assisting parents in understanding the special needs of their child;

(ii) Providing parents with information about child development; and

(iii) Helping parents to acquire the necessary skills that will allow them to support the implementation of their child's IEP or IFSP.

The first two parts of this definition are longstanding in IDEA. The last part—regarding helping parents acquire the necessary skills that will allow them to support the implementation of their child's IEP or IFSP—was added in IDEA '97 "to recognize the more active role of parents as participants in the education of their children" (71 Fed. Reg. at 46573) and is retained in IDEA 2004. As with all related services, parent counseling and training would only be provided to parents "if a child's IEP team determines that it is necessary for the child to receive FAPE" (Id.).

Example of Parent Counseling goal on the IEP:

Provide Juan's parents with information about community resources available to assist the family in meeting Juan's needs.

Music Therapy

Music therapists use music activities to foster the development of motor, communication, cognitive, and social abilities in students with special education needs.

Music Therapy on the IEP:

Music therapy can be used to

address many of the goals targeted in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) such as: the learning of academic concepts, increasing cooperation and appropriate social behavior, providing avenues for communication, increasing self-esteem and self confidence, improving motor responses and agility, and encouraging exploration and examination of issues that impact the life of the student. Under the direction of a qualified music therapist, the new skills learned in the music therapy setting can be transferred to other areas of the student's life.

Music Therapists have undergraduate and/or graduate degrees in music therapy from university programs approved by the American Music Therapy Association. They follow their degree with at least six months of full-time supervised clinical training. Music therapists must also be board-certified by the Certification Board for Music Therapists; they become "MT-BC's" by taking a national exam, and maintain their status through continuing education or re-testing.

Art Therapy

Art therapy is the deliberate use of art-making to address psychological and emotional needs. Art therapy uses art media and the creative process to help in areas such as: fostering self-expression, creating coping skills, managing stress, and strengthening sense of self.

Art therapists are Master level mental health professionals trained in the use of art and media, as well as psychological and counseling approaches.

Example of Art Therapy goal on the IEP

Through use of art materials, puppet play, and role play, Joan will learn to

verbally identify facial expressions, recognize and identify her feelings as they occur, and use more appropriate behavior in relating to her peers and to adults as measured by Art therapist's observations.

Sensory Integration Therapy

Sensory Integration Disorder (or Sensory Processing Disorder) refers to difficulty taking in or interpreting input from our senses: sights, sounds, touch, tastes, smells and movement, that can lead to consequences in daily functioning, social and family relationships, behavioral challenges, regulating emotions, self-esteem, and learning.

Who provides Sensory Integration therapy? Occupational therapists (OT) Physical Therapists (PT), Speech/Language Therapists (SLT), teachers, and/or others who have advanced training in using a sensory integration approach.

Play Therapy

Play therapy is a form of counseling (or psychotherapy) by which licensed mental health professionals use play-based models and techniques to better communicate with and help clients, especially children, achieve optimal mental health. From Association for Play Therapy - <http://www.a4pt.org/ps.index.cfm?ID=2289>

Local resource: Nazareth College, Play Therapy Center for Children and Families, contact Steve Demanchick at 585-389-2545 or sdemanc8@naz.edu.

http://www.child-talk.com/pdf/npt_chart.pdf

Progression of a Child with Autism from a Non-Social to a More Social World Through Narrative Play Therapy

Thinking Outside of the Box

We recommend that you think ahead about how related services can be provided in the general education environment. For example, if the speech teacher wants to facilitate pragmatic language skills, couldn't that be done over lunchtime in the cafeteria? Not a "lunch bunch" with 6 students, all receiving special education services, but a typical lunch group with the speech therapist seated near by... Don't think related services is something a therapist can only do with a student in a private room and then hope the skills transfer over. It's not just an effort to "fix" a child by doing related services three times a week for 20 minutes. Related services can be taught in natural environments, empowering students to do real things in real settings. Look across all of the school settings. Think of how related services personnel can help students in places that they already are in.

from *IEP and Inclusion Tips for Parents and Teachers*, by Anne I. Eason and Kathleen Whitbread (Jan 1, 2006)

Here is how the New York State Regulations, Part 200, defines *Related Services*

"Related services means developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a student with a disability and includes speech-language pathology, audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling services, orientation and mobility services, medical services as defined in this section, parent counseling and training, school health services, school nurse services, school social work, assistive technology services, appropriate access to recreation, including therapeutic recreation, other appropriate developmental or corrective support services, and other appropriate support services and includes the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in students."

One-to-One Aide Changing Guidelines

Did you know? NYS has new Guidelines for Determining a Student with a Disability's Need for a One-to-One Aide. See the new Guidance Document at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/1-1aide-jan2012.htm>

This type of support is included in *Supplementary Aids and Services* on the IEP.



Social Skills Development

Social skills are not the same thing as behavior. Rather, they are components of behavior that help an individual understand and adapt across a variety of social settings. The classroom is one such environment children must learn to navigate. Successful learning requires students to interact closely with teachers and peers. In addition to their general importance for daily interaction, social skills can have a big impact on a child's ability to succeed in an academic setting.

Example of Social Skill goal on the IEP:

Given direct instruction, practice and visual supports, Jerry will successfully demonstrate two new social skills per quarter including: recognizing, expressing and regulating emotions, conversational repair, and non verbal cues. Skills will be determined quarterly by the IEP team.

* * * * *

See
Jed Baker
on
April 25th



No More Meltdowns, Handling Challenging Behaviors and Teaching Social Skills

in Canandaigua, NY

For more information, see www.unyfeat.org or call (585) 420-8670-presented by The Ontario ARC and UNYFEAT.

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) says that a student's IEP will include:

4) A statement of the special education and **related services** and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the child—

- (i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;
- (ii) To be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section, and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
- (iii) To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children in the activities described in this section... [§300.320(a)(4)]

Evaluation

IDEA requires that a child be assessed in all areas related to his or her suspected disability. This evaluation must be sufficiently comprehensive so as to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not those needs are commonly linked to the disability category in which he or she has been classified.

Related services can include, but are not limited to, any of the following: speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes, school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, parent counseling and training.

Determining What Related Services a Student Needs

It is the IEP team's responsibility to review all of the evaluation information, to identify any related services the child needs, and to include them in the IEP. Goals are written for a related service just as they are for other special education services. The IEP must also specify with respect to each service:

- **when** the service will begin;
- **how** often it will be provided and for what amount of time; and
- **where** it will be provided. [§300.320(a)(7)]

Each child with a disability may not require all of the related services listed above. Furthermore, the list of related services is not exhaustive and may include other developmental, corrective, or supportive services if they are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Examples include artistic and cultural programs, art, music, and dance therapy.

The IEP is a written commitment for the delivery of services to meet a student's educational needs. A school district must ensure that all of the related services specified in the IEP, including the amount, are provided to a student.



Resources



National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities
<http://nichcy.org/>

International Art Therapy Association
<http://www.internationalarttherapy.org/index.html>

American Art Therapy Association
<http://arttherapy.org/>

Art Therapy Alliance
www.arttherapyalliance.org

Prelude Music Therapy
www.preludemusictherapy.com

NYS Education Department, Office of the Professions
<http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/slpa/>

LD Online
<http://www.ldonline.org/article/5818>

Hand to Hold <http://handtohold.org/>

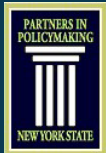
American Music Therapy Association
<http://www.musictherapy.org/>

Child Talk, *Progression of a Child with Autism from a Non-Social to a More Social World Through Narrative Play Therapy*
<http://www.child-talk.com>

National Association of Special Education Teachers - www.naset.org

IEP and Inclusion Tips for Parents and Teachers, by Anne I. Eason and Kathleen Whitbread (Jan 1, 2006)

Nazareth College Play Therapy Center for Children and Families, contact Steve Demanchick at 585-389-2545 or sdemanc8@naz.edu.



Partners In Policymaking News



Partners in Policymaking

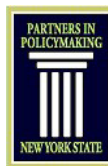
21,000 Partners graduates in the United States
2,000 Partners graduates internationally

Nearly twenty five years ago, the Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities created a ground-breaking, innovative training program called *Partners in Policymaking*® to teach parents and self-advocates the power of advocacy to change the way people with disabilities are supported, viewed, taught, live and work. During the past two decades, important issues have been confronted and dramatic changes have been made.”

Congratulations to New York State Partners in Policymaking 25th Anniversary

NYS Partners Accomplishments Include

- Enactment of the Autism Insurance Bill, 2011
- Enactment of Person First language bill, 2007
- Provided training for over 1000 partners statewide
- Expanded training to provide online learning opportunities



NYS Partners in Policymaking 2011 Class Graduates

By Jackie Yingling

In November 2011, 49 members of the NYS Partners in Policymaking Class of 2011 completed their initial training program! The participants were the inaugural class using a newly designed interactive blended on-line learning platform. There were a few challenges to overcome; and this class rose to the occasion. Many had limited computer proficiency in the beginning of the class, but by the fall of 2011, they were confident and skilled at making their way through the web-based curriculum.

As in previous Partners classes, they developed strong ties to each other and to the Partners network. Each delivered a 3 minute testimony to an audience as part of the culminating activities of the class. Now it is onward to a long-term project of their choice and utilizing opportunities for future trainings available to members of the Partners graduate network. As with all Partners graduates, this class will truly make a difference while creating partnerships with legislators and policymakers on disability issues.

Congratulations to each and every member of the 2011 NYS Partners Class!

From Ann Kurz, NYS Partners 2005 Graduate

“For NYS, Partners enhanced the dignity of all citizens by actively backing the passage of the People First Language Bill. For me personally, Partners validated and defined my feelings and helped me to find a more confident voice to dream big and pursue my life choices.”

The Power of Partners in Policymaking

From Veronica Swart, NYS Partners 2004 Graduate:

“New York State Partners in Policymaking graduates have changed the way New Yorkers think and talk about individuals with different abilities. Partners graduates spearheaded efforts in helping to create and support legislation that became the NYS People First Language Bill. This bill helped to create a climate in which the state agency serving individuals with disabilities later changed its name to reflect people-first language. In 2010, the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities became the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. NYS Partners were the impetus for bringing this issue to light and empowering New York State to become a People-First home for all New Yorkers.”

From Bridget M. Cariello, NYS Partners 2008 Graduate:

“Life is full of meaningful experiences and powerful teachable moments. The NYS Partners in Policymaking program has had tremendous impact on these moments statewide. Whether working on legislation promoting the power of positive language, helping others learn about “the dignity of risk”, or changing the mindset of a community, NYS Partners are ever present. Congratulations to the Partners in Policymaking Program on 25 years of supporting individuals with disabilities and their families. Thanks for helping NYS Partners to become empowered to make changes in policies that have impacted many communities in New York State.”

Dad's Corner

A Tribute to the Memory of Gary Giudice

A Father's Love

By Ron Kampff, Webster Challenger
Baseball Head Coach and Dad



Almost 13 years ago my life was blessed to have met a "Father" who lived up to every sense of the word. To say that

Gary Giudice's commitment to his son exemplified what it means to be a devoted, dedicated, and loving dad would be an understatement. Gary Giudice and his son Nicky were the perfect model of a relationship between a father and son. This is something that we should all try to emulate. Yes, it is difficult to be a parent and especially to a child with special needs. In Nicky's case, he was born with Cerebral Palsy and needed assistance in every aspect of his life.

Gary's true values were witnessed on a daily basis from running up and down the basketball court with Nicky or cruising around the bases at a Challenger Baseball game. While most dads hope for a star athlete or a scholar student I believe Gary's only hopes were to be a good dad and make Nicky's life the best it could be.

Anyone that knew their relationship would certainly agree that Gary succeeded. I could only hope to be half the dad that Gary was. Everyone that knew him would agree that his dedication was something of a miracle in itself. Nicky, who was unable to speak, would certainly let it be known when dad was not near his side whether it be at flag football, baseball, bowling, soccer, etc. It was very rare not to see Gary with his

"Pride and Joy" at his side. Everyone they came in contact with witnessed their special bond.

I had the pleasure of witnessing many special moments. Perhaps the one vivid memory I have is watching Gary and Nicky explode around the bases at a Challenger Baseball game. Whether it was at the local Little League Field or at Frontier Field you could see the trail of dust in the air as Gary pushed Nicky around the bases until he reached home plate. Everyone would cringe as he rounded the bases on one wheel. Everyone but Nicky! It was as if you could read his mind by the grin on his face that dad was in control and there would always be a happy ending. *Safe at home* was the feeling I perceived, whether it was at the ballpark or home snug in bed. Gary was always there.

...I believe Gary's only hopes were to be a good dad and make Nicky's life the best it could be.

It wasn't until about a little over a year ago that Gary would be put to another test. This time it had to do with his unexpected battle with pancreatic cancer. Despite all of the testing and therapy, Gary treated his battle like it was just a mild inconvenience that kept him from doing the things he loved. It wasn't



too long after his diagnosis that he was back out on the basketball court spending time with his buddy. This time he seemed a little weaker but his spirit was not broken. Months would pass, and again there he was at the opening of Challenger Baseball. Again, his body weaker, yet his mind and spirit were never to be compromised. Another season was another win for Nicky and the entire community of friends, players, and families. It was such a joy to see the love a father and son had. Never once did Gary complain, despite the cancer, or the tedious task of getting Nicky ready for a hot summer day of baseball. It was as if Gary and Nicky were sent here to teach people like myself the things that really mattered.

As time passed and Gary grew sicker he had to slow down his activities with Nicky. I am certain that he was more concerned about Nicky and the family than he was about his own well-being. Eventually the cancer weakened his ability to get out with Nicky and enjoy the numerous activities they so loved to do. It was difficult not seeing the two of them together. I am sure it gave Gary great comfort knowing that he had a very supportive and loving family that could fill his shoes on a moment's notice. Gary would be the first one to agree. Sadly, these shoes will now have to be filled by his great family and numerous friends. We can only hope to be the "Father" that Gary so proudly demonstrated. Gary passed away at the age of 58, but lives on in the hearts of many, including myself.



the Marketplace



Individuals with Disabilities and Family Members:

You may now post want ads for disability-related goods or services in The Bridge. This service will be provided at no cost to individuals with disabilities or their family members. Contact Maria Schaertel for further information at (585) 546-1700, ext. 271 or Schaertel@advocacycenter.com.

Business Owners, Service Providers:

The Bridge readers value goods and services that enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities and family members. Your ad will appear here for only \$50! Contact Maria Schaertel at (585)546-1700, ext. 271 or Schaertel@advocacycenter.com.

People First Waiver Information:

Web Page: www.opwdd.ny.gov/2011_waiver/index.jsp
 E-mail: People.First@opwdd.ny.gov
 Comment Line: 1-866-946-9733 or TTY: 1-866-933-4889



Fact sheet about the People First Waiver: http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/2011_waiver/images/fact_sheet_mar_2012_2.pdf

Here is the March 2012 Waiver Update link: http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/2011_waiver/images/march_2012_waiver_update.pdf

Attend a Public Briefing on the People First Waiver

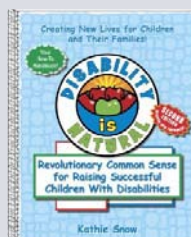
To reserve a seat at one of the presentations, please visit www.opwdd.ny.gov/wp/wp_catalogz2407.jsp. The presentation will be recorded and distributed system wide to assist those unable to attend in person.

- April 3, 10 AM: Buffalo (181 Lincoln Avenue, Depew)
- April 5, 1 PM: Hauppauge (415-A Oser Avenue)
- April 5, 2 PM: Schenectady (500 Balltown Road)
- April 11, 1 PM: Syracuse (5885 East Circle Drive, Cicero)
- April 17, 1 PM: Rochester (The Strong – One Manhattan Square)
- April 19, 1:30 PM: Brooklyn (Gymnasium – 888 Fountain Avenue)
- April 19, 10 AM: Bronx (1301 Morris Park Avenue)

Newbie Notes

Spring Pick-Me-Up

Want to gain a fresh perspective on disability? Try reading *Disability is Natural*, by Kathy Snow, Braveheart Press, 2001, or visit her website: www.disabilityisnatural.com. The website includes articles, archived newsletters, presentation schedule, and a great online store!



From the Editor



It's Annual Review time again for grades K-12. Generally, sometime in the spring, the CSE (Committee on Special Education) will meet to discuss services for your child for next school year- this process is called the *Annual Review*. This issue highlights Support Services and Therapies, in order to help parents identify and review a variety of supports for their children when collaborating in the creation of the IEP – Individualized Education Program.

Thanks to Webster Challenger Baseball Head Coach Ron Kampff for sharing his memories, admiration and respect for a great dad in this issue's *Dad's Corner* column.

Our front cover nameplate photo features Ella Burkin, one of the 20,000 people whom The Advocacy Center touches in a year. The Advocacy Center supporters help Ella (and many other people with disabilities) look into the mirror and see an individual of dignity and value, and a life of endless possibilities.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for An Evening of Art and Jazz: June 2, 2012, 6-11pm. George Eastman House is such an impressive venue for this special event ... did you know that The Museum is a National Historic Landmark, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a member of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta??

If your child is school-age, good luck with your annual review and enjoy the spring!

Maria Schaertel



**THE
ADVOCACY CENTER**
Putting People First

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Rochester, NY 14620

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An Evening of ART & JAZZ

Saturday, June 2, 6-11 pm at George Eastman House



The Kayakers by Dunstan Luke

Guests may bid on this and other art works featured in the
Silent Auction from 6:00 to 9:30 pm in Potter Peristyle.

Gift certificates to Rochester area attractions and
amusements will be available for bidding as well.

See page 1 for ticket information.

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