

NHR Celebrates DSP Recognition Week *by Tom McCluskey*

NHR has long been committed to maximizing the quality of services experienced by the people we support by strengthening and empowering Direct Support Professionals. We support formal education through our Direct Care Certificate programs at local colleges as well as our tuition assistance program. We encourage the attainment of credentials as evidenced by our apprentice program and our NADSP credentialing classes. We recognize the need to partner with other agencies to garner increased recognition of DSPs both inside our industry and in the greater society as well. NHR is an active participant in the Mid-Hudson Coalition for the Development of Direct Support Practice (MHC), the NYS Association of Community Residential Agencies (NYSACRA) and the American Network of Community Organizations and Resources (ANCOR). National Direct Support week demonstrated that through the efforts of many, progress is being made towards attaining professional status for DSPs. The progress may be slow but continues to be made on many fronts and NHR is in the thick of it.

Taking advantage of the timing of their annual conference, the Self Advocacy Association of NYS (SANYS) invited NYSACRA and the newly founded DSP Alliance of NYS (DSPANYS) to join them on Saturday, Sept 12th, 2009 as they held a public march on Wolf Road in Albany. Over 150 people, including several from NHR, recognized the quality of life for people receiving services is directly linked to the quality of the DSPs. It was an awesome public display of unity towards a common goal; a quality life for all citizens. Chants like, "I don't know what you've been told, my DSP is good as gold" were accompanied by signs reading, "Quality of Life because of Quality Staff." It was quite moving.

Our own Barbara DelVentura acting as the treasurer of DSPANYS, along with Joe Macbeth, Associate Director of NYSACRA

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From left to right: Jesse Edmonds, Matthew Fischer



From left to right: Maryann Moldoff, Ginny Zwierankin, Michele Tiffany



From left to right: Alice Legg, Representative Maurice Hinchey, and Jason Sealy



A Note From the Executive Director....

“The Future Ain’t What It Used to Be”

By Regis Obijiski, Executive Director

Help us to get to the future.

For the sake of the children and adults with disabilities whom New Horizons serves, I am asking for your immediate advocacy to contact the Governor and State Legislators and explain what the Governor’s proposed funding cuts of 10 % will do.

Yogi Berra, the New York Yankee famous for his baseball career and his unique brand of elocution, is credited with saying: “the future ain’t what it used to be.” We know what he meant. Today, his malapropos feels appropriate. We are living in unsteady times auguring even more unsteadiness, causing many of us to stumble over our uncertainty of the future. I will outline the problem, state the impact to our services, and propose a plan of action for all those who support New Horizons.

The problem

In the middle of October, Governor Paterson outlined a two-year Deficit Reduction Plan (DRP) that is designed to close a \$3 billion gap in the current fiscal year that ends on March 31st of 2010. For the next fiscal year beginning on April 1st, the deficit is expected to rise to at

least \$5 billion.

Agencies such as New Horizons have a solid commitment to and record of services for people with disabilities. Yet, our reliance on public financial support to realize our mission is more tenuous than it has been since public policy shaped community services for persons with developmental disabilities 40-50 years ago. The State of New York is finding it impossible to balance its budget, and the Federal government has already spent beyond its means in order to stimulate a broken national economy. Although some measures may be working, one gets the feeling that there is no reliable script to follow. In some sense, leaders and followers are making up the answers as they go along. This is not business as usual. It ain’t what it used to be.

Governor Paterson is the chief executive officer of our State, and he has the responsibility to balance our budget. One aspect of his DRP is to impose across the board cuts to the various State agencies such as OMRDD—our licensing and funding agency. New York State’s willingness to cut our funding grows almost week by week.



The NHR Newsletter is a quarterly publication produced by the agency to keep our friends informed about NHR’s current activities.

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- **0% increase** reflected in the letter of Robert Megna (Director, NYS Division of the Budget) to the State agencies on September 21st.
- **4% Cut** identified by NYSARC's meeting with the Senate Finance Committee staff on October 19th.
- **10% Cut** quoted from OMRDD Commissioner Ritter's meeting with her Provider Council Meeting held on October 22nd.

As of the first week in November, the Governor is proposing an across the board 10% cut to begin immediately. He warns that the cuts could be deeper if decisions are delayed by the Legislature.

The Impact

The suggested reductions in the Governor's deficit reduction plan, if enacted, will drive agencies like ours to cut deeply into essential services. Our work with people who have developmental disabilities is labor-intensive. It takes people to assist people. More than three-fourths of our budget is personnel costs. It is inescapable that reductions in our workforce will result in reduction in services.

Some agencies that are smaller than New Horizons may cease operations altogether. If that happens, the State will be required to provide services at a much higher cost than the private sector. An important dollars and cents point of view reveals that, for every 39 cents saved in State dollars, an additional 61 cents is lost in Federal Medicaid match funds. When New York State turns back Federal dollars, they are gone forever. From a fiscal perspective alone, it makes no sense. If the State must cut funding, they should consider funding that is 100 percent State dollars.

The not-for-profit sector remains one of the largest employers of entry-level jobs in the State. New Horizons will need to provide a regular pay check and health insurance for workers who would otherwise have to go on unemployment and public assistance, if these cuts go into effect.

Worst of all, funding cuts of this magnitude to a field that has already experienced cuts to the bone will also jeopardize the health and safety of the most vulnerable citizens in our State. This is a serious quality of care concern.

Plan of Action

Because human services are always a target in lean fiscal times, we must advocate as if the life of our mission depends on it. It does. More than in the recent past, self-advocates, family members and the staff who provide the all-important life services are testifying at public hearings and writing their elected representatives because the proposed cuts to services are getting deeper every month.

Talking points: tell the Governor and your Legislators that cuts of 10 percent for services for people with developmental disabilities will:

- ◆ Devastate the OMRDD service system
- ◆ Compromise the quality of care
- ◆ Shut down critical programs
- ◆ Create job loss
- ◆ Negatively impact local economies even further
- ◆ Results in a loss of matching federal funding to the State

1. Call Governor Paterson's "Citizen Services" phone line: **518-474-8390** and leave a message for him. Please state your name and where you live.
2. Email, send a letter or call your State Senator and Assembly Member. You can find them by entering your zip code after opening the following websites:
<http://nysenate.gov>
<http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem>

Thank you for expressing yourself to our government so that our future can be what it is supposed to be.

AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS



**Horseback Riding!
By Elaine Fiore**

New Horizons Resources is just that.

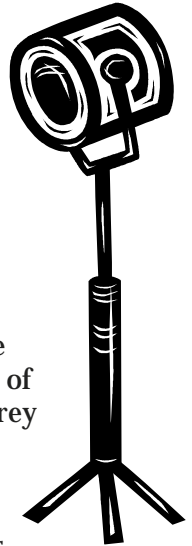
When Independent Living's Paul Dixon wanted to go horse back riding the folks at NHR found resources and provided a new horizon for Paul.

He enjoyed a full day at Pinegrove Dude Ranch on August 27th . The day was filled with so many activities including swimming, mini golf, a game of pool, a hay ride that took him to the peddle boats where he peddled his way around a pristine lake, an all you can eat lunch buffet and of course horseback riding.

Thanks to NHR dreams do come true.

Spotlight On....

*Jeffrey
Dunlavey*



Jeff Dunlavey is a DSP at Albrecht Lane and was selected recently as NHR Employee of The Month. The person who nominated Jeffrey said the following:

“I am writing you to nominate a fellow employee of mine, Jeff Dunlavey. Jeff works with the individuals at Albrecht Lane. Jeff and his wife care for 4 other consumers in their own home and he works full time at NHR. Jeff has dedicated his life to making sure the community of individuals with developmental disabilities live their lives to the fullest. Jeff was working at Orchard long before OPTS came into effect. When the Orchard gentlemen were moving on to bigger and better things Jeff was faced with a difficult decision of which gentlemen he would go with and help them experience a greater life.

Jeff on several occasions has taken the guys home for the holidays if their families were unable to make it. Jeff makes a great effort to make sure that the guys from Albrecht and Stormville keep in touch on a regular basis, whether it is coming to each others house for dinner or meeting up at a Renegades game and having a great time. Jeff is the first volunteer to do community outings as well as cover the house in emergency situations, whether it be staffing or the guys' health, you call Jeff and he will be there. Just recently Jeff brought in his personal power washer to wash the outside of the house, just to make sure that the guys can keep living in a clean and beautiful place.

Not only does Jeff treat the guys well, he treats staff just the same. When holidays come around Jeff brings in gifts for the staff's children. There aren't enough words in the dictionary to describe Jeff's heart. I am so honored not only to work with Jeff but to know him as a person. Please honor Jeff and his great intentions and ambitions to make these gentlemen's lives so much better, and to show him that the staff here at Albrecht appreciates everything he is doing for the guys at Albrecht who care for him dearly.”

Thank you for making a difference, Jeffrey!

Save The Date!

**3rd Annual Spring Juried
Craft Show**

March 20 & 21, 2010
Marist College
Poughkeepsie, NY

Vendors Wanted

Contact Beth at 473-3000 x322 or
bcookinham@nhrny.org for more info.

AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

Four Honored At Community Leadership Breakfast

The New Horizons Foundation's Annual Community Leadership Breakfast was held on Thursday, October 29th at the Poughkeepsie Grand. This year Michael Graham, Roderick MacLeod, Lorraine Roberts and Gail V. Webster were chosen by past honorees to receive the Award. Each year this award is presented to those whose spirit, dedication and leadership have fostered a better life for all residents of the Hudson Valley. To see the bios of this year's honorees and view past recipients of this award, please visit our website, www.nhrny.org/foundation.



Pictured above: NHF Board President, Steven Berner, Honorees Roderick MacLeod, Lorraine Roberts, Gail V. Webster and Michael Graham, NHR Executive Director, Regis Obijiski.

We are most grateful to those who have sponsored this event.....

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Past honorees return to celebrate!



New Horizons Foundation Annual Appeal 2009

The New Horizons Foundation Annual Appeal 2009 is currently underway. If you would like to contribute, please complete this form and return it with your tax-deductible donation payable to the New Horizons Foundation. We at NHR greatly appreciate your commitment to improving the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities.

"Hope is a state of mind, not of the world. Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously heading for success, but rather an ability to work for something because it is good."

-Vaclav Havel

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Please make checks payable to: *The New Horizons Foundation*, and mail to:
123 West Road, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569
Donations to the Foundation are fully tax deductible.

AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

Fashion Show Takes Over The Poughkeepsie Grand!

The 6th Annual Fall Into Fashion Show proved to be a great success for the New Horizons Foundation. A record of over 250 people attending viewed 35 models wearing the latest fall fashions from Crystal's Closet, Dress Barn, Elizabeth Boutique, Mary H. Abdoo & You and Up To Date and hair trends from David Cartelli of Davide in Wappingers Falls. To view more photos or order copies, please visit www.tjhanlon.com.



Pictured above: Rose Palazzo, Karen Coburn and Tammy Dellacamera, Mae Smith gets her hair done from David Cartelli.



Pictured above from left to right: Fran Sitter gets a little help on stage from Ed Schebilski, models get ready for the show, Alison Heady and Missy Frank enjoy a stroll down the catwalk, live music from the KVK Trio, our greeters, Ed Schebilski, Matt Sherlach, John Evangelista and Quincy Ferguson and Cablevision News' Donna Reyer.

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AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

NHR's Annual Picnic was held on Saturday, August 22nd at Freedom Park in Lagrange. Many thanks to everyone who attended and helped make the day a success!



Susan Greenidge and Carolyn Luongo



George Saris, John Clarke, Samuel Natal, Chris Turton



Regis Obijiski, Sandra Swan, Nancy Howell, Jean Tansey, Sally Heilman



Denise Powell and Marie Kluge

Are You Ready for Some Football??

By Debbie Ferraro

Mike Gonyea and Raymond Born recently went to watch the New York Giants practice at their training camp at SUNY Albany. Their first stop was the souvenir tent where we purchased Giants t-shirts. After getting a "friends and family" pass we were able to go right down to the field level to watch them practice.

Mike liked watching the defense players work on their tackling skills and Ray was impressed watching Eli Manning throw his passes. At the end of the practice, we claimed our spot at the fence, hoping to get some autographs – and we did! Raymond and Michael each got autographs from #66 David Diehl (tackle) and from #88 Michael Matthews (tight end) who recently got traded to New England. The guys are looking forward to watching the Giants play on TV this fall!



From left to right: Raymond Born and Michael Gonyea

Continued from page 1

and John Raffaele, Chair of the MHC hit the local airways to educate radio listeners about DSPs and the work they do. They recorded the Finding Out with Peter and Ellen Show which aired on a local radio station on Sunday, September 13, 2009. Ellen and Peter of course are no strangers to NHR.

ANCOR held its annual Governmental Activity Seminar conference in Washington DC. Regis was joined by two of our DSPs, Alice Legg, At-Home Res. Hab. and Jason Sealey, Tyrrel Road, as they learned about the legislative process and then personally visited and educated our national legislators; Sen. Schumer, Sen. Gillibrand and Representative Hinchey and others about the need to support H.R. Bill 868. This bill, if passed would address a living wage and the opportunity for states to decrease the gap of compensation between DSPs who work for voluntary agencies and those employed by the state. To let your representatives know how you feel about this bill, sign on to www.ancor.org and click on take the DSP capital challenge link. I haven't seen Alice since their return but boy is Jason pumped up. Give him a call. He would love to talk to you about the need to be actively involved!

On September, 14 and 15th, NHR partnered with the MHC to host DSP recognition BBQs. Over 100 DSPs came to network, learn about educational and credentialing opportunities, enjoy lunch and a lucky few left with door prizes. NHR's Human Resource department was the host but thanks are extended to John Clausson, Terri Nightengale and Jennifer Sucato for jumping in and helping out.

The MHC also hosted bulletin boards featuring our own Ed Schebilski and Paul Malloy. They stated, "If you don't already know a DSP, someday you will."

Professional status is an ongoing effort. We must continue to be active as individuals, agencies, organizations and associations to educate the public about the necessary and valuable work performed by DSPs. National DSP week gave us a platform to highlight some of the issues confronting people that receive services and DSPs. Much more work is required but you can never say, "Thank-You" enough.

Thank- You to all the DSPs here at NHR.



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News from the Foundation Office Beth Cookinham, Foundation Director

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to the Fun & Success of this Event...*

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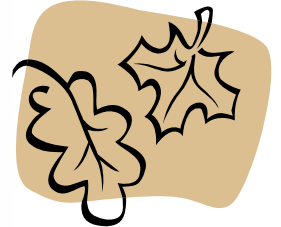
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Volunteers

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Debra Piccirilli
Matthew Sherlach
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Sandra Swan



Fashion Show Crew

Dottie DeNunzio – *Production Advisor*
Lisa Morris – *Commentator*
Pat Nishball – *Production Assistant*
Erin Revern – *Production Assistant*
Music by Zolz Entertainment
Hair & Makeup by Davide', Wappingers Falls
Makeup by Janna Whearty
Photography by Brad Cookinham, TJ Hanlon

Additional Thanks to...

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