



# First Rich O'Donnell Symposium a Success

On November 12, Enable offered direct service providers the chance to relax and recognize the true value and opportunities inherent in their work at the first Rich O'Donnell Symposium. Presented by First Niagara, the symposium featured a presentation by Dr. Beth Mount at Traditions at the Links.

Dr. Mount discussed the ability of direct service providers to find "keys" in their clients. These keys are events, objects, or ideas that pull out the person's true identity and happiness. She asked attendees of the seminar to think about one of their participants and

imagine what their keys are. The attendees then created posters displaying the keys and the future actions they could take to make their clients truly happy.

The Rich O'Donnell Symposium presented by First Niagara is held for direct service providers in honor of Rich O'Donnell, a



*Enable employees Rachel Estep, Sheridan Sandford and Mark Squadritto work on their poster displaying opportunities for one of their participants.*

former Enable employee. As a direct service provider, Rich knew the importance and value of the personal relationship that develops between direct support staff and the people they serve. Before his unexpected death in June 2007, he had become a friend and companion to the residents of Greystone Drive, above and beyond his role as a direct care service provider.

Thank you to First Niagara for providing this opportunity to such a deserving group of people.



*From l-r: Dan and Paula O'Donnell (Rich's parents), Dr. Beth Mount, Greg Gilroy of First Niagara, Sara Wall-Bollinger, Executive Director of Enable*

## Education Services

It has been a busy start to the school year for Enable's Education Services! Services were consolidated at Exploring Your World (EYW), Enable's inclusive preschool program on West Genesee Street. We bid a fond farewell to Westside Nursery and Shining Stars Day Care, but continue to operate a preschool program in collaboration with the Northside CYO.

Now with four classrooms including a Universal Pre-Kindergarten and a Toddler Program for children 18 to 36 months of age, EYW is bustling with activity! EYW is also pleased to announce it has been granted a day care license from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. This license, which is required for preschool services longer than three hours per day, will allow Enable to provide an extended day program for children who can benefit from more program time and meet the expressed needs of families.

Funds secured by State Senator John DeFrancisco, as well as support from the First Presbyterian Church United and donations from private individuals, have helped Enable to complete building enhancements to meet the requirements necessary to obtain the day care license. Senator DeFrancisco visited EYW during its open house on October 16 to tour the renovations.

As part of the project, additional classroom space was specifically designed to meet the needs of children with autism, a growing need within our community. At EYW, the children with autism are taught according to the methods and principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA). Scientific evidence supports the effectiveness of an ABA approach for many children with autism.



*Parent Alexandra Montufar discusses the ABA classroom with State Senator John DeFrancisco and Enable Executive Director Sara Wall-Bollinger.*

In the classroom environment, children with autism participate in preschool activities alongside their typical peers. It is an active five-hour day during which they practice the critical skills of social interaction, functional communication, group participation, toy play, following routines, coping with frustrations, and other self-help skills. The eleven children currently enrolled in the program benefit from a 2:1 ratio of students to teachers, receiving personal attention from the five staff members that run the extended day classroom.

For more information about Enable's Education Services, contact Phil Grajko at (315) 475-1382.



*Jackson enjoys playing on the climbing ladder at EYW as his teacher Kathy Porillo looks on.*

# Nob Hill Opens

Using Options Through Services (OPTS) funding, Enable was able to open a home for two women in the Nob Hill apartment complex in August. The apartment is an Individualized Residential Alternative similar to other homes operated by Enable. The two women who live there, Stephanie Silverman and Amile Vogelpoel, said they enjoy the independence of living away from their families and the privacy of living with just one other person. "It's very exciting to live here!" Vogelpoel said.

The women have staff with them 24 hours per day to offer support. They both chip in to help with chores around the apartment, and in turn are given independence to decide what to do with their time. "We love to have pizza on the weekends!" Silverman said.



Stephanie and Amile love to spend time in the kitchen of their apartment in the Nob Hill complex.

# Enable Welcomes Visitors from Azerbaijan

Enable expanded its international reach on November 3 when four delegates from Azerbaijan visited the agency through the Open World Program run by the Library of Congress. The delegates, all of whom work in a disability-related field and have a disability themselves, listened to presentations from Sally Johnston, Advocacy Coordinator, and Phil Grajko, Education Director.

Johnston spoke to the delegates about the history of advocacy and legislation important to people with disabilities, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. Grajko explained the success of Enable's inclusive education program and how the program is funded and individualized for each student. Both speakers then answered questions from the delegates.

Elena Taranova, the executive director of the Disability Awareness and Learning Center in Azerbaijan, said she was especially interested in the organization of an agency such as Enable, including the responsibilities of a board of directors. Taranova said she would like to apply such a system at home.



Seated (l-r): Elena Taranova, Enable Advocacy Coordinator Sally Johnston, Enable Executive Director Sara Wall-Bollinger, Parviz Heydarov Standing (l-r): Open World Facilitator Nigar Baimova, Interpreter Emin Hasanov, Tahir Khudiyev, Kamran Aliyev, Open World Host Ruth Ragonese, aide to Mr. Heydarov, Enable Education Director Phil Grajko

"We will try to get our government's attention to what we learned on the trip. We then hope that we or the government can contact Enable for help in implementing this program," she said.

Taranova was very intrigued by the concept of borrowing money for capital projects, such as Enable's new facility. She said there is no system to facilitate loans in Azerbaijan, and she would like

the government to begin one to fund new agencies.

"It doesn't matter if it is run by the government or privately, but it is important these agencies exist," she said.

The delegates remained in Syracuse for a total of ten days visiting other local organizations such as the Onondaga County Board of Elections.

# National Physical Therapy Month

The theme for National Physical Therapy Month was "Get Fit for Life", and Enable celebrated with activities showing how movement plus fun equals fitness. Employees visited the clinic area to play games with therapy and exercise equipment. They played balloon tennis, bowling with gourds, and seated basketball. The biggest hit of the day was a Nintendo Wii loaned by a PT assistant. Participants were able to try yoga, aerobics, and the hula hoop on the system. The physical therapists also offered tips on flexibility and cardiovascular health.

Thanks to Enable's physical therapists for keeping us healthy and fit!



Agency nurse Kathy Paolini pitches a 2 lb. weighted ball while seated on a therapy ball, working on balance, focus, strength and coordination.



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*communication and outreach services*



# Upcoming Events

**February 3, 2009 .....SADA Charity Preview**

Please designate Enable! Tickets can be ordered online at [www.enablecny.org](http://www.enablecny.org).  
Contact Ashley Anderson at 410-3383 for more information.

**March 13 – 14, 2009.....Enable Seminar Series**

“Handling the Adult Neurological Patient” presented by Boehme Workshops.  
Contact Deb Oonk at 410-3384 for more information.

**April 22, 2009 .....Shining Lights Awards Celebration**

Join us as at our annual awards celebration.  
Contact Deb Oonk at 410-3384 for more information.

**June 22, 2009 .....Enable Golf Classic**

Join us for food, golf and fun at the Drumlins Country Club East Course.  
Contact Ashley Anderson at 410-3383 for more information.

*Visit our website at [www.enablecny.org](http://www.enablecny.org) for more details on these events.*

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**Human Resources (315) 410-3312 • Self-Directed Personal Services (315) 410-3391**

## **Enable's Services**

Adaptive Equipment Loan Program  
Advocacy  
Aquatic Therapy  
Assistive Technology  
Augmentative Communication  
Certified Residential Settings  
Day Habilitation  
Diagnostic Assessment  
Early Intervention Evaluation  
Environmental Modifications

Family & Individual Support  
Home & Community Based Services  
Inclusive Pre-School Special Education  
Individualized Support Services  
Itinerant Special Education  
Neurology Services  
Occupational Therapy  
Physical Therapy  
Pre-School Evaluation  
Residential Habilitation  
Self Directed Personal Assistance

Sensory Integration  
Service Coordination  
Speech & Language Therapy  
Supported Employment



## **Affiliations:**

Cerebral Palsy Associations of NYS  
United Way of Central New York  
United Way of Greater Oswego County  
Association for Persons in Supported Employment  
National Association for the Education of Young Children  
US Green Building Council