

SAC/DDS MARCH 30th STATE HOUSE CELEBRATION

More than three hundred self-advocates, family members, providers, legislators, Department staff, and other citizens came to the Great Hall – Massachusetts State House - for the annual SAC/Department State House Celebration. This year's theme, CELEBRATING CHANGING THE NAME: CHANGING EXPECTATIONS, focused on the success of Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong (MASS) and other self-advocates in changing the name of the Department to Department of Developmental Services. Mary Richardson, Host of Channel 5's Chronicle, emceed the recognition of individuals and groups who helped to change the name by their advocacy or example.

Commissioner Elin Howe presented the 2009 Gunnar Dybwad Leadership Award to Lucie Chansky, the Chair of the Metro Regional Citizen Advisory Board, the Newton/South Norfolk Area Advisory Board, and former member of the Statewide Advisory Council (SAC). Lucie is also a board member of Arc Massachusetts and member of its Government Affairs Committee.

Lucie Chansky thanked Commissioner Howe for the award. She noted that she had known Gunnar Dybwad and his wife Rosemary and worked on several projects with them. She stated, "I feel a special significance, in getting the Gunnar Dybwad award today, because we are celebrating the name change of the Department that serves individuals with intellectual disabilities. Gunnar would have been very happy with this name change but he would be even happier that the elimination of the "R" word was brought about by the strong advocacy of those individuals whom the Department of Developmental Services serves. I would wish we all now will think of RESPECT when we hear the R word."

The Commissioner's Exemplar Award was presented to Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong and key legislators who were instrumental in changing the name:

Representative Michael Costello

Senate President Therese Murray
Senator Fred Berry
Senator Steven C. Panagiotakos
Senator Steven A. Tolman
Representative Barbara L'Italien
Representative Kevin G. Honan

Senator Stephen M. Brewer
Senator Richard T. Moore
Senator Karen Spilka
House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo
Representative Tom Sannicandro
Representative Cheryl Coakley-Rivera

EOHHS Secretary JudyAnn Bigby, MD, congratulated MASS and self-advocates for their effective advocacy. Their enthusiastic civic involvement through legislative advocacy, volunteerism, etc. further demonstrates the importance of changing the name of the Department. The Secretary noted further that the application of principles of self-determination through the service planning process will support self-advocates full inclusion in community life.

Mary Richardson, Host of Channel 5's Chronicle, was warmly received by the audience. She expressed her appreciation for being invited to participate in the celebration that was akin to

a combination of “St. Patrick’s Day and Mardi Gras”. She congratulated self-advocates on their successful advocacy. Individuals, groups and organizations that contributed to the “change the name” effort and/or exemplified the values and accomplishments that underscore the need for change were recognized.

DDS/SAC STATE HOUSE HONOREES 2009

CENTRAL/WEST

Karlene Shea

Karlene has been promoting community integration by developing and teaching a curriculum of skills building through the Integration Facilitation Project. She has transformed social networks and beliefs about where people belong... at home, of course, as essential members of our communities.

The Pioneer Club & Advisor Mary “Betsy” Sullivan

Established in 1978, this self-advocacy group successfully advocated for the closure of Belchertown State School, improved working conditions for individuals with disabilities, and was instrumental in changing the name activities.

Laurel Peltier

As a parent, advocate, special education professional and Chair of the Western Mass Regional Citizen Advisory Board, Laurel spearheaded community education about changing the Department’s name and helped promote quality enhancement and legislative advocacy throughout the region.

NORTHEAST REGION

Representative Michael A. Costello

When self-advocates in the Northeast Region described their experiences with the “R” word and why the Department’s name had to change, Representative Costello became their advocate. He educated his legislative colleagues and successfully led the efforts to get the name changed to the Department of Developmental Services.

Trek for Respect

Commemorating the success of changing the name of the Department, Trek for Respect, a Coalition of self-advocates and friends held a twenty-five mile relay walk from Haverhill to Salisbury Beach that ended with a symbolic finish by MASS Chair John Anton and Representative Michael Costello. Plans are to make this an annual event.

Minute Man Arc “Blue Team”

Participants in the Minute Man Arc day and residential programs made a commitment to self-advocacy and to be ambassadors within their communities. Their collaboration with the Central Middlesex Area Office to get rid of the “R” word in Area Office communications and to change the Department’s name was successful.

SOUTHEAST REGION

Elizabeth Ponte

Liz is a caring daughter, a compassionate friend, a responsible employee, a faithful companion, as well as a steadfast self-advocate. Overcoming numerous challenges, she has grown into a highly regarded and articulate leader in self-advocacy and for her work in getting the Department's name changed.

Susan Harrington

Susan does not allow labels to dictate her approach to life. For over fifteen years, Susan has been a mainstay in the Southeast Regional office. When you call the Southeast Regional office, it is her cheerful voice that greets you and she's an original member of MTV's program "How's Your News?"

Regina Diener

As a member of the Plymouth Citizen Advisory Board, Regina educated her colleagues and Department staff on the importance of changing the Department's name. Her description of how labels make "an uphill battle even more difficult" was significant in achieving this milestone in disability history.

METRO REGION

Roger Walsh

As a member and officer on Arc Mass Board of Directors, SNCARC's Our Club, Lifeworks Board of Directors, and the Human Rights Committee, Roger is an advocate's advocate. His message is "Everyone has challenges they must face; an individual's challenge should not define them as a person."

The Corbett Family

As a result of many challenges that faced their son Jack, the Corbett's responded with an emphasis on growth and accomplishment rather than disability. Through a "public partnership," they are managing successful residential supports for their son.

MRS Speaks Out

Members of MRS Speaks Out, include human rights officers, trainers, as well as committed self-advocates. In celebrating their fourth anniversary, this self-advocacy group was very involved in the efforts that led to the successful change in the Department's name.

CENTRAL OFFICE

Neil Lazzara

For decades, Neil has supported self-advocacy through work with individuals and as an advisor to the Western Mass and statewide self-advocacy groups. His vision of what is

possible for self-advocates has helped to chart a course for self-determination, independence, and empowerment.

Patricia Quatieri

Patricia, who was unanimously elected Chairperson of the Central Middlesex Citizen Advisory Board, has provided the leadership to improve the quality of services through Family Citizen Monitoring. As a self-advocate, Patricia has testified at the State House budget hearing and worked hard to increase CAB membership.

Susan Moriarty

Self-advocacy has been part of the Templeton Developmental Center culture since the 1980's and Susan was instrumental in its inception and ongoing support. As a result of her efforts, residents have enhanced their advocacy skills in "speaking out," fundraising to support group activities, and legislative advocacy.

DEVELOPMENTAL CENTERS

Peter Lafferty

For more than twenty years, Peter has successfully increased expectations of individuals with intellectual disabilities by helping more than seventy individuals move to homes in the community. Through his efforts of focusing on their "abilities," individuals "find their voices and are being heard."

Ability Club @ Fernald Developmental Center

The Fernald Ability Club was founded over twenty-five years ago and its members were early supporters and members of MASS. The Club consists of members living in the facilities as well as those who have moved into the community. The Club was very active in efforts to change the name of the Department.

MASS ADVOCATES STANDING STRONG AWARDEES

MASS Chairpersons: Craig Smith, Anne Fracht, John Anton

Since its inception, it has always been the goal of Mass Advocates Standing Strong to change the name of the Department. Its three Chairpersons, Craig Smith (1995 - 2000), Anne Fracht (2000 - 2005), and John Anton (2005 - present) provided the leadership to successfully achieve this goal.

Representative Michael A. Costello

Representative Costello led the effort in the Legislature to change the name after hearing from his constituents how the term "MR" was hurtful and demeaning.

Buddy Bostick

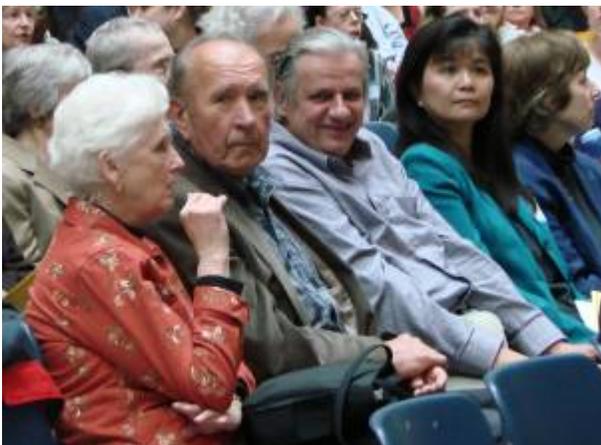
A long-time supporter of self-advocacy, Buddy has been key in keeping Representative Costello informed about how important changing the Department's name was to self-

advocates. Buddy was instrumental in organizing “Trek for Respect,” a twenty-five mile walk to commemorate changing the name.

PHOTOS FROM THE STATE HOUSE CELEBRATION



1. SAC Vice Chair Maria Freccero welcomed the 300+ participants to the Celebration.



2. SAC members Lisa Ching, Ron Asbjornson, Hank Pasko and his wife, Ann participate in the celebration.



3. SAC member Reggie Clark



4. Dybwad Leadership Award Recipients, Leo Sarkissian and Mary Lou Maloney



5. Commissioner Elin Howe introduces the 2009 Dybwad Leadership Award Recipient.



6. 2009 Dybwad Leadership Award Recipient, Lucie Chansky, and Commissioner Howe



7. MASS members Anne Fracht, Craig Smith, Craig Powers, and Chairperson John Anton receive award from Commissioner Howe.



8. MASS member Paul Bosma presents Commissioner's Exemplar Award to Senator Michael Moore



9. Senator Moore thanks everyone for the awards.



10. MASS member Kevin Ryan presents award to Senator Panagiotakos



11. Representative Kevin G. Honan, Anne Fracht and Commissioner Howe



12. EOHHS Secretary JudyAnn Bigby, Chronicle Host Mary Richardson with the Chansky family



13. EOHHS Secretary Judy Ann Bigby addresses the audience.



14. SE Honorees Regina Diener, Elizabeth Ponte and Sue Harrington join Regional Director Rick O'Meara and Mary Richardson.



115. Fernald's Ability Club members receive awards at the State House Celebration.



16. MASS award recipients, Craig Smith, Anne Fracht, and John Anton stand with Craig Powers and Stateswide Coordinator Ed Bieleckie at the Celebration.



17. MASS Chair John Anton and Honoree Buddy Bostick



18. Commissioner Elin Howe shares a moment with Celebration participants.



1912. Senator Steven A. Tolman receives Commissioner's Exemplar Award from MASS Founding Chairperson, Craig Smith.