

# Dds / SAC STATE HOUSE CELEBRATION March 22, 2010

The Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services and the DDS Statewide Advisory Council held its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual State House Celebration on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, in the Great Hall, Massachusetts State House. More than three hundred individuals and families, legislators and policy-makers, providers and DDS staff, and other citizens participated. The theme – TAKE ACTION: TAKE CHARGE! – acknowledged the many ways that self-advocates, their families and supporters have asserted their rights as citizens to contribute to their community and to improve their quality of life.

DDS Commissioner Elin Howe announced the 2010 Dybwad Leadership Award recipients, Marjorie Cohen and Susan Nadworny. This award is given annually to individuals who best exemplify the spirit and commitment of Gunnar Dybwad to self-advocacy, community inclusion, and self-determination.

Presiding over the celebration was WBZ Radio Host, Dan Rea.

Following are photos from the Celebration.

DDS Commissioner Elin Howe welcomed the audience to the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual State House Celebration. She stated that there were many accomplishments to celebrate from changing the name of the Department to improving lives of individuals.

“The accomplishments of the many people that we will celebrate today show that the words that we use to describe individuals should include engaged citizen, courageous friend, hard-working employee, effective leader, and registered voter.”

The Commissioner remarked, “Our theme is TAKE ACTION: TAKE CHARGE! It reflects the many ways that self-advocates and their families with the support of providers, the Department and their community are becoming the decision-makers regarding important aspects of their lives. This may be decisions on what services and supports will be provided and who will provide them. It is being actively engaged in the IEP or the ISP. It is taking action to find employment, raise money for self-advocacy through the “Trek for Respect”, make friends and volunteering in the community.



Another TAKE ACTION example are the many visits of self-advocates and their families to the State House to meet with their legislators, the Governor and policy-makers regarding services and supports for individuals with disability. By sharing their story, they put a face on the more than 32,000 individuals served by the Department. And they have been effective.”

Dr. Jean McGuire, Assistant Secretary for the Executive Office of Health and Human Services acknowledged the many accomplishments of families and individuals with disability. She noted that there was much more to be done and looked forward to working together.



## DYBWAD LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS



Marjorie Cohen, parent, community leader, Chair of the Worcester Citizen Advisory Board, member of the Governor's Commission was presented a replica of a bowl that Gunnar Dybwad kept filled with fruit to share with guests. The bowl is given to the recipient of the Dybwad Leadership Award.

Marjorie was acknowledged for her leadership in promoting community accessibility, inclusive classrooms, and for her many years of effective legislative advocacy.

Susan Nadworny began her advocacy with the birth of her son and has greatly expanded her impact through her leadership of Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change. With MFOFC, she was instrumental in promoting Family Support legislation and funding. This service model enables families to support their family member with a disability at home. Through the MFOFC Leadership Series, hundreds of families have gained skills in



advocacy, community education and effective networking.



WBZ Radio host, Dan Rea, presided over the State House Celebration. He shared his observations and long time commitment to working with individuals with disability.

## **DDS /SAC STATE HOUSE HONOREES**



**Figure 1. Denise Daley receives certificate from Commissioner Howe, Assistant Commissioner Tummino and WBZ Host Dan Rea.**



**Figure 2. Mary Rodgers is acknowledged at the 2010 State House Celebration.**



**Figure 3. Mark Whitehouse is acknowledged for his contributions.**



**Figure 4. Heather Sherwood is joined by SE Regional Director Rick O'Meara at the Celebration.**



**Figure 5. Mallisa Kenney is a 2010 State House Honoree.**



**Figure 6. Cathe Carpenter and Laurie Brennan are recognized for their CAB leadership.**



**Figure 7. Cynthia Perrone's leadership and Family Support advocacy is acknowledged.**



**Figure 8. Donna Hunnewell accepts on behalf of the Lowell Wish Project.**



**Figure 9. Lus Eneida Garcia is joined by her family as she accepts the award.**



**Figure 10. Deborah Pierce is acknowledged.**



**Figure 11. Deborah Davignon is acknowledged.**



**Figure 12. Maria Freccero is a DSS SAC 2010 Honoree.**



**Figure 13. Deb Aulenback and Tom Larkin are honored as representatives of the CRT.**



**Figure 14. Members of the Task Force on Young Adults in Need of Intensive Community-Based Supports are acknowledged.**