

ANNUAL CONFERENCE DRAWS MORE THAN 800 TO ALBANY

More than 800 people from Affiliates across the state attended three days of workshops and meetings, October 20-22, at the 2008 Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State (CP of NYS) Annual Conference in Albany. Nearly 50 people with disabilities attended the conference as the result of grants provided by the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC).

The 48th Annual Conference began on Monday, October 20 at 11:00 am with a special presentation by UCP of New York City entitled, My Child Without Limits, a web-based information and social networking resource for families and caregivers of young children with cerebral palsy and other developmental disabilities and the professionals who work with them.

Nelson Lauver, creator and host of the nationally syndicated radio program, The American Storyteller (www.theamericanstoryteller.com) delivered the Keynote address on Monday afternoon. His inspiring presentation was highlighted by personal stories and hilarious anecdotes chosen to demonstrate the power of perseverance. The Keynote presentation was followed by seven concurrent sessions, including an update from Diana Jones Ritter, Commissioner of the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.

The first day of the conference concluded with the CP of NYS Annual Awards Dinner honoring more than a dozen organizations and individuals for their success in overcoming obstacles, or for their contributions to people with disabilities and their families.

Tuesday's schedule included nearly 40 sessions and meetings on a broad range of topics and issues critical to people with disabilities, volunteers and professionals from across the state. An exhibition of artwork submitted by Affiliates from across the state was on display at a silent auction on Tuesday. Kimberly Evans, from Cerebral Palsy of the North Country, was chosen as CP of NYS Artist of the Year, and was among those honored at the Annual Awards Dinner the night before. Tuesday night featured the Celebrate Staff Dinner recognizing 57 employees from 21 Affiliates for outstanding service.

The Annual Conference concluded on Wednesday morning with an inspiring, fast-paced and hilarious Closing Plenary session by Sister Anne Bryan Smollin.



Diana Jones Ritter, Commissioner of OMRDD, (center) accepts Public Service Award on behalf of Governor David Paterson from CP of NYS Board Members Robert DiFrancesco and Natalie Rogers.



Kimberly Evans, from CP of the North Country (center) was honored as CP of NYS Artist of the Year.



Dawn Korzec Carpenter (Upstate Cerebral Palsy) accepts the Al Felmet Achievement Award.



Susan Constantino, President & CEO, CP of NYS, presents Staff Recognition Award to Leslie Stephens from Upstate Cerebral Palsy.