

# CP OF NYS ANNUAL CONFERENCE ATTRACTS NEARLY 700 PEOPLE TO SARATOGA SPRINGS

**I M A G I N E**, the Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State (CP of NYS) Annual Conference, attracted nearly 700 people from across the state, and beyond, for 3 days of educational workshops and meetings October 30-November 1 at the Saratoga Hilton Hotel and City Center in Saratoga Springs.

The schedule included sessions conducted by nationally known presenters discussing the latest information in supporting children with autism, offering improved care for Medicaid recipients through internet-based telemedicine programs, as well as innovative programs providing community integration, employment and volunteer opportunities for people with disabilities.

## Featured sessions, included:

### MONDAY, OCTOBER 30

#### Keynote Address

[Mick Ebeling](#), a film and television producer, philanthropist, and recipient of the Muhammad Ali Humanitarian of the Year Award, dazzled attendees with his inspiring message about overcoming the concept of “impossible” so that innovation can take place. He explained his philosophy of how helping one individual can lead to helping many.



Mr. Ebeling is the CEO of **Not Impossible Labs**, an organization that develops creative solutions to address real-world problems and was founded on his belief that nothing is impossible. He offered stories about the success of several projects undertaken by his organization to support that belief.

With no technical background in ocular recognition technology, Mr. Ebeling created The Eyewriter, an open source, low-cost, do it yourself device. The Eyewriter enables individuals with paralysis to communicate and create art using only the movement of their eyes. Time Magazine named The Eyewriter one of the “Top 50 Inventions of 2010.” For Not Impossible’s [Project Daniel](#), Mr. Ebeling traveled to Sudan to 3-D-print prosthetic limbs and fit them for children severely injured by years of war. He left the equipment behind with trained locals, creating the world’s first 3-D printing prosthetic lab and training facility. Arms are printed within hours at a cost of \$100.

He says his philosophy is simple: recognize a problem, commit to solving it, and then begin the process of figuring out how. He discussed what it takes to make a great innovator and provided techniques and solutions for teaching the art of innovation to improve careers and lives

## **New York City Ballet Children's Workshop**

Dancers **Ashley Laracey** and **Cameron Dieck**, from the New York City Ballet (NYCB, conducted a dance workshop for children with disabilities. A demonstration of what the children learned in the workshop was presented for conference attendees during an Awards Reception at the Saratoga City Center later that day. View a television news story about the session [HERE](#)



**Jason Helgerson**, NYS Medicaid Director and **Jack Rollins**, from the National Association of Medicaid Directors provided a New York State and national perspective on the latest news on Medicaid changes/proposed changes and the impact on New York's disability provider community.

## **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31**

### **Keynote Address**

**John J. Ratey, MD**, an Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and an internationally recognized expert in Neuropsychiatry, discussed the importance of exercise in optimizing and maintaining brain function for all ages, with a focus on the critical importance of exercise for the wellbeing of people with disabilities and mental health issues. He began his session by asking participants to go through some exercises. He then discussed his effort to re-engineer schools, corporations, and individual lifestyle practices by incorporating exercise to achieve peak performance and optimum mental health.

**Theresa M. Hamlin**, Ed.D., from The Center for Discovery, **Erik Jacobson**, Ph.D., from Upstate Cerebral Palsy, and **Patricia Tomanelli**, from DDI, discussed the work of their collaborative – The Centers of Excellence in the Care and Treatment of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Other Complex Disabilities (COE). They shared what is known about Autism as a complex condition and data that supports the prevalence of co-occurring conditions. The COEs also shared information on a new data repository; screening tools they developed to identify co-occurring conditions and the best practices for assessment and intervention. This session, as with the ones above, was well attended and highly rated.



For more on the CP of NYS Annual Conference, visit the conference web page at <http://www.cpodnys.org/2017-annual-conference/>.