

IMAGINE

2018 CP of NYS Annual Conference

CP OF NYS Annual Conference Ends Three-Day Run In Saratoga Springs

The 2018 Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State (CP of NYS) Annual Conference saw more than 700 people from every corner of the state gather in Saratoga Springs October 15-17 for nearly 50 workshops, educational sessions, and meetings on issues important to people with disabilities, their families and the people and organizations that provide supports and services. See a brief overview [HERE](#).



The conference officially began with a keynote presentation by Elaine Angelo at Noon on October 15 before more than 300 people in the Saratoga City Center. Her presentation provided insight, results of research and also practical tips on the ever-changing environment of the multi-generational workplace. Ms. Angelo encouraged attendees to embrace generational diversity in their organizations and provided examples of cultural and attitudinal differences between generations and how to embrace and manage those differences.

The Keynote session was followed by a presentation from Kerry Delaney, Acting Commissioner of the NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Acting Commissioner Delaney offered insight into plans for the future of supports and services for people with developmental disabilities in New York State.



Tuesday, October 16 began with a Keynote presentation by former world-renowned fashion photographer [Rick Guidotti](#). For years Mr. Guidotti took photographs of those that others considered the world's most beautiful people. One day he saw a girl at a bus stop. She had pale skin and white hair; a girl with albinism. She inspired him to begin a process of discovery – about people with differences and about himself. What he found was upsetting. The images he saw were sad and dehumanizing.

He stopped working in the fashion industry and created a not-for-profit called [Positive Exposure](#). What started with [photographs](#) has grown into a variety of programs to empower people living with *difference*, and to educate the world around them. His highly energetic and inspiring talk discussed how he is working to change perceptions of people everywhere.

Mr. Guidotti's Keynote was followed by a panel discussion on advocacy and government engagement conducted by **NYS Assemblymembers Melissa Miller and Angelo Santabarbara** and [News 10 ABC Anchor Christina Arangio](#). Family members, people with disabilities, staff members and volunteers heard about the importance of family advocacy as it relates to educating government officials and the media on the issues important to the health and well-being of people with disabilities and their families. All three panelists are parents of children with developmental disabilities and brought a unique insight to this critical topic.

Other Tuesday afternoon sessions included a presentation by fitness expert Eric Chessen on the importance of physical fitness to the well-being of people with autism, a special education update from the NYS Education Department and a two-hour training on Civilian response to an active shooter event conducted by **Ronald Messen**, First Sergeant, Albany County Sheriff's Office. Session attendees received practical information about what to expect during an incident, what to expect from law enforcement, and how to respond to law enforcement.

The CP of NYS Annual Conference is sponsored in part by the **Irwin Siegel Agency; The Beacon Group; BDO USA, LLP; Focused Wealth Management and Total Care RX/Worlds Fair Pharmacy**. For more information on the conference and speakers, please visit the CP of NYS website at <http://www.cpofnys.org/2018-annual-conference-2/>. Or view coverage of the event [HERE](#).

