



NYSACRA

MEMBERSHIP INVITATION

2010-2011

NYSACRA is a catalyst and leading advocate for people who have developmental disabilities and organizations that support them.

December 2010



AN INVITATION

You work every day to support and encourage people with disabilities, and when you are in need of support and encouragement NYSACRA is there.

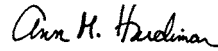
For more than 30 years, NYSACRA has carried out its vision to be a leading advocate for people who have developmental disabilities and the people and organizations that support them. We understand the challenges providers face every day. In a challenging and changing environment our collective mission cannot be realized without a strong partnership. We need—and absolutely depend upon—the involvement of not-for-profit agencies that provide services in New York State communities.

We invite you to join us in this statewide association where you will find a strong and respected advocate for your concerns. We look forward to welcoming you as a NYSACRA member. Please call for more information or to discuss any of the materials that are enclosed.

Sincerely,



Steve Klein
President



Ann M. Hardiman
Executive Director



Steve Klein
President
Board of Directors
NYSACRA



Ann M. Hardiman
Executive Director
NYSACRA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steve Klein, Schenectady ARC, *President*
Fredda Rosen, Job Path, *First Vice President*
Matthew Sturiale, YAI-NIPD, *Treasurer*
Louis Cavaliere, Services for the Underserved, *Secretary*

Regional Vice Presidents

Jeff Covington, Catholic Charities Disabilities Services, *Capital*
Paul Lowry, UCP of Nassau County, Inc., *Long Island*
Christopher Fortune, Orange County AHRC, *Mid Hudson*
Evelyn Alvarez, HeartShare Human Services of NY, *New York City*
Patrick Waite, Oswego County Opportunities, *Northern*
Helen Trowbridge Hanes, Aspire of Western NY, *Western*

At-Large Members

Howard Ganter, Jefferson Rehabilitation Center
James Lawler, Crystal Run Village
Lee Rambeau, FECS

Immediate Past President

Tom McAlvanah, Lifespire



STAFF

Ann M. Hardiman, *Executive Director*
Jim Kosakoski, *Deputy Executive Director*
Patricia McKay, *Associate Executive Director*
Joseph M. Macbeth, *Assistant Executive Director*
Ann D. Genaro, *Director of Educational Services*
Kathleen P. Mayo, *Director of Legislative Services*
Lisa Mount, *Office Manager*
Tamelia Fritz, *Office Assistant*
Philip Kopach, *Financial Coordinator*

OVERVIEW OF NYSACRA

Background

Founded in 1977, NYSACRA originally afforded not-for-profit service provider agencies with the opportunity to meet and share ideas and information while the development of community residences for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities was in its infancy. NYSACRA also began providing an important public voice representing the needs of its members at the federal, state, and local levels; vital work we continue to this day.

Since the Seventies, however, the service delivery system for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities has changed dramatically. From virtually no choices (other than home or institutional care) to an array of opportunities for those with a variety of disabilities, NYSACRA now represents nearly 200 not-for-profit service provider agencies with a combined workforce of approximately 65,000 employees. The supports provided by

these agencies and their staff are wide-ranging and include: supportive and supervised residential living alternatives, prevocational and vocational training, family care and respite services, clinical services, and educational and preventive education services.

The 1990s saw an unprecedented change in the intellectual and other developmental disabilities service delivery system, i.e. services that were once peripheral, such as case management and family supports, emerged as central to the service delivery system. In 1994, in order to meet the challenge of providing appropriate support to its members in this rapidly changing field, NYSACRA implemented a strategic planning process. That process has helped NYSACRA prepare for the changing needs of its members and we continue to transform, as do our members.

Vision

NYSACRA is a catalyst and leading advocate for people who have developmental disabilities and organizations that support them.

Mission

NYSACRA represents the collective voice of its members in promoting the full participation of persons with developmental disabilities in the communities of New York State. NYSACRA executes this mission by:

- influencing public policy, public understanding, and community action dedicated to quality services designed to realize inclusion and meet individual need;
- acting as a resource to provide services, advocacy, information, technical assistance, education, collaboration, and networking experiences to our members; and
- promoting choice, quality supports, and services in the community, in partnership with people with developmental disabilities, their families, those who provide their supports, and others involved in their lives.

Organizational Structure

NYSACRA is governed by a 16-member board of directors. Board members represent a rich diversity coming, as they do, from a variety of the provider agencies that NYSACRA serves—both programmatically and geographically. Members of the board and staff work within NYSACRA's committee structure to assure broad representation of ideas and views from member agencies. The committees are organized to reflect the challenges within the provider community, which includes:

- **Policy Analysis:** analyzes, reviews, and influences policies and regulations affecting services to persons with developmental disabilities.
- **Education and Training:** promotes agency staff development and training as a service to the NYSACRA membership by identifying training needs and developing educational initiatives.
- **Annual Conference:** establishes the direction of the annual conference by developing a theme, identifying topic areas, and suggesting presenters.
- **Legislative:** identifies, prioritizes, and monitors NYSACRA's legislative agenda.
- **Workforce:** identifies, develops, and implements projects and programs that improve and enhance the quality of the workforce that serves individuals with developmental disabilities.
- **Technology:** researches and reports on technology that will enhance the delivery of services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

- **Quality:** promotes quality person-centered initiatives and practices that embrace choice, dignity, and accountability and also provides guidance on quality assurance, corporate compliance, and other regulatory standards.
- **Ad Hoc:** ad hoc committees are created at the discretion of the Board of Directors to consider, investigate, take action on, or report on some single issue or subject.

All members are encouraged to participate at the board and committee-levels to provide NYSACRA staff with the most comprehensive and timely developments within the field.

Strategic Plan

As a professional trade association, NYSACRA's obligation and commitment to its members is as wide-ranging as their ever-changing needs. Thus, the strategic planning process provides the organization with the mechanism to identify member needs through its committee structure, and to take action to address those needs. That Strategic Plan is firmly grounded in the vision, mission, and overall goals of the association.

NYSACRA's Strategic Plan for 2006–2011 (available in its entirety to members at www.nysacra.org) is comprised of three strategic areas of activity, and corresponding goals for each:

- **Shaping the industry:** exploring a new service paradigm, impacting public policy, shaping industry standards, and professionalizing the workforce.

- **Improving member capacity:** strengthening local membership and providing appropriate technical support for individual members.
- **Improving association capacity:** increasing financial capacity, flexibility and resource development, improved use of technology, and by increasing membership.

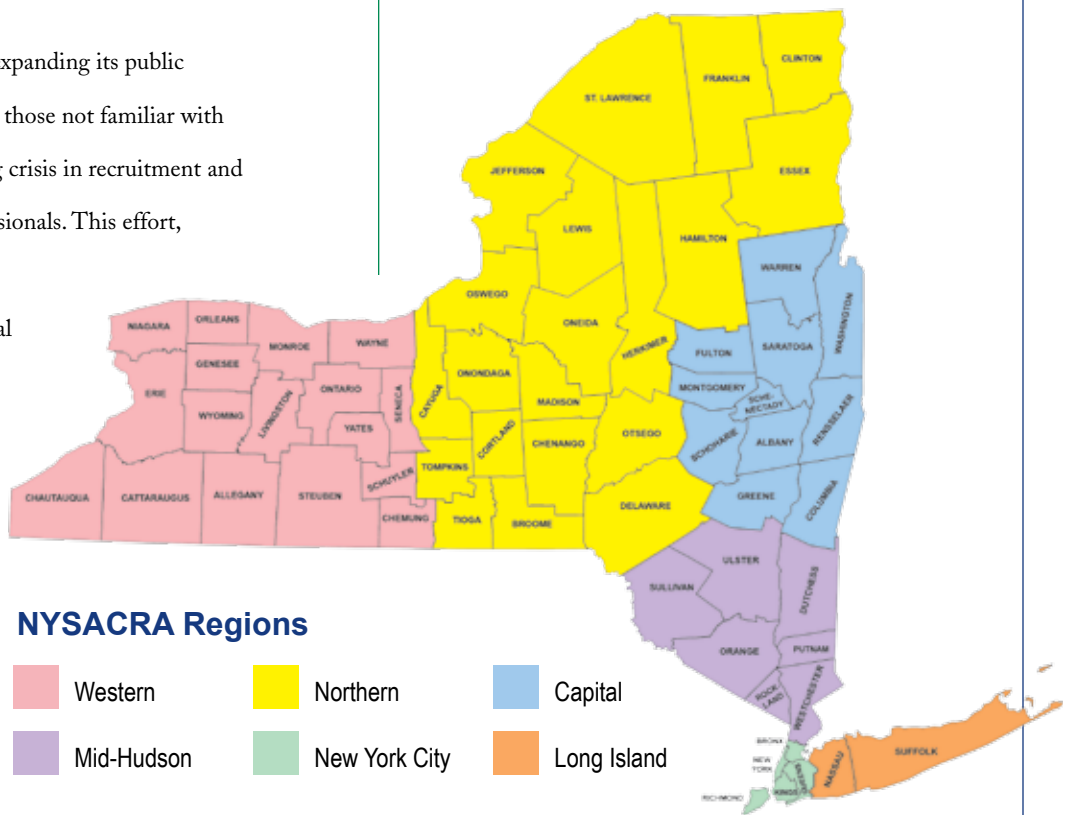
Although NYSACRA will be engaging in a number of new and exciting activities to meet its strategic planning goals, workforce development remains the cornerstone of its commitment to its members. Accordingly, significant effort will be devoted to identifying other industries that have negotiated major shifts in product development and/or business models by linking success with valued workforces; NYSACRA will then evaluate how those models can improve the delivery of person-centered opportunities in the field of developmental disabilities while retaining the investment in staff.

In addition, NYSACRA is expanding its public information campaign to educate those not familiar with the industry about the continuing crisis in recruitment and retention of direct support professionals. This effort, coupled with proactive political involvement beginning at the local level but supported primarily by NYSACRA's legislative affairs activities, will set the stage for changes in compensation and benefits, education, and training.

Goals

NYSACRA's strategic plan is developed and measured against four basic goals that focus on enhancing the organization's impact on the:

- policies and practices that affect people with developmental disabilities;
- stakeholder relationships within the developmental disabilities service delivery system;
- quality of services and supports available to people with developmental disabilities; and
- continued expansion of comprehensive services to the organization's membership.



MEMBER SERVICES

NYSACRA is pleased to offer a variety of services to its members. From workforce development to legislative action to public education, NYSACRA remains committed to providing members with opportunities that help them enhance service provision, develop a common community, and make their voices heard at the state and federal levels.

Conferences and Training

- **Annual Conference** — NYSACRA's annual conference is a prestigious event that includes over 50

topical sessions provided by professionals to professionals in the field of developmental disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are honored through participation in art exhibits and theatre productions. The annual conference also provides the venue for the election of NYSACRA's board members and their introduction to the membership at the Annual Banquet Dinner.

- **Leadership Conference** — NYSACRA convenes an annual leadership conference designed for upper level administrators on topics that are crucial for continued success.
- **Direct Support Professional Regional Conferences** — Each year NYSACRA conducts six regional Direct Support Professional Conferences across the state. These one-day events have many objectives: they provide

recognition to our DSPs for their extraordinary services to the people we support; they offer the opportunity to give professional presentations to their peers; and they open the minds of their colleagues, and challenge others who are in similar roles.

- **Topical Issues** — NYSACRA also presents conferences on other topics (such as Medicaid, diversity, and person centered planning) that respond to the needs of the membership.
- **Management Development Series** — NYSACRA presents regional trainings throughout the year to expand on subjects from the Annual Conference and introduce new topics. Sessions on supervisory skills, building a positive work environment, and enhancing the documentation process are examples.



Workforce

- **Realistic Job Previews** — *We Get It Done: Working as a Direct Support Professional* is a Realistic Job Preview, in DVD format, that was designed to assist member



agencies in their direct support staff recruitment and retention efforts. Realistic Job Previews (RJP) are tools used by businesses

to give prospective employees honest insights into the expectations, challenges, and rewards of the positions for which they are applying. NYSACRA will be streaming the DVD for members only on our new website. This will allow you to log on to www.nysacra.org and show the RJP from any location within your organization. As part of this DVD, NYSACRA members also receive a User's Guide, four 30-second Public Service Announcements (PSA), an 11-minute video that provides a context for NYSACRA's advocacy and policy efforts on behalf of direct support professionals, and a special 60-second PSA honoring Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week.



- **College of Direct Support** — NYSACRA's collaboration with the College of Direct Support offers a comprehensive, web-based learning program designed for individuals who support people with intellectual and other development disabilities that is infused with a set of values and skill standards to train Direct Support Professionals and their supervisors and managers as they support people in community-based settings. There are currently more than 50,000 students using the CDS across the country.
- **Direct Support Professional Alliance of New York State** — NYSACRA spearheaded the development and implementation of the New York State chapter of the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals. The state chapter serves to advance the national association's Code of Ethics, national credentialing in direct support, and the overall goal of professionalizing the workforce.
- **Economic Value Study of Community Group Homes** — This Statewide study proves that community residential programs for the developmentally disabled

not only provide a needed service but are also a major economic contributor to the local community, by providing jobs and buying goods and services locally.



Advocacy and Partnership

- **Legislative Day** — NYSACRA members converge each winter on the State Legislature to educate elected officials on the impact the proposed budget has on the work done by Direct Support Professionals and the importance of policy issues for the individuals we serve as part of our annual Legislative Day.



- **Online Action Center** — NYSACRA's Action & Education Center, presented on our website, provides members with all the tools they need to achieve grassroots success. The center includes links and information on elections, voting, media contacts in the state, action alerts, legislation, and other issues all by simply entering a zip code.
- **Access to Goods and Services** — Members of NYSACRA have access to special products and services at reduced rates through preferred vendors and associate members.

Individualized Services

- **The Learning Institute** — The Learning Institute creates a community of practice, connecting people in a spirit of exploration and learning to increase capacity for innovation in individualized supports. NYSACRA, together with faculty and selected provider agencies, hold periodic learning events, support journeys to innovation sites, share educational resources, and strengthen connections within and between regional networks.
- **Individualized Shared Living** — This lifestyle is an area of intense interest among people with disabilities, their families, providers and the NYS OPWDD. NYSACRA is exploring the concept of shared living from several perspectives to help make it an understood, accessible model for supports in New York State.



Research

- **Economic Value Study of Community Group Homes** — This statewide study proves that community residential programs for the developmentally disabled not only provide a needed service but are also a major economic contributor to the local community, by providing jobs and buying goods and services locally.
- **Health Insurance Study** — NYSACRA has an ongoing interest in health care benefits/insurance and publishes findings as a reference for its members.

Products

- *We Get it Done: Working as a Direct Support Professional* — is a DVD providing realistic job reviews to assist member agencies in their direct support staff recruitment and retention efforts.
- *Direct Support Professionals: The Frontline of Change* chronicles the history of the developmental disability service system's transformation and the challenges confronting direct support professionals in New York State.
- *Legislative Action Toolkit* provides various booklets that explain the legislative process, present effective advocacy strategies and offer contact information for key state and federal government officials and agencies.
- *Medicaid in New York State – It Works and It Puts People First* is a policy paper that provides an overview of the Medicaid program in New York and person-centered accounts of how it enables people with disabilities.

- *NYSACRA Annual Membership Directory* is a valuable networking tool that provides contact information for all members including service descriptions.
- *NYSACRA Commitment to Action* details the association's plan of action to help confront the direct support professional workforce crisis in New York State.
- *News & Views* provides weekly news updates to all members.
- *NetWork News* is the association's quarterly newsletter that provides more in-depth coverage of topics of interest as well as member agency profiles.
- *Public Relations Toolkit* presents strategies and vehicles for promoting greater understanding and acceptance of people with disabilities.
- *Site Selection Toolkit* describes the site selection process for community residential development in NYS, offers suggestions on best practices, and answers frequently asked questions.
- *Voices from the Frontlines* is a product of "listening" to the direct support professionals that attend NYSACRA's annual regional conferences. They speak directly and eloquently about their mission, accomplishments, challenges and needs.



JOIN NYSACRA

Joining NYSACRA is easy and cost effective. A variety of membership levels are available and represent the various communities which serve the developmentally disabled.

- **Agency** level for providers of service for the developmentally disabled in New York State. *Membership fees are determined by the size of the agency's budget devoted to supporting people with developmental disabilities.*

- **Affiliate** level for organizations that are in the process of developing services, administer services in other states, or operate other types of human services programs.

- **Associate** level for organizations that provide services to NYSACRA member agencies.

Simply fill out the enclosed membership application and mail to NYSACRA or complete it online at www.nysacra.org.



Awards

- Developmental Disabilities Planning Council *Community Leader Award (2008)*.
- National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals and the University of Minnesota/ Research and Training Center on Community Living *2008 Moving Mountains Award (2008)*.

Affiliations

- American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)
- College of Direct Support (CDS)
- National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (NADSP)
- American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD)



Top Ten Reasons to Join NYSACRA

1. **Advocacy** — NYSACRA develops, advocates for, and participates in legislative and policy activities that encourage and support people with disabilities in their quest for full inclusion in the community.
2. **Camaraderie** — NYSACRA strives to maintain a relaxed relationship with and among its member agencies to better support the developmental disabilities community.
3. **Education, Training, and Conferences** — NYSACRA offers member agencies exemplary education through its training opportunities at the local and regional levels as well as through its renowned annual conference.
4. **Ideas** — NYSACRA brings cutting edge solutions from the national, state, and local levels to member agencies to help them tackle the everyday challenges and prepare for future ones.
5. **Impact and Voice** — NYSACRA provides member agencies with direct access to government and its elected officials and helps agencies develop a quality workforce with tools, resources, and special projects.
6. **Information** — NYSACRA provides resources and technical assistance to help meet the information needs of member agencies through newsletters, email, fax, website, and statewide and regional meetings.
7. **Integrity and Respect** — NYSACRA embodies positive ideals and continually evolves to take action on behalf of member agencies that serve people with developmental disabilities and their families.
8. **Involvement** — NYSACRA fosters a sense of community among its member agencies and helps them face mutual challenges through shared experiences.
9. **Networking, Support and Connections** — NYSACRA cultivates a professional, responsive, and friendly network to support member agencies and their work.
10. **Opportunities and Partnerships** — NYSACRA provides member agencies with business and product options from qualified suppliers and helps them obtain financing to develop partnerships.



**New York State Association of
Community and Residential Agencies**
240 Washington Avenue Ext., Suite 501
Albany, NY 12203
Phone (518) 449-7551
Fax (518) 449-1509
nysacra@nysacra.org
www.nysacra.org