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‘EVERYDAY HEROES’ PROGRAM AWARDED THE FAXTON CUP

ROME, N.Y.: The Central New York Developmental Disabilities Services Office (CNY DDSO) has been awarded the Faxton Cup from the Faxton-St. Luke’s Healthcare System.

To celebrate National Rehabilitation Week in September, the Faxton Cup Awards are presented annually to individuals and organizations in the community who demonstrate, on a local level, dedication to the enhancement of the quality of life, either by setting an example of what people with disabilities can accomplish, or on behalf of people with physical disabilities. The awards were presented on September 24 in Rome.

The CNY DDSO was the recipient of an organizational award for its “Everyday Heroes” program. The DDSO has participated for more than a year in an Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) initiative called the “Everyday Heroes Leadership Institute, that is designed to empower direct care staff to promote opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to develop relationships and fully participate in their communities. Since those two elements are already deeply woven into the way CNY DDSO supports people with disabilities, the local agency adopted its theme “Everyday People, Everyday Lives,” to reflect their continuous, ongoing efforts in that area.

Other 2008 award recipients include:

- David Forbes of Clinton, NY: David Forbes was the first Certified Orthotist and Prosthetist to set up a full-time practice in the Utica area. He is the former president of Empire Orthotic and Prosthetics Laboratories and throughout his career, Forbes has not only provided the latest technology to patients, but has also provided community education in local colleges and for professional organizations on the innovations of orthotics and prosthetics. He often provides free care for indigent patients, and has done all this while suffering from the effects of polio.
- Michael Mariani, Clinton, NY: In the summer of 2007, Michael Mariani was critically ill at Upstate University Hospital after suffering a severe brain injury related to a very rare infection from encephalitis. Mariani had to relearn how to do everyday tasks and spent nine weeks at Faxton-St. Luke’s Healthcare Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit learning to dress himself, walk with assistance, talk, swallow and even breathe on his own again. Since leaving Faxton-St. Luke’s, he has devoted much of his time to give back to the place and people who gave so much to him. He encourages patients with stories and jokes and always exudes positive energy. He is able to put smiles on the faces of patients and employees alike.
- The Office of Dr. Scott Brehaut, New Hartford, NY: After working with numerous doctors and hospitals to help Michael Mariani in his recovery, it was Dr. Scott Brehaut’s office in New Hartford where Mariani’s wife, Aida, felt most at home. Dr. Brehaut runs a family practice and geriatric medicine office. “Because of the way Dr. Brehaut and his office handles their business, those who are undergoing treatment for a stroke, brain injury, or any illness are better able to heal and return to a normal life,” said Aida. “Dr. Brehaut explained to us that life may be difficult because of the disability the sickness may bring. But he’s helped to

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make that quality of life as wonderful as possible because, as he puts it, everyone deserves a chance to live, love and be happy.”

BELOW: The award winners on September 24, 2008, in Central New York.

