

Tech Valley Nonprofit Business Council Announces Award Winners

Organizations, individuals to be honored at sixth annual luncheon

The Tech Valley Nonprofit Business Council — a shared initiative of the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce and The Chamber of Schenectady County — will honor successful nonprofit organizations and outstanding community-minded individuals at the sixth annual Tech Valley Nonprofit Awards Luncheon.

The event is scheduled for Tuesday, November 23 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm at the Glen Sanders Mansion in Scotia. **KeyBank** and **CDPHP** are the corporate sponsors of the awards luncheon. **Potratz Partners Advertising** is the video sponsor.

Reservations to attend the Tech Valley Nonprofit Awards Luncheon may be made by visiting www.acchamber.org. The cost to attend is \$49. For more information, contact Leigh Reinhardt, business council coordinator, at 518.431.1414 or at leighr@acchamber.org.



Eunice Antonucci

The categories/award winners are as follows:

The 2010 Nonprofit Board Service Award recognizes an individual or a board demonstrating effective nonprofit governance practices, exemplifying ethical voluntary leadership and creating a positive board culture that is reflective of the organization's values — **Eunice Antonucci, Governing Board Member, Center for Disability Services**

During the early 1970s, the only living options for individuals with disabilities were family homes with no services, or institutions that were infamous for mistreatment and neglect. It was then that Eunice Antonucci was approached by the mother of a young man with disabilities, who feared that when she died, there would be no life for him without her as caregiver.

That mother's plight, and others like it, inspired Antonucci, a nurse and subsequent owner of Smith's Restaurant in Cohoes, to act. In 1974, she opened Sergeant Street Better Homes through the federal Model Cities program. This "hostel" on Ontario Street in Cohoes was the Capital Region's first community residence for individuals with disabilities, and among the first statewide.

Antonucci took full advantage of the movement toward "deinstitutionalization" and embarked upon her distinguished career as a nonprofit board member to build a community care system. Over the next 36 years, her board leadership and dedication to consumers and families would lead to the formation and growth of **Residential Opportunities Inc. (ROI)** from this one hostel, and was also instrumental in the 2000 merger of ROI with the Center for the Disabled, now known as the **Center for Disability Services**.

To this day, Antonucci continues strong board leadership, including executive committee membership, for the Center, which has become the largest provider of comprehensive programs and services in upstate New York. It remains her goal that the mother she met more than 30 years ago, and parents like her, feel secure in the knowledge that their children are safe, well cared for and living full lives in the community.

"This award is very, very much appreciated, both personally and professionally. The accomplishments that have been realized would not have been possible if it were not for the help of many people. Herb Shultz and Alan Krafchin are two, in particular, who were so instrumental to our early success. We have come a long way in creating a strong and effective system of care for people with disabilities, but make no mistake about it: we still have a long way to go." Eunice Antonucci, Governing Board Member, Center for Disability Services

The 2010 Corporate Partner Award recognizes a for-profit organization that has successfully built partnerships with nonprofit organizations, demonstrating visionary leadership that has moved their organization forward as a community partner and contributed significantly to the quality of life in the Capital Region community through professional and civic activities or involvement — **Blue Slate Solutions, LLC**

The Blue Slate commitment to community extends not just throughout the Capital Region, but across the country and around the world, as well.

Locally, Blue Slate team members have been actively involved for several years with such organizations as **ClearView Center Inc., Girls Incorporated of the Greater Capital Region, Let Hope Live!, Senior Services of Albany and Schenectady ARC**. Recently, the



Blue Slate Solutions, LLC

Blue Slate team completed a project for ClearView Center to landscape the backyard of a residential treatment facility. Blue Slaters performed an "extreme makeover" to transform the yard into an attractive outdoor sanctuary for the residents, an improvement that earned a commendation from the New York State Office of Mental Health.

Blue Slate team members were also integrally involved in the construction of an outdoor pavilion for Schenectady ARC's Princetown Ridge facility, by helping with planning and construction, and by hosting an information session and fundraising event at Blue Slate headquarters.

Blue Slate also actively supports national organizations, such as the American Cancer Society and the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, and works to make a global impact, as well, through the organization Kiva. Blue Slate has actively supported the missions of the local arms of such international organizations as **HopeClub of the Capital Region, Capital District Habitat for Humanity** and the **Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation**, through volunteering and donations of services and cash.

"I am enormously proud of the work the Blue Slate team has done to support our community. It is such a key piece of our core values here at Blue Slate. We call it our 'Total Commitment to Community' to formally recognize the enormous amount of energy our employees share to make our community a better place. Receiving this award is really nice recognition for our team members." Rick Barnett, CEO, Blue Slate Solutions, LLC

The 2010 Nonprofit Executive Leadership Award recognizes a nonprofit executive whose years of service exemplify the knowledge, skills and leadership necessary



Tony Gaetano

for effective nonprofit management, and who has taken an active role in creating and supporting development in the Capital Region — **Tony Gaetano, Chief Executive Officer, Arsenal EUL, LLC**

Ten years ago, Tony Gaetano helped create the **Arsenal Business & Technology Partnership** and began serving as its president. Earlier this year, he resigned as president and was retained to serve as the part-time chief executive officer of the new Arsenal EUL LLC, a subsidiary of the Partnership dedicated to expanding private development at the Arsenal.

Gaetano brought all of the economic, research and political resources of the Capital Region, as well as the state and federal leadership, to work on behalf of the Arsenal's military missions and new commercial development. He has helped attract international companies, such as the **M + W Group** and **Vistec Lithography**, and local startups, such as **Solid Sealing Technology** and **Extreme Molding**, to the Arsenal and helped them grow. This year, the Partnership's efforts will have created more than 400 new permanent jobs, hundreds of construction jobs, and new investment will surpass \$100 million.

When taking over leadership of the not-for-profit in 1999, Gaetano brought with him 13 years of experience as a senior economic development official

in Gov. Mario Cuomo's administration and eight years in senior management under Gov. Hugh Carey. He also served as the executive assistant to the mayors of Syracuse and Utica.

"I'm very proud of what the Arsenal Partnership has accomplished, and I know better than anyone how many talented and generous people have been involved in achieving the success it has enjoyed. Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari; former Congressman Mike McNulty; Senator Chuck Schumer; Harry Robinson, founding chair of the Arsenal Business & Technology Partnership; and Dr. Alain Kaloyeros, chief executive officer of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering of the University at Albany, are largely responsible for the good things we've accomplished. They made my job easy. It would not have been possible without great partners and friends, such as the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber. This is a true honor, and I could not be more grateful." Tony Gaetano, Chief Executive Officer, Arsenal EUL LLC

The 2010 Nonprofit Organization Award is given to an organization with 1 – 74 employees that effectively collaborates and/or partners with various sectors and/



Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc.

or other nonprofit organizations in the community — **Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc.**

Nanci Beyerl is a social worker in the Capital Region who rescues abused, neglected and homeless horses and partners

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them in equine assisted learning and therapy programs for at-risk youth, people suffering grief and loss, and people with developmental disabilities.

Beyerl founded Peaceful Acres, a 12-acre farm in Pattersonville in 2002, and moved to the farm with her four horses and three children. In 2003, she trained with The Equine Assisted Growth and Learning



Association (EAGALA) in Arizona, where she earned certification in Equine Assisted Learning and Psychotherapy (EAL/P). In 2004, Beyerl entered graduate school and received her master's degree in social work from Adelphi University in 2007.

From 2007 on, Beyerl worked diligently spreading the word about services at Peaceful Acres and invited people to come see the farm and learn more about EAL/P and refer participants. By 2009, Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc. was established as a 501(c)3 organization, and funding support and grants were secured.

Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc. now sits on 156 acres and partners more than 30 rescued horses and seven donkeys in equine assisted learning and psychotherapy sessions for youth, adults and couples referred from Schenectady ARC, Northeast Parent & Child Society, Parsons Child and Family Center, St. Catherine's Center for Children Inc., St. Anne Institute, Girls Incorporated of the Greater Capital Region, Addictions Care Center of Albany, St. Mary's Hospital in Amsterdam, local schools, families, and VA and military programs.

Forming collaborations with program partners has been a focus of Beyerl's agenda as founder and executive director from the start. She has a firm conviction in serving clients that have a support system through other established organizations and adding EAL/P to their treatment.

Beyerl and her team all have a solid base in The EAGALA Model and work to assure best practices and continuing education in this very special treatment modality. It is through collaborations, partnerships and community that the participants are served and find healing and growth.

"When I received the call about receiving the award, I was completely overjoyed. I knew Peaceful Acres Horses had been nominated, but did not think our little, grassroots organization stood a chance at the award. The first call I made was to my parents, Ed and Tippy, who have supported me in every way through this journey. The next was to our board members and supporters to say 'thank you' and to keep up the motivation and determination to save horses and people. As for me, it was the news I needed to give myself a little 'pat on the back' and an opportunity to look back at where I started and where Peaceful Acres is now — a great reflection of time." Nanci Beyerl, MSW, founder and executive director, Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc.

The 2010 Nonprofit Organization Award is given to an organization with 75 or more employees that effectively collaborates and/or partners with various sectors and/or other nonprofit organizations in the community — **The Community Hospice**

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All of the region's hospitals view Hospice as an important resource when discharging patients.

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The Community Hospice is the sole provider of hospice services to families in the Capital Region. It makes available medical expertise, as well as much-needed support and assistance, to people facing serious illness.

This year, The Community Hospice has been providing more help to more people than ever before. On average, each day there are 625 local patients under Hospice's care. Most stay in their own homes, where they're in comfortable surroundings, near the people and things they love.

The Community Hospice partners with nearly all health care providers. Both primary care physicians and specialists regularly refer patients to Hospice.

Approximately 40 of the very best, quality-focused local nursing homes collaborate with Hospice to ensure their seriously ill residents get the best possible care.

All of the region's hospitals view Hospice as an important resource when discharging patients. Two of those hospitals, **Ellis Hospital** in Schenectady and **St. Peter's Hospital** in Albany, have joined with The Community Hospice to establish innovative palliative care programs that provide special consultations to seriously ill patients. Those consultations focus on helping patients set goals and expectations so they can maximize their quality of life and minimize distressing symptoms.

The organization is also known for its no-cost, highly acclaimed grief and bereavement programs, including Wave Riders and Camp Erin for kids and teens who've lost someone they loved. This fall, the "Today" show spent a weekend at Camp Erin, videotaping an in-depth feature story showcasing the incredible work of Community Hospice's staff and volunteers.



The Community Hospice Walk 2010

"We accept this recognition on behalf of all the families we're privileged to serve. They graciously allow us into their lives at what is truly the most difficult time any family faces. Thanks to them, the generous donors who support us, and our talented and dedicated staff and volunteers, we're able to fulfill our mission and provide our special kind of caring to all those who need us." Ron Watson, president and CEO, The Community Hospice •



The Community Hospice

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