



DNNYC Member Newsletter, Fall 2006

Mayor Recognizes Disabilities Network

Executive Director Honored with 2nd Annual Frieda Zames Award For Commitment to Individuals with Disabilities



Alexander Wood accepts the Frieda Zames award from Mayor Bloomberg. Photo courtesy of Kristen Artz, The Mayor's Office.

August 15 – Disabilities Network Executive Director Alexander Wood was awarded the 2nd Annual Frieda Zames Advocacy Award by Mayor Michael Bloomberg at a Gracie Mansion reception.

The Mayoral Advocacy Awards recognize people and organizations who raise the quality of life for people with disabilities. Zames, who passed away in 2005, was a founding board member of the Network.

“The Disabilities Network is honored to be recognized for our efforts to continue Frieda’s remarkable legacy,” said Wood. “By bringing all stakeholders, all political persuasions, to the table, we will continue to make concrete strides forward.”

“Shaping policy, building community and expanding opportunities for people with disabilities will remain our guiding principle in the months and years ahead.”

At the ceremony, Bloomberg also announced that Matthew Sapolin, Director of the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities, would be named that office’s first commissioner.

Other awardees included Bettie Jones of Bear Stearns, Dr. William Ebenstein of the JFK Jr. Institute for Worker Education, Ronald Nelson of Avis-Rent-A-Car and Frances West of IBM.

Spitzer and Paterson Hold ADA Town Hall at DNNYC

Promise Greater Protections For New Yorkers with Disabilities

July 26 - At a statewide teleconference to celebrate the 16th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), New York State Attorney General and gubernatorial candidate Eliot Spitzer promised to appoint a state disability advocate if elected.

He also pledged to improve housing, jobs and voting access for people with disabilities.

"The protections we believed we could rely on ... are being cut back," said Spitzer about recent court decisions limiting the ADA. He and his running mate, State Senate Minority Leader David Paterson, addressed 120 people at the Network while hundreds more listened via phone link-up.

The state advocate would guide all disability-related policy. Spitzer said the expense would be minimal but didn't provide an estimate.



Spitzer, Patterson speak to the capacity crowd.

Paterson, who is legally blind, criticized Albany for not fully complying with the federal Help America Vote Act, which calls for accessible voting booths.

"The ADA is an unfinished agenda," he said. "You can have an act on paper, but it isn't trickling down to the streets."

The event was covered by local media and by the Associated Press.

Thanks to Don DePew of c2 (caption coalition) inc. for donating caption services for the event!



John Ravitz of the Board of Elections addresses the crowd.

Inaugural Community Forum Spotlights The Help America Vote Act

June 21 - In an exciting change of format, the Network held its first revised community meeting, which provided a comprehensive overview of the beleaguered Help America Vote Act.

DNNYC forums will now feature a moderated panel discussion to better reflect the diversity of community insights and opinions. Previous Network meetings featured single guest speakers.

Reviews were positive and the format changes must've worked: the new meeting location at Selis Manor was filled to capacity.

Panelists included John Ravitz, NYC Board of Elections; Aaron Belisle, Center for Independence of the Disabled-NY; and Neal Rosenstein, New York Public Interest Research Group. Our newest board member, Dennis R. Boyd., Esq. of New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, moderated.

It's your Network! We count on your dues and donations to produce our Forums, listserv and other services. To join the Network, renew your membership or make a donation, please see the back page.

504 Democratic Club's Sandra Schur Emerging Leadership Award To DNNYC Staffer

**NYC Councilmember Gale Brewer Makes Presentation To DNNYC's
Director of Advocacy At Annual Event**

May 21 – Disabilities Network Director of Advocacy, Lawrence Carter-Long, was honored with the 504 Democratic Club's Sandra Schur Emerging Leadership Award by Councilwoman Gale Brewer at the Club's annual banquet.

"I humbly accept this award in recognition of those who have come before me and in anticipation of those whose efforts will surpass what we're doing now," said Carter-Long. "Receiving an award is the easy part – it is in living up to the promise which inspired its presentation we find out what we're made of. I hope to prove myself worthy of the promise of award's namesake and of its title."



Carter-Long, Councilmember Brewer at the event.

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Lawrence Carter-Long, Director of Advocacy

Rebecca Hinde, Development Coordinator
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Network Launches disTHIS! Film Series

Popular Monthly Movie Screenings Spotlight “Disability Through A Whole New Lens”

The Disabilities Network and Downtown Community Television’s Connect TV have joined to present disTHIS!, New York City’s first regular disability film series showcasing quality cinema depicting “disability through a whole new lens.”

Screenings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at Downtown Community Television (DCTV), 87 Lafayette Street between Walker and White.

disTHIS! features movies our members are unlikely to see elsewhere. These unique, acclaimed features and shorts are sexy, funny and provocative, never quite what you’d expect. disTHIS! screenings and post screening discussions highlight pride instead of pity, character over charity and direction rather than diagnosis.

disTHIS! was initiated following several successful movie screenings held over the past year with the Visible Theatre, the Margaret Mead Film Festival, Lantern Books and Columbia University. DNNYC received a grant to produce the series from the Christopher Reeve Foundation.

Whenever possible, films include ASL interpretation, open captions and/or audio description. All movies, talkback sessions and related events are free and open to the public. For more information, including past and upcoming films, go to: <http://disthis.org>

Employment & Economic Development Targeted In 2nd Community Forum

October 4 - Strategies to boost jobseekers’ marketable skills and combat employer misconceptions and discrimination were the hot topics at DNNYC’s second successful Community Forum.

The role small business ownership can play in the disability community’s economic development was also addressed.

Attendees will leave with resources for disabled jobseekers as well as an understanding of approaches the community can take to change unemployment’s root causes.

Special thanks to our panelists, **William Ebenstein**, Executive Director, JFK, Jr. Institute for Worker Education, who moderated the event and **Bettie Jones**, Associate Director of Human Resources, Bear Stearns, **Nancy Carin**, Executive Director, Business Outreach Center Network and **Bill Chong**, Deputy Commissioner, NYC Department of Youth & Community Development for their participation in the event.



William Ebenstein addresses the audience at our Oct 4th Economic Development Forum.

New Supporters! The Network has won new grants from the Hon. Rosie Mendez of City Council, Sen. David A. Paterson & the NY State Senate, and the Christopher Reeve Foundation and renewed support from the New York Foundation, the American Express Foundation, United Way of New York City and the Fund for the City of New York. Thank you to all!

Join the Disabilities Network now!

The Network has grown to include over 65 organizations & 270 individuals. Thanks for your support.
If you have not yet joined or need to renew, please do so now!

<u>Students & Retirees</u>	\$10	<u>Advocacy/Consumer Group</u>	\$100
<u>Individual</u>	\$25	<u>Service Provider</u>	
<u>Supporting</u>	\$75	(not-for-profit) \$100	(under \$300,000 budget)
Make the Network open to all! Supports membership for two people who could not otherwise afford dues.		\$250	(over \$300,000 budget)
		\$500	(over \$1,000,000 budget)
<u>Sustaining</u>	\$10/monthly	<u>Business Partner</u>	\$500
Sign up for autopay online at: DNNYC.net		(for-profit)	

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