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The NJ Center for Outreach & Services
for the Autism Community

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attention News Directors and Health Correspondents

Local Residents and Businesses Honored at Autism Conference

(Ewing, NJ) May 22, 2007 - The New Jersey Center for Outreach and Services for the Autism Community (COSAC), held their 25th Annual "Issues in Autism Conference" in Atlantic City from May 17-19. The three day event culminated with its annual award ceremony on May 19 during which 21 state residents and businesses who have made a positive difference for individuals with autism were honored. Each winner has given time and resources to help make a positive difference in the lives of individuals affected by autism, and was selected because of his/her dedication, caring and generosity.

The Centers for Disease Control recently release new autism prevalence rates indicating that 1 in 150 children has autism, and 1 in 94 New Jersey children is affected by the lifelong developmental disability, for which there is no known cause or cure. "With the formidable task of assisting the increasing number of families whose lives are affected by autism, COSAC realizes we cannot do it alone," said COSAC Executive Director Paul Potito. "Our value to the community depends upon the dedication and commitment of people within and outside of the autism world, which has enabled us to exist for 42 years. We congratulate and thank each of our award winners," Potito said.

For more information about autism and COSAC's services, call 1.800.4.AUTISM, or visit www.njcosac.org. Photos of award winners can be obtained by calling Jessica Alloway in COSAC's Communications Department, at 609.883.8100, extension 25.

(More)

COSAC is a nonprofit agency providing information and advocacy, services, family and professional education, and consultation. COSAC encourages responsible basic and applied research that would lead to a lessening of the effects and potential prevention of autism. COSAC is dedicated to ensuring that all people with autism receive appropriate, effective services to maximize their growth potential, and to enhancing the overall awareness of autism in the general public.

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Award winners' names and title of award are as follows:

Joanne Monaco, Ewing – Community Service Provider of the Year Award

Andy Bondy, Cherry Hill – Distinguished Service Award

Lori Frost, Cherry Hill – Distinguished Service Award

Thomas Mulligan, Edison – Individual Achievement Award

Ann Marie Kuba, Somerville, Bridgewater-Raritan School District – Teacher of the Year Award

Maria Abinader, Edison – Autism Awareness Ambassador of the Year Award

Greg Coleman and Trenton Thunder, Mercerville/Trenton – Community Partner Award

vFinance, Inc. Investment Banking Division of New York, New York – Corporate Partner Award

Greg Panasuk, Manasquan – Development Achievement Award

Kevin Orender, Manasquan – Development Achievement Award

Jessica Vanderhoef, Denville – The Frank Simms Volunteer of the Year Award

Dr. Lucille Esralew, Ph.D., Cranford – Healthcare Professional of the Year Award

Erin O'Connor, Chatham – Junior Autism Awareness Ambassador of the Year Award

Assemblyman Joseph Roberts, Brooklawn – Legislator of the Year Award

The Record, Bergen County – Media Award

Comcast Newsmakers, Trenton and Toms River – Media Award

Jenn LaGratta, Washington Township – Peer Award

Stephanie Corvo, Rivervale – Peer Award

Kelsey J. McGrail, Hillsdale – Peer Award

Nicole E. Tomasofsky, Montvale, Peer Award

Paul Potito, Milltown – Service and Commitment Award

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