



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Young Presented with NYS Council for Exceptional Children's 2014 Excellence in Community Service Award

CATHARINE YOUNG November 21, 2014

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ALBANY - The New York State Council for Exceptional Children (NYS CEC) has honored Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I-Olean) with their 2014 "Excellence in Community Service Award."

At their 61st annual conference in Syracuse, NYS CEC President Annmarie Urso, Ph.D., officially announced Senator Young as the honoree to be recognized with this year's prestigious award.

"It really is our honor to recognize Senator Young with the NYS CEC's Excellence in Community Service Award. She has been proven to be a staunch advocate for youth and persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities in New York State and deserves to be recognized for her advocacy and leadership in the Senate in relation to sheltered workshops, funding, and care for individuals with disabilities, as well as her personal attention to the needs and concerns of individuals with disabilities in her district," said Dr. Urso, who in addition to serving as NYS CEC President also chairs the Livingston County Community Services Board's Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee.

New York State's CEC is the largest state chapter in the national/international CEC organization, with over 2,000 teachers, professionals, and special education leaders dedicated to serving the thousands of students and families in New York with disabilities. Senator Young was nominated for the award by the Livingston County Community Services Board and The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming, both member organizations.

"I am very grateful and deeply honored to receive the Excellence in Community Service Award," said Senator Young. "It is a joy and a pleasure to be able to speak up for our children with disabilities. The real honor and recognition belongs to the truly exceptional children of our state and the dedicated individuals at CEC for the remarkable job they do teaching, caring for, and helping them every day."

Working at The ReHAbilitation Center in Cattaraugus County for 15 years prior to joining the State Legislature, Senator Young had the chance to regularly meet and interact with the young people who utilize the services CEC offers.

“The years I spent at The ReHAbilitation Center gave me the opportunity to witness amazing achievements and compassion every day. Serving in the State Assembly and Senate then gave me the chance to improve the systems we have in place to support children with disabilities and reinforced my belief in their importance,” said Senator Young. “The children I have met are the most inspiring and life-filled people I have ever known and give me with the resolve to continue working for them.”

In the Senate this year, Senator Young has defended and advanced programs that provide greater opportunity for children with disabilities, through both the State Budget process and through individual legislative initiatives. Access to educational resources, appropriate employment opportunities, proper medical care, and necessary transportation that enables people to enjoy robust and active lives have all been important priorities.

These children are also well represented by the many dedicated educators at CEC who devote their lives to helping children with disabilities as they gain academic and other practical life experience. Teachers, parents, administrators, and caregivers help build an educational foundation by addressing their unique needs, a formidable challenge, but one that is also very rewarding.

“The Livingston County Community Services Board and The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming co-nominated Senator Young for this award in recognition of her work on behalf of the community of persons with disabilities in her district and in the state. The Livingston County Community Services Board is pleased that Senator Young received this award because of her unwavering dedication to supporting children, youth, and adults with disabilities/exceptionalities,” said Livingston County Community Services Board President Elizabeth Hall.

“The NYS Council for Exceptional Children could not have made a better choice than Senator Cathy Young for their Annual Excellence in Community Service Award. The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming has a long relationship with Senator Young and admire her genuine friendship and support of persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities,” said The Arc of Livingston-Wyoming Executive Director Chris Peterson.

“The Council for Exceptional Children, and their members in Livingston County in particular, have my heartfelt gratitude for this recognition and my full support as they continue their mission and commitment to so many wonderful young people across our great state,” said Senator Young.

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