



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## **Senator Young Honored with Community Action Award from The Resource Center and TRC Foundation**

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Senator Cathy Young was given the great honor of receiving the annual “Community Action Award” from The Resource Center and TRC Foundation in a special presentation held at their Dunkirk location yesterday afternoon.

“To be presented with this award from The Resource Center and TRC Foundation is an honor that I truly and profoundly appreciate. They do wonderful work serving our communities and providing the care and services that people with disabilities need and deserve. The real recognition goes to everyone at The Resource Center and TRC Foundation who work every day to help and support them,” said Senator Young.

The Resource Center provides services and help to more than 15,000 people in Chautauqua County, more than 10 percent of the county’s entire population. They recently undertook the development of a new model of care called “STARS” that focuses on integrating services around five key life dimensions: basic needs, physical health, behavioral health, family stability, and employment/community involvement. TRC Foundation raises funds to help provide for the needs of individuals with disabilities in the county. Providing support to people with developmental disabilities is at the core of both The Resource Center and TRC Foundation’s mission.

“We are delighted to present Senator Young with our 2014 Community Action Award,” said Paul Cesana, CEO and Executive Director of The Resource Center. “Both she and the other recipient of this year’s award, Assemblyman Andy Goodell, have been diligent in watching out for the best interests of individuals with disabilities, not just here in Chautauqua County, but across all of New York State.

Senator Young has authored legislation that will go a long way toward helping people with disabilities, particularly those transitioning from high school into the real world, to find jobs in the community.”

Senator Young said, “Their commitment to meeting all of a person’s needs and being completely devoted to a positive result for every individual is what sets The Resource Center apart. The STARS initiative clearly shows that they have a positive, innovative approach, which is why I was happy to be able to secure \$100,000 of funding for STARS in last year’s state budget. I know The Resource Center is a model for how care should be given. They are fully committed to their admirable work ensuring those most in need have access to care and support.”

This year, promoting initiatives important to individuals with developmental and other disabilities was one of Senator Young’s highest priorities.

One of the challenges faced by individuals with developmental disabilities are new federal and state work requirements that will close employment centers where many with developmental disabilities work. These work sites are suited to their needs and abilities and are invaluable to the hardworking individuals who only want to be part of the community and earn their own paycheck.

“People with disabilities and their families face unprecedented changes as New York State dramatically transforms the way services and supports are delivered to those with disabilities. We are grateful that Senator Young has stood up to defend the interests of people with disabilities, and we are glad to have her in our corner as we work alongside individuals with disabilities and their families to make sure that the best interests of people with disabilities continue to be considered as the State implements its policy changes,” said Mr. Cesana.

Through Senator Young’s efforts, this year’s state budget helped address the problem by requiring more employment opportunities in community-based settings where people with developmental disabilities who want to work can do just that. The budget also included a tax credit program for businesses that hire workers with disabilities.

Senator Young also passed legislation in the Senate that would improve transportation systems for people with developmental disabilities. Being able to move between home, work, day programs, and recreational activities is crucial to empowering people with developmental disabilities to be involved in their communities and achieve their highest potential.

“Individuals with developmental disabilities have always been very special to me. They should know they can always count on me to stand with and speak up for them,” said Senator Young.

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