



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Marks NY State Day of Persons with Disabilities

JIM RANNEY December 3, 2015

| ISSUE: **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

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Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) and Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes (D-Buffalo) gathered with representatives of People Inc and the members of the Developmental Disabilities Alliance of Western New York Thursday to recognize the contributions of people with disabilities throughout New York State. December third has been designated as International Day of Persons with Disabilities and was adopted in New York State in 2012.

“This is a time to recognize the economic, cultural and social contributions that people with disabilities make in our communities every day,” Gallivan said. “We must continue our commitment to remove barriers that people with disabilities face and to support programs that allow individuals the opportunity to live fulfilling and productive lives. As a state, we have an obligation to ensure that persons with disabilities are an active part of our communities and have the chance to live as independently as possible.”

“Today, more than ever, it is important to ensure that all persons are able to fulfill their role and participate on an equal basis with others. When we focus on the disability of an individual and not the ability, we diminish their contributions to this great state, this country and the world. On this International Day of Disabilities, we pause to recognize the many accomplishments, the fortitude and strength of persons with disabilities as well as the challenges they face. We also stop to acknowledge that people of every ilk deserve, and must be afforded the same opportunities as everyone else,” said Peoples-Stokes.

“During the holiday season, you take time to recognize the special people in your life, family friends and people that are special to you. The fact the Persons with Disabilities Day is celebrated during the holidays means even more,” said Rhonda Frederick, President and CEO of People Inc and the Developmental Disabilities Alliance of Western New York (DDAWNY). “Today we recognize the accomplishments and obstacles that people with disabilities have overcome while also remembering the issues they, their families and not for profit providers face this upcoming legislative session.”

An estimated 21% of all adult New Yorkers have some form of disability. While they face numerous difficulties and challenges, persons with disabilities have contributed greatly to the fabric of New York’s communities.

Under legislation sponsored by Senator Gallivan and Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes in 2012, New York joined the United Nations, World Health Organization, the United States government and countless countries in observing International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

“I want to thank Senator Gallivan and Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes for taking the time to recognize New York State Day of Persons with Disabilities and advocating for us like they always do on issues facing the disability community,” Frederick said.