

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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St. John's Community Services Recognizes Community Partners and Individuals Supporting Individuals with Disabilities

Philadelphia, PA—Five outstanding people and organizations will be recognized for their commitment to furthering the lives of people with disabilities in the Philadelphia area. St. John's Community Services (SJCS) holds its annual SJCS-PA Awards Luncheon at noon on Friday, March 26, 2010 at the Crowne Plaza Philadelphia. The luncheon will be hosted by Lorraine Ballard Morrill, News and Community Affairs Director for Clear Channel Radio Philadelphia. Representing SJCS, among others, will be Thomas F. Wilds, President; Genni Sasnett, COO; Grace Dempster, Chair, SJCS-PA Board of Directors; and Nicole Buckley, SJCS-PA State Director.

Each award recipient develops opportunities for community inclusion of the people SJCS-PA supports through advocacy and outreach. Their dedication has furthered the SJCS mission of *advancing community support and opportunities for people living with disabilities*. The award recipients are:

- Advocacy Award—Oscar Drummond, SJCS-PA Board member, self-advocate
- Community Partner Award—Weaver's Way
- Program Award—Temple University Institute on Disabilities
- Community Service Award—Aid for Friends
- SJCS Employee of the Year—Cathy Landis, State Office Manager, SJCS-PA

The Hon. State Representative Thomas Murt (152nd Legislative District) will be the special guest speaker. His remarks will address his commitment to minimize state budget cuts for supports to people with disabilities, the importance of full community participation, the need for continued advocacy, and recognition of SJCS-PA for creating competitive employment and community participation opportunities for people with disabilities in the Philadelphia area. Rep. Murt's presence reinforces his support at the March 9th Rally in Harrisburg to sustain funding, attended by SJCS-PA self-advocates and staff.

SJCS-PA is grateful to individual sponsors who helped to make this special awards ceremony possible: Hollace Ann Rutkowski (SJCS-PA Board member), Grace Dempster, Laurita M. Hack (friend of SJCS), Jaret Lyons (WB Mason), Genni Sasnett, and Kareem Thomas (SJCS-PA Board member).

St. John's Community Services was founded in 1868 by parishioners of St. John's Episcopal Church ("the Church of Presidents") in Washington, DC. St. John's is a non-profit, non-denominational agency that is dedicated to supporting over 400 children and adults with disabilities to live, work, learn and participate in communities of their choice in Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Washington, DC, and Virginia. Since 2000, SJCS-PA has supported people with intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities to work in the competitive workforce while employers are given the opportunity to hire and retain qualified, skilled and reliable employees. In addition, Community Participation now provides a unique day program for adults to develop life skills, volunteer in the community, and prepare for possible employment.

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