



# PLAN|NJ NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF PLANNED LIFETIME ASSISTANCE NETWORK OF NEW JERSEY  
FUNDED BY THE NEW JERSEY STATE BAR FOUNDATION

FALL/WINTER 2009

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**Who will care for your loved one when you are gone?**

**PLAN NOW!**

## PLAN/NJ Celebrates 20 Years



*From left to right: Ellen Nalven, M.Ed, Executive Director, PLAN/NJ; Jennifer Velez, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Human Services; and Michele Wernsing, President, PLAN/NJ Board of Directors.*

Planned Lifetime Assistance Network of New Jersey (PLAN/NJ) marked a momentous 20-year milestone with a cocktail reception held at the NJ Law Center on October 1st. The fundraiser was a major success, thanks to the 150 families, friends and organizations that attended and demonstrated their support for PLAN/NJ.

The event's keynote speakers, **Shirley Whitenack**, Esq., of Schenk, Price, Smith & King, and **Christopher C. Gagliardi**, an advocate for individuals with differing abilities, spoke movingly on the importance of planning ahead for the care of a loved one with a disability.

Four honorees were given awards for their dedication to improving the lives of individuals living with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges: **Jennifer Velez**, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Human Services; **Herbert Hinkle**,

Esq., Hinkle, Fingles and Prior; **Thomas Baffuto**, Executive Director of The Arc of New Jersey; and **John Scagnelli**, Executive Director of The Arc of New Jersey from 1970 through 1990.

In addition, eight individuals received Life Planning Partner Awards for their dedication to individuals with disabilities and for their personal achievements:

- **Winifred Chain**, NAMI New Jersey
- **Lawrence Friedman**, Esq., Friedman Law
- **Robert F. Guarasci**, New Jersey Community Development Corporation
- **Rose Kardashian**, Catholic & Family Community Services
- **Barbara Kish**, South Amboy
- **Kevin Kish**, South Amboy
- **Patrick Maloney**, Ewing
- **Mary Sandstrom**, North Brunswick

**THE PLAN/NJ MISSION** answers the question, "Who will care for my loved one when I am gone?" PLAN/NJ provides practical solutions for families and their loved ones with significant developmental, physical or mental health challenges, thus lessening the fear and anxiety families experience when planning for the future.

*From the Desk of the Executive Director*  
**A TIME TO BE THANKFUL . . .**



*Ellen Nalven*

**T**hanks to supporters of our 20th Anniversary fundraiser, PLAN/NJ can continue to provide essential services to individuals with disabilities who have no other means of support. The statistics are daunting—according to the 2005 Census, 65% of individuals with disabilities are unemployed. That means that individuals with disabilities are three times more likely to live in poverty and have little or no money to coordinate necessary services such as guardianship, in-home visits, and representative payee services.

Thanks to our supporters, PLAN/NJ will continue to help these individuals to remain as independent as possible. We will advocate on their behalf and serve as surrogate family, looking out for their best interest. On behalf of ALL the clients and families we serve, thank you for supporting our organization. We are very proud of our 20-plus years of service and are grateful for your longstanding support.

Sincerely,  
Ellen Nalven, M.Ed.  
Executive Director

## Because of You . . .

**T**hanks to the following friends and organizations for making our 20-year fundraiser a success. Your support will assist PLAN/NJ clients in need of vital services including representative payee, guardianship, monitoring, advocacy and life care planning.

### *Platinum Sponsor*

Merrill Lynch

### *Silver Sponsors*

Hinkle, Fingles & Prior

Schenk, Price, Smith & King, LLP

### *Bronze Sponsors*

Begley, Begley & Bookbinder, PC

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Zager Fuchs, PC

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### *Supporting Sponsors*

Advancing Opportunities

The Arc of Atlantic County

The Arc of New Jersey

The Arc of Union County

Thomas Baffuto

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Discover Wine, Somerville

Patricia Everett

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Faulkner Financial, LLC

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First Step Counseling Services

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Chuck Johnstone

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Kaplow & Co. Insurance

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The Merrill Lynch Center for

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National Plan Alliance

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The New Jersey State Bar

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Foundation

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The Sandstrom Family

Skylands Community Bank

Statewide Parents Advocacy

Network (SPAN)

WanderPolo Law, LLC

Robert Jr. and Constance Watkins

Michele and Donald Wernsing

Jean Wiegner and Thomas Fasanella

Lori & James Young

### **With Sincere Appreciation to Our Most Recent Grant Funders . . .**

**ISPMansys LLC of Livingston** — for awarding PLAN/NJ with the “Optimistic about the Economic Recovery/IT Mini-Grant” to upgrade our technology needs. ISPMansys created the PLAN/NJ client database, which has proven invaluable to us.

**The IOLTA Fund of the Bar of New Jersey** — for awarding PLAN/NJ a 2010 Major Grant to provide Guardianship Consultation Services, Life Planning Consultation, Writing No-Fee LifePLANS and Representative Payee Services for families without financial support.

# Oh, What a Night!



From left to right: Jennifer Velez, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Human Services; Mary Sandstrom, Life Planning Partner Award recipient; Ellen Nalven, M.Ed., Executive Director, PLAN/NJ; and Goldie Ellis, board member, PLAN/NJ.



From left: Frank Caragher, Executive Director, The Arc of Union County, and Thomas Baffuto, Executive Director, The Arc of New Jersey.



Jason Miller (left) Client Services Supervisor, PLAN/NJ, with Christopher Gagliardi, advocate for people with differing abilities and keynote speaker.



Ellen Nalven presents John Scagnelli, previous Executive Director of The Arc of New Jersey, with the PLAN/NJ Founder Award.



From left: Rose Kardashian, Catholic Family & Community Services, and Sara W. Mitchell, Esq., board member, PLAN/NJ.



From left: Herbert Hinkle, Esq., from Hinkle, Fingles and Prior, receives the PLAN/NJ Leadership Award from Ellen Nalven.



***Lifetime Advocacy for  
People with Differing Abilities***

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**We're on the Web!**

*Visit us at:*

[www.plannj.org](http://www.plannj.org)

For more information about PLAN/NJ, to schedule a presentation for your group or for help with planning for your relative's future, call: (908) 575-8300.

**Effects of  
Additional Supports  
on College Retention  
Research Study**

Students with mental health challenges often struggle to stay in college. If you know anyone who has been diagnosed with major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, or schizoaffective disorder, they may be eligible for special support. The University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) and the University of Pennsylvania are looking for college students between the ages of 18 to 64 to participate in a research project exploring the effects of additional supports on college retention. The project seeks to identify the critical supports students with psychiatric disabilities need to be successful in college. Participation is confidential and compensated.

For more information, please contact  
**1-866-788-1947** or email  
[psych\\_research@umdnj.edu](mailto:psych_research@umdnj.edu)

***A Time to Give***

***YES! I want to support Planned Lifetime Assistance  
Network of New Jersey (PLAN/NJ): help us to be  
here for the lifetime of our clients.***

*Please print:*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my tax-deductable donation of:

\$150    \$100    \$50    \$35    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to* **PLAN/NJ**  
P.O. Box 547, Loeser Avenue, Somerville, NJ 08876-0547