Partners Toward Independence Welcomes Carol Blessing

Carol Blessing is a licensed master of social work with more than 25 years of professional service and has spent the last 13 years with Cornell University’s Employment and Disability Institute within the School of Industrial and Labor Relations. She is the primary author and facilitator of the landmark Citizen-Center Leadership International community of practice and education series (www.cclds.org).

Blessing has an extensive history working with individuals, their families, and service organizations to foster the full inclusion of people within typical community settings through paid employment and other meaningful community membership roles. She has been both a direct care practitioner and a program administrator.

In addition to her expertise in theory and practices that promote successful employment outcomes for people with disabilities, Blessing is well-versed in the areas of organizational change, strategic planning, Appreciative Inquiry and person-centered planning.

Email: cj39@cornell.edu

Enjoy a free copy of “Conversations on Citizenship & Person-Centered Work” by John O’Brien and Carol Blessing, the featured speaker. Pick up your book at the event.

A free event for parents, educators and human services professionals.

Thursday, Oct. 10, 2013
8:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
At the Pieters Family Life Center
1025 Commons Way, Rochester, NY 14623
Free child watch and respite care available.

Free resource book to attendees!
Dear Family Members:

The Golisano Foundation is pleased to offer this parent symposium, the first in a series meant to create awareness, educate and establish a learning community. It is essential for families to initiate smart planning strategies early on.

This event is especially valuable in that it brings together people from across Western New York so that they may network, share success stories of their loved ones and meet community partners who want to walk alongside families every step of their journey as they navigate a changing supports landscape. This is also opportunity for attendees to influence the evolution of supports and services.

In preparation for this opportunity, consider these questions: (1) Do I understand how the service system is changing? (2) What are my child’s short- and long-term life goals? (3) What kinds of supports exist and how can I access them? (4) How can I use a savings plan to buffer the realities of funding fluctuation?

By the end of this event, we expect that parents will feel more confident to answer some of these questions and make informed decisions in their life planning. Additionally, we look forward to identifying future education opportunities.

Our founder, Tom Golisano, once said, “Everyone should have an opportunity to be treated with respect. Strong legs run so that weak legs may walk.” The foundation’s purpose is to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to achieve their maximum potential with integration, independence, self-determination and productivity in all facets of their lives.

Please spread the word about this opportunity to others.

Sincerely,
Ann Costello
Executive Director
Golisano Foundation

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**Life Stages | Early Planning for Families with Young Children**

**Parent Symposium and Luncheon**

**Thursday, Oct. 10, 2013**

8:15 a.m. **Register and Network**

Enjoy a continental breakfast and visit resource tables

8:45 a.m. **Welcome by Ann Costello**

9 a.m. **Presentation by Carol Blessing**

*Citizenship as a Right, a Responsibility and an Expectation*

10 a.m. **Break**

10:15 a.m. **Session I: Recipe for Planning**

Understand eligibility, leverage self-determination and figure out the ingredients for success in education, employment and community engagement

Panel discussion facilitated by Carol Blessing

11:15 a.m. **Break**

11:30 a.m. **Session II: Investing in the Future** Presented by Ashley Lunger, Mass-Mutual Financial Group - Financial Architects

Noon **Lunch and Networking**

1 p.m. **Community Conversation**

Participate in an open discussion to identify gaps of information and develop next-step strategies

2:30 p.m. **Closing**

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**Event Registration**

There are no fees to attend this event.

Complete this form and mail it by Tuesday, Oct. 1 to:

**Center for Human Services Education**

349 W. Commercial Street, Suite 2795
E. Rochester, NY 14445.

Or, register online at [www.humanservicesed.org/symposium](http://www.humanservicesed.org/symposium).

□ Yes, I/we will plan to attend. My contact information is:

**Full Name:**

**Title:**

**Organization:**

**Street Address:**

**City, State, Zip Code:**

**Telephone:** (______)__________________________

**Email:**

□ Check here if you do not want notice of future events.

*Child watch and respite care will be provided during the event, in the same building, from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Please pack a lunch for your loved one(s).

Other attendees include:

**Full Name:**

□ parent □ sibling
□ child w/ disabilities, date of birth: __________________
□ needs onsite child watch / respite care*

**Full Name:**

□ parent □ sibling
□ child w/ disabilities, date of birth: __________________
□ needs onsite child watch / respite care*

**Full Name:**

□ parent □ sibling
□ child w/ disabilities, date of birth: __________________
□ needs onsite child watch / respite care*

For child watch or respite care, describe your loved one’s care needs here:

____________________________________________
____________________________________________

For any member in your party request accommodations or dietary needs here:

____________________________________________
____________________________________________

Questions? Contact Deirdre Phillips at dphillips@humanservicesed.org or (585) 340–2009.