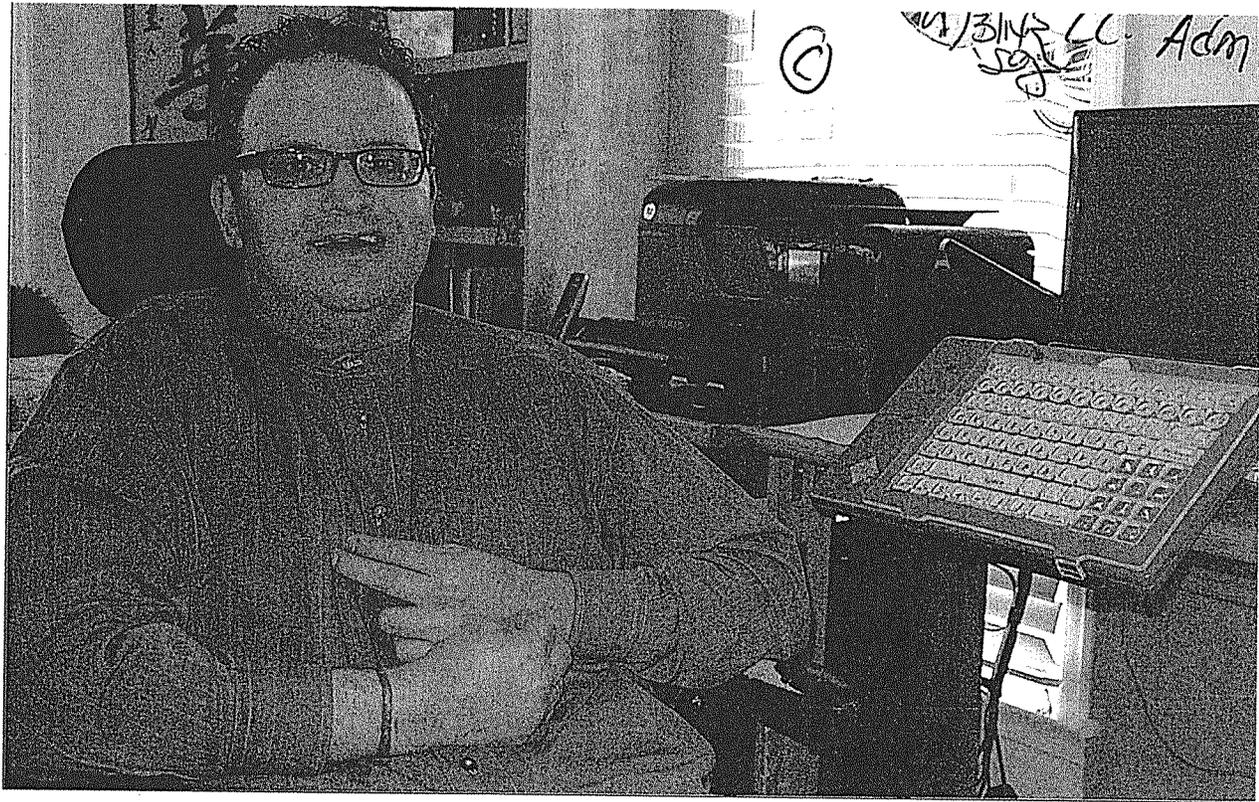


RECEIVED
 SEP - 3 2014
 Mount Olive Township Clerk's Office



INDEPENDENCE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY – Advocate and Avon consultant Dan Molloie uses several different types of software and assistive devices to access his computer. This helps him to earn a living and make a positive impact as a volunteer for several different organizations.

Assistive Technology Makes Things Possible Active at Work and In His Community

For some people, technology might make some tasks a little easier or help them be a little more efficient, but for a person with a disability, technology may allow them to independently perform tasks that they otherwise would not be able to do. It is an impressive thing to see technology have a major impact on someone's life. Dan Molloie, a 40-something with the degenerative neuromuscular disorder Friedreich's Ataxia, is a wonderful example of this.

Dan works as an Avon consultant. He is also an advocate for people with disabilities and someone who volunteers widely in his community. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Statewide Personal Assistant Services Program (PASP) Advisory Council, a post he has held since 1997.

In April of 2014, Advancing Opportunities recognized Dan with the Elizabeth M.

Boggs Award for Advocacy. It was presented during the Spring Gala.

Much of Dan's work happens at his computer. Despite already having a wheelchair accessible desk and a Big Keys large key keyboard, Dan was having difficulty with computer access due to his fine motor and visual challenges. Advancing Opportunities' Assistive Technology Specialist Kristen Russell, OTR, ATP, conducted an assistive technology evaluation with Dan through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

After observation, discussion, and exploration of many different options, Kristen iden-

SEE PAGE 6

inside:

Message from Jack	Page 2
Family Support Snapshot.....	Page 3
Kindergarten to College	Page 4

Focusing on The People We Serve

Dear Friend,

As Advancing Opportunities expands services, we've incorporated a quote from the leader of India's independence movement Mahatma Gandhi into our agency credo. His words are displayed in each of our offices and in all of the group homes we operate; they hang next to our mission statement. Each time I read



Gandhi's statement, I am reminded the individuals and families we serve have selected our agency to provide their services. Because there are other organizations they could have chosen, I feel fortunate.

I count on each member of my staff to feel the same way as they work to advance the independence and improve the quality of life for people with disabilities all around the state. This June, the U.S. Labor Department reported unemployment figures for people with disabilities more than two times higher than for people without. Given that news, I am proud of our Assistive Technology team who helped Dan Molloie find the tools he needed to continue working and earning a living.

Our advocates helped Erin Saunders so many years ago when she was in Kindergarten and her Mom needed help getting her school district on board with a plan to keep her in a regular classroom. Erin is getting ready to start college classes this fall and exploring becoming a minister. We're proud to be a part of Erin's network of support and look forward to being there for

"A customer is the most important visitor on our premises; he is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favor by serving him. He is doing us a favor by giving us an opportunity to do so."

Mahatma Gandhi

her when she graduates from college and is looking for employment.

Jo-Anne Loxley has formed a special bond with Jason during the hours she provides respite services to the Braman family. While she and Jason have fun, his parents get a break and we know how important that can be to a family's health.

The people we've introduced to you in this newsletter, Dan, Erin and Jason, represent hundreds of children and adults the team at Advancing Opportunities serves during the course of a year. Thank you for continued support. It is because of friends like you that we can continue to provide the vital, individualized services that have a tremendous impact on the lives of people with disabilities. On behalf of all of us here at Advancing Opportunities, I wish you well.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Mudge". The signature is written in a cursive style.

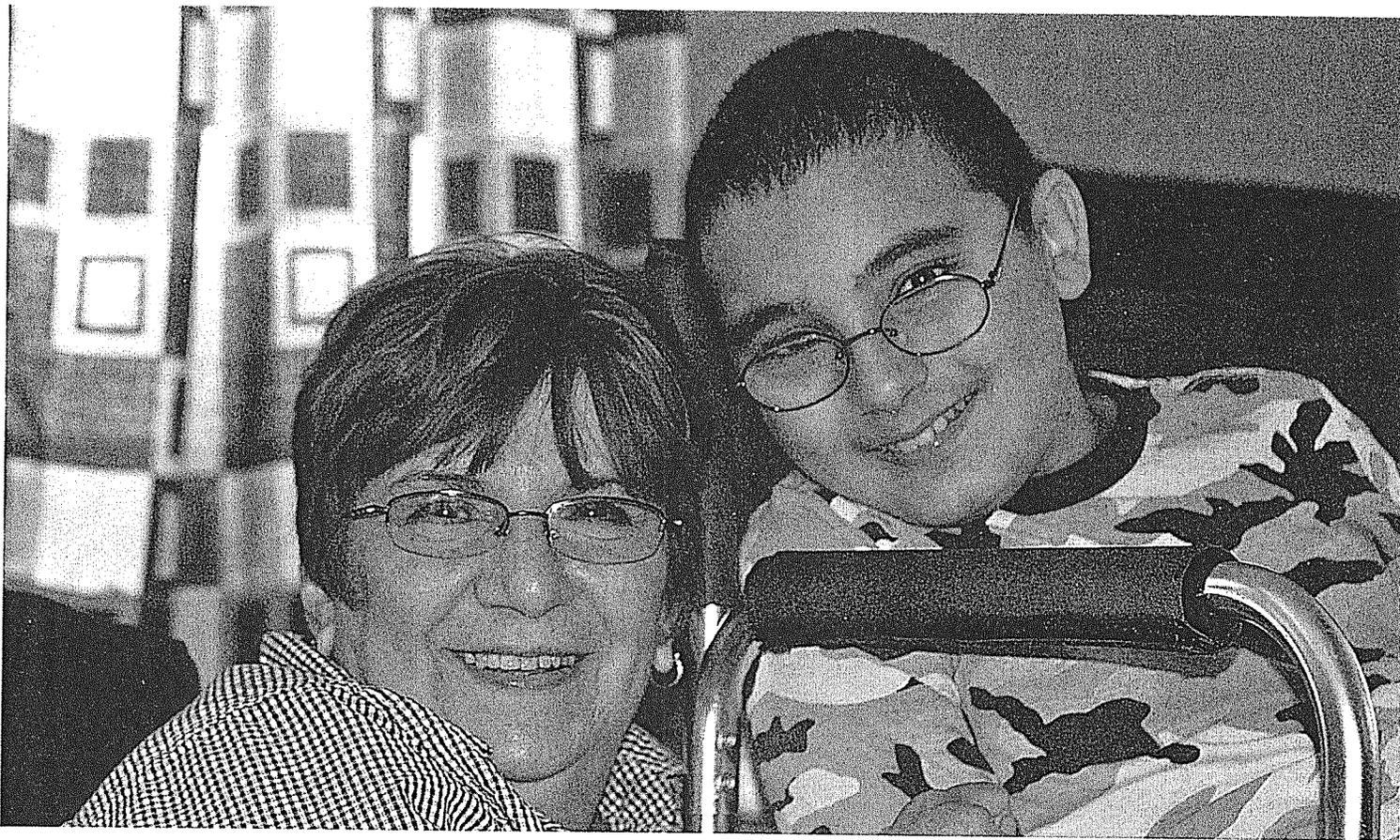
Jack Mudge
Chief Executive Officer
Advancing Opportunities, Inc.



Advancing Opportunities
All Disabilities. Many Services. One Agency.

Address: 1005 Whitehead Road Extension, Ewing, New Jersey 08638
Voice: 609-882-4182 **Toll Free:** 1-888-322-1918
Fax: 609-882-4054
Online: www.advopps.org **Email:** info@advopps.org

Advancing Opportunities/Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey helps children and adults with all types of disabilities gain independence. We believe people with disabilities have the right to participate fully in society. Since 1950, we have provided services, support, education and advocacy to individuals with disabilities and their families to help them lead fuller lives at home, school, work and play.



DYNAMIC DUO – Family Support Specialist Jo-Anne Loxley (left) and her young charge Jason share adventures each week and work together on goals. In-home respite services give Jason's parents a bit of break while Jason's needs are being tended to by a qualified, caring professional.

Family Support Services in Action

Jason and Jo-Anne Share Big Dreams and Fun

A wide, happy smile seems to light up the room. Upon seeing Jason, it is hard not to want to smile back. Jason Braman, an 11-year-old boy, is too busy to let his cerebral palsy interfere with all he loves to do.

Jason receives in-home respite services from Jo-Anne Loxley every week through the Division of Children and Families' Children's System of Care. Together, they go shopping, play mini golf, visit the library, or try out new restaurants. Some days, they stay home and play games. "We love to play Yahtzee and Connect 4, and believe it or not, we also love to shoot Nerf guns for fun," says Jo-Anne. Yes, Jason usually wins. "I win because I'm really good," adds Jason.

"We also enjoy dining out at different places, not only fast food places (as you would think a kid would enjoy), but we like to try different restaurants, because we both like to try ethnic foods. We've been to Mexican, Chinese, and Italian restaurants so far, and of course, we

can't forget the ice cream shops!" says Joanne. When they are not eating out, they enjoy baking at home. Banana cream pie is their favorite. "We need a lot of ingredients," says Jason.

The Bramans adopted Jason when he was an 8-week-old infant; Jason's diagnosis of cerebral palsy was made later, when he was about 18 months old. Although he attended a school for children with special needs, he is now in his regular community school. "He's much better in a school with regular kids," says his mom, Laurie. And with a smile, Jason adds that he is looking forward to sixth grade this fall.

Before receiving in-home respite care, Jason participated in Advancing Opportunities Parents' Night Out activities. Though Jason loved these events, coordinating transportation with the needs of his older sib-

SEE PAGE 7

Here's How We're Making a Difference From Kindergarten to College

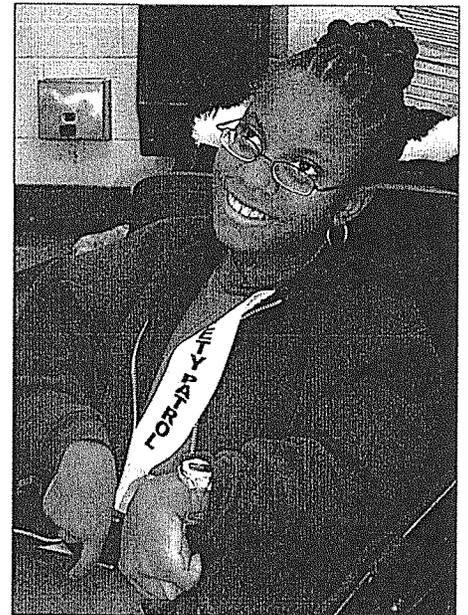
As an agency, Advancing Opportunities provides a wide array of services which help people with all types of disabilities in many aspects of their lives. It's not uncommon for an individual to receive support from several different departments through the years.

Take Erin Saunders for example. When we first met Erin, she was in Kindergarten and her mother Wanda called the agency because she needed assistance from an advocate. Her school district planned on placing the energetic five year old in a special services setting. "I knew in my heart that wasn't going to work," said Wanda. "Erin has cerebral palsy, but her condition is strictly physical. I wanted her to be in the regular classroom because I knew she needed to be challenged." Wanda and the advocate worked together and convinced school ad-

ministrators Erin belonged in a regular classroom alongside her non-disabled peers.

We checked in with Erin back in 2007 to see how she was doing and featured her in a newsletter article then. We learned she had been working with the agency's Assistive Technology Department to find the tools and devices that would help her reach her full academic potential. Erin thrived. She was an honor roll student, a member of the National Honor Society, and active in many clubs and activities.

During the summer months, Erin participated in the agency's Bridges Program, which pairs a child with disabilities with a one-to-one aide so they can participate in community-based recreational activities. Erin attended Camp Liberty Lakes and swam, sang, and summer camped right along with



SEVEN YEARS AGO -- As an eighth grader Erin enjoyed cooking shows and helping her mom in the kitchen. She also liked going to summer camp.

everyone else. She also took part in the agency's respite program Adults' Night Out. While Erin enjoyed fun activities like going to movies or shopping with her peers, Wanda got a little break. "Those few hours made a big difference," said Wanda. "I took advantage of those two or three hours like it was a whole day."

Fast forward seven years and we met up with Erin again and found she has grown into an attractive and outgoing young adult.

SEE PAGE 5

COLLEGE FRESHMAN -- This summer, Erin (right) and her mom Wanda have been ironing out all of the details to ensure that when she starts at Burlington County Community College, everything goes smoothly.



From Kindergarten to College

FROM PAGE 4

Some things haven't changed. Her smile is still wide and bright as ever; conversations with Erin continue to be punctuated with laughter.

After graduating from high school, Erin spent time volunteering to gain skills and work experience. She volunteered at the Burlington-Riverfront YMCA and at the Burlington Township Municipal Building. She said she really enjoyed both opportunities but is looking forward to getting a job with a paycheck attached so she can go shoe shopping.

This September, Erin will be starting classes at Burlington County Community College. She has been working with the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and with Advancing Opportunities' Assistive Technology Specialist Sally Hagarty to figure out the best way to access and use a computer for doing her research and course work. Erin has limited visibility, so reading what's on her computer can be difficult. Sally showed her some of the screen-reading software, which lets Erin listen to what's on the computer rather than relying on seeing it.

Erin has cerebral palsy and even after having had several surgeries on her hands, she does not have the dexterity or flexibility that makes typing easy. Erin uses a special keyboard with larger keys. She

has been trying voice recognition software – a solution that would allow her to speak into a microphone and have her words transcribed into text. But since her speech is affected by her cerebral palsy, it's not the most perfect solution. But Erin keeps working at it – she's a young woman with something to say and always finds a way to communicate what's on her mind.

Erin and her Mom are active members of their church, Faith Covenant Fellowship Ministries, under the leadership of Pastors William and Joanne Barnett, Jr. Erin and her Mom look forward to volunteering in the church office and Erin participates in the Adult Praise Dance Group. This spring, Erin started something new: preaching. She has delivered two sermons and has been seriously

considering joining the ministry.

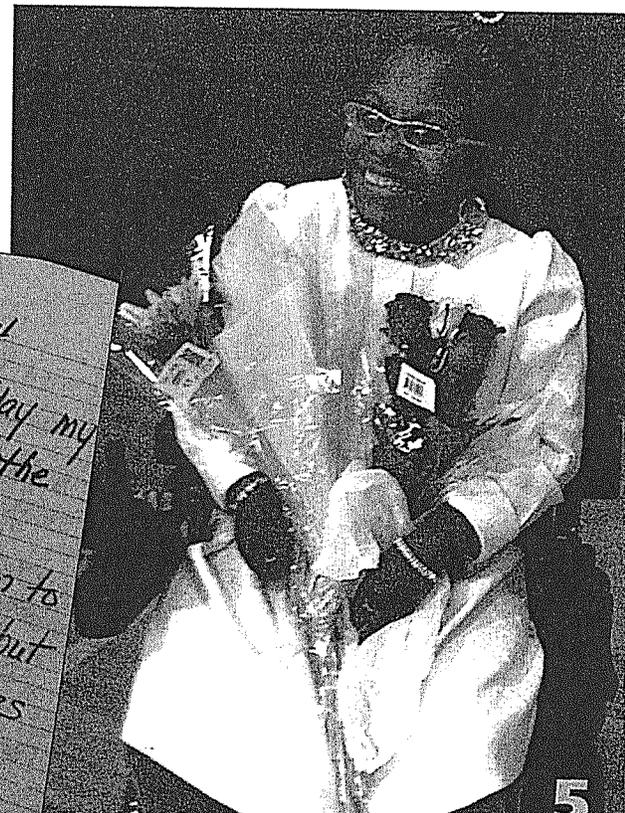
Pastors William and Joanne Barnett Jr., have encouraged Erin, who is very interested in sharing her story. Her first sermon was entitled "Different is Just Different" and in it, she shared what it was like to be the girl in the purple wheelchair – a girl with a family and friends who is just a little bit different.

Her second sermon was about perseverance and her congregation learned how tenacious Erin is. "I think people saw how determined she is," said Wanda. "And how strong she is. Despite the 18 surgeries she's had and the different challenges she faces with her body, she always has a smile on her face. Erin keeps me going. I am so proud of Erin and it is truly an honor and a blessing to be her mother," said Wanda.

SHARING HER MESSAGE—

Erin has delivered several sermons to her congregation in Burlington, NJ. The last one was about perseverance.

Introduction
Good Morning, Today my
Message is based on the
Bible Verse
The race is not given to
those who are strong, but
to the person who endures
to the end.
Today my Topic is
"Don't Give



Active at Work and In His Community

FROM PAGE 1

tified specific tools for a trial period. To address visual concerns, he trialed Zoomtext Express, which provides some basic features for someone with a visual impairment, including the ability to have an enlarged and colored mouse cursor and basic screen magnification.

Dan found this tool to meet his needs visually. He trialed an Intellikeys keyboard with the Qwerty USB Overlay, which provides mouse and keyboard access on the same overlay. This allowed him to use the mouse without having to switch between the keyboard and the mouse.

He also tried Word Q word prediction software. Word prediction programs attempt to “guess” what the user is trying to type, and display a list of guesses based on the letters entered. Dan found that although this software did not speed his typing up significantly, it did allow him to type with less fatigue. He and Kristen added some Avon terminology to this software, which helped him type these words/phrases with many fewer keystrokes.

Initially, speech recognition software was not something Dan was interested in trying. His speech is affected by his disability and it can be difficult for others to understand him at times. He had tried Dragon Naturally Speaking in the past and found it extremely frustrating and inaccurate. After getting to know Dan and his excellent computer skills over time, as well as seeing others with speech impairments use speech recognition software successfully, Kristen convinced Dan to give Dragon Naturally Speaking one more try.

During this training period, Dan found himself



ESTEEMED HONOREE -- *The agency presented Dan Molloie with its Elizabeth M. Boggs Award for Advocacy in April. His mother, Diane L. Stortu, was on hand to help Dan celebrate the accolade.*

using Dragon Naturally Speaking more and more. He memorized many commands, and used Dragon for much more than dictating text. He quickly learned to open Microsoft Outlook, create a new email, dictate the email address, subject, and entire email, and send the email all by voice!

He often found voice commands to be easier and more efficient than using his mouse. He still benefitted from having good access to his keyboard and mouse for those times when Dragon didn't cooperate, but by in large, he relies very heavily on this software.

During a recent timed typing sample, he typed a twenty word sentence using his keyboard in six minutes and dictated the same sentence into Dragon Naturally Speaking in fifty seconds with no errors!

With these tools, Dan has found that he can use the computer for much longer periods of time with less fatigue. This will be very important for him moving into the future when he may become fatigued more quickly.

This summer, the agency received a grant from Disability Rights New Jersey's Richard West Assistive Technology Advocacy Center to help promote the use of assistive technology and hired Rider University student Anita Chomenko to produce several videos which are featured on the department's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/assistivetechcenter>. One of the videos features Dan explaining the tools he uses to access his computer.

To see more examples of how assistive technology can benefit people with disabilities, visit the department's website: www.assistivetechcenter.org.

Jason and Jo-Anne Share Big Dreams and Fun

FROM PAGE 3

lings became difficult. It was apparent that the in-home respite program would better suit the needs of Jason and the rest of his family. The entire family enjoys Jo-Anne. “She’s really good with Jason,” says Laurie. “She’s amazing—almost like a grandma.” “She’s very nice,” Jason chimes in.

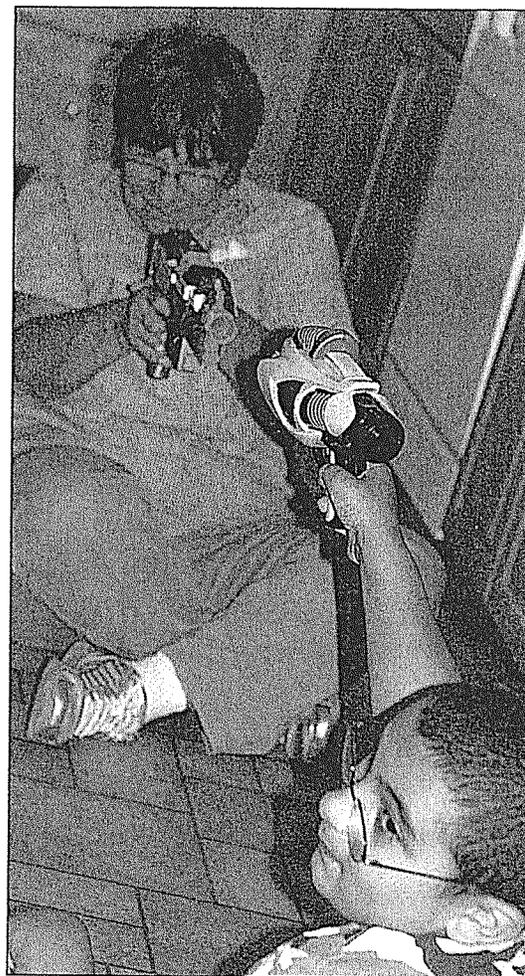
The feeling is mutual: “I love working with Jason; he is lovable, has a great sense of humor, and is absolutely endearing,” says Jo-Anne. “I love the conversations that Jason and I have together. He really does have a great sense of humor, and I think he enjoys mine,” she adds.

Jason and Jo-Anne are both highly motivated and share ambitious goals. Jo-Anne relates the day when Jason took three steps without his walker; he later took five steps to

reach his dad, without any assistance. “It was the most wonderful experience I have had with Jason,” says Jo-Anne, “and I’m sure there will be more.” Jason and Jo-Anne will not stop there.

“My goal with Jason is for him to walk on his own without the use of the walker. And, with his capabilities, I know that this will happen. Jason told me he will probably be done with the walker in two years, but I believe with his continued therapy, his willingness, and his strong motivation to improve, he will be walking on his own within one year.” Jason is happy to share credit with his mentor. “She’s very energetic!” exclaims Jason.

NERF WARS— *Jo-Anne Loxely and Jason battle it out in the kitchen with Nerf guns during one of Jo-Anne’s recent respite visits.*



Two Chances to Join Us for Great Golf this Fall

For nearly 20 years, golfers have joined the Rothwell Family and Pennington Quality Market in support of the agency. This year, the Rothwell Family Golf Classic will be held on Monday, September 22, 2014 at Cherry Valley Country Club.

And on Wednesday, October 8, 2014, Advancing

Opportunities will be holding an event at Deerwood Country Club in Westampton, NJ.

Participants of both events will enjoy 18 holes of golf, lunch, cocktails, dinner, prizes and awards. For more information or to sponsor either of these events, contact Liz Graham at 609-882-4182 ext. 511.

Advancing Opportunities’ Board of Directors

Officers:

Warren D. Kelemen, **President**
Jim Bartolomei, CPA, **Vice President**
Michael Yarrow, CPA, **Treasurer**
Elizabeth Faircloth, **Secretary**

Members:

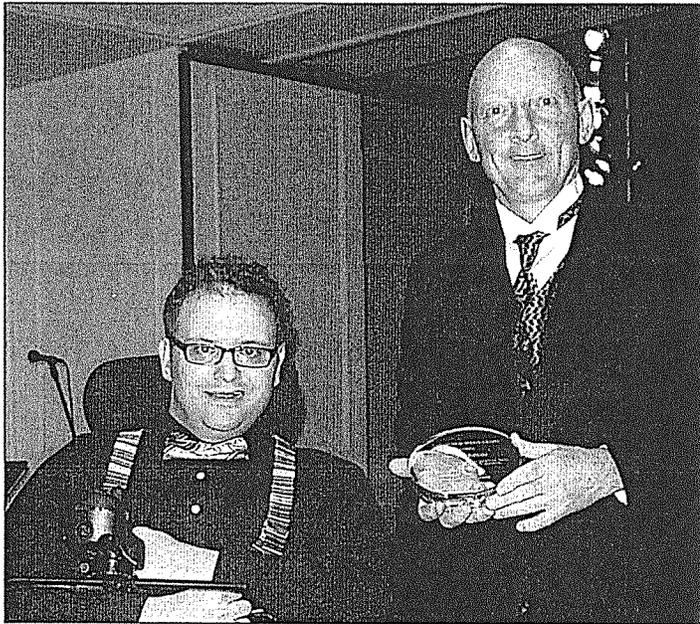
Albert Costantini
Angelina Duggan, Ph.D.
Kenneth Giacini
Greg Kay
Michael G Lettiere, CPA

Linda Meehan
Christian R. Patterson
Michael Rothwell
Michael Scheiring
James Spano, CEC, CIC

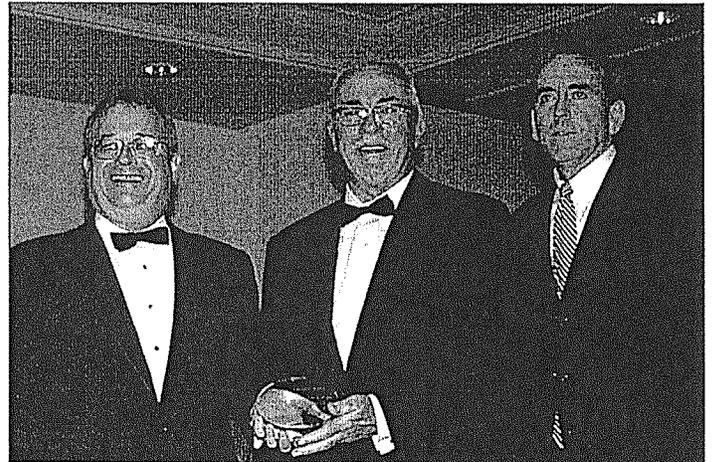
Spring Gala 2014

Thank You for a Wonderful Evening!

Advancing Opportunities would like to thank everyone who made its Annual Spring Gala on Saturday, April 26, 2014, such an amazing and successful evening.

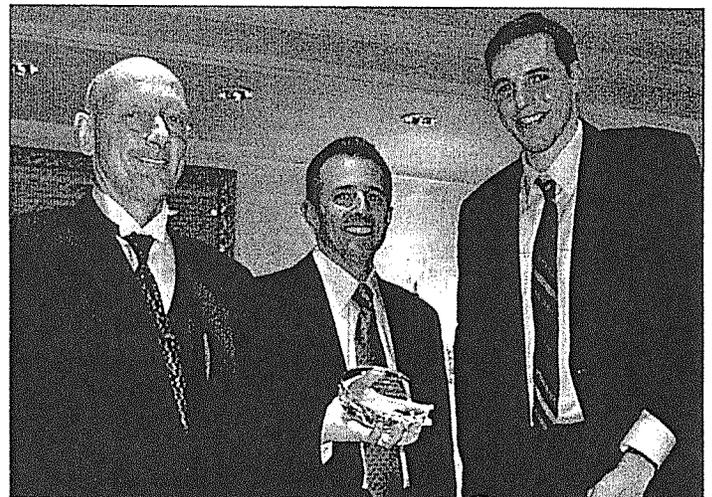


Board of Directors member Jim Spano (right) presented Dan Molloie with the Elizabeth M. Boggs Award for Advocacy. Dan has been active in securing and protecting rights for people with disabilities for many years. He began championing for himself as a student at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ in the 90s. He has served as the Chairman of the Statewide Personal Assistant Services Program Advisory Council since 1997.



Board of Directors Member Michael Rothwell (right) presented the Corporate Citizenship Award to Hopewell Valley Community Bank Chairman Pat Ryan and President/CEO Jim Hyman. Since opening its doors 15 years ago, HVCB has generously and consistently supported the agency with donations and sponsorships.

The event was possible because of the generosity of the following Sponsors: Platinum Sponsor The Spano Family Charitable Foundation, Inc.; Ruby Sponsors Hill, Barth & King LLC, Pennington Quality Market, StemCyte, Thomas Edison State College; and Sapphire Sponsor PSE&G.



Spring Gala Chairmen (from left) Jim Spano and Jim Bartolomei presented Kevin Luecht with the Andrew J. Murphy Award. Kevin, who performed one of his original songs during the evening, worked with advocate Justin Allsopp. He attended Berkshire Hills Music Academy in South Hadley, MA, and received specialized education in music, vocalization and independent living skills. Today, Kevin lives in his own apartment, writes and performs his songs and volunteers in the community.