

# Disability Awareness Training Newsletter

## AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH



### First Responders Disability Awareness Training

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### Recent News

[Crisis Training Pays Big, Study Finds](#)

[Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustment Under Title II](#)

### Upcoming Trainings

**LAST SESSION BEFORE THE SUMMER!**

#### **Firefighter/EMS Train the Trainer - Otsego County**

Friday May 16 (7pm-10pm) & Saturday May 17 (8am-5pm) at the Oneonta Fire Dept. Click link to register.

**FALL 2014** - We are in talks of bringing Firefighter/EMS trainings to the following NY counties: Niagara, Monroe, Ulster, Rockland, Broome, Albany

If you are interested in hosting a training in the fall/winter 2014, please contact our office.

### Upcoming Conferences

Dear David,

As Niagara University closes out another school year, the First Responder Disability Awareness Training office continues to take on new initiatives to ensure that first responders across all disciplines receive proper training and education.

## Senate Hearing for Law Enforcement Disability Awareness Training

U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), the Senate's Assistant Majority Leader and Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Human Rights, chaired a hearing entitled ***Law Enforcement Responses to Disabled Americans: Promising Approaches for Protecting Public Safety.*** Recent high-profile tragedies have demonstrated the need for law enforcement officers to receive additional training to safely address these situations. Localities that use these approaches have seen fewer injuries and deaths among officers and people with mental illness or developmental disabilities, increased jail diversion rates, fewer lawsuits following crisis incidents, and stronger ties with the mental health and disability communities. This hearing explored how Congress and the Executive Branch can support and strengthen these efforts.

Project Director Dave Whalen attended the hearing whereby testimony was given by Denise O'Donnell, Director of Bureau of Justice Assistance; Alfonza Wysinger, First Deputy Superintendent Chicago PD; A.D. Paul, Sergeant Plano PD; Judge Jay Quam, 4th Judicial District Minnesota; Pete Earley, author of the book "Crazy" and father of a child with bipolar disorder; and Patti Saylor, mother of the deceased Ethan Saylor. The panel discussion was predominantly on interactions with individuals with mental illness, highlighting both the challenges and erroneous methods of addressing matters in the judicial system. Ms. Saylor clearly highlighted the issues with law enforcement interactions with people with developmental disabilities. The case of Ethan was featured in one of our recent newsletters. NU applauds the panel for bringing this together. One notable absence from the panel discussion was issues that law enforcement encounters across the disability spectrum. We are excited to be on the cutting edge of training law enforcement in New York State.

[Click here for our written testimony](#)

## NU FR-DAT to receive DDPC award



The Niagara University First Responder Disability Awareness Training program will receive the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) **2014 Forging Pathways Award** at the DDPC awards luncheon in Saratoga, NY on May 29.

[www.ddpc.ny.gov](http://www.ddpc.ny.gov)

The purpose of the ***Forging Pathways Grantee Recognition Program*** is to recognize and reward extraordinary quality, creativity, innovation, and success in DDPC funded grants. NYS DDPC is the original funder of NU FR-DAT.

Project Director to present at the following conferences:

**MAY 14 - NYS 911 Coordinators Association**

(Lake George, NY)  
[www.nys911.com](http://www.nys911.com)

**MAY 21 - Niagara Falls National Heritage Association workshop**

[www.nps.gov/nifa](http://www.nps.gov/nifa)

**MAY 22 - 26th Annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day (DDDay!)**

(Niagara Falls Convention Center)

[Click here for brochure](#)

**AUGUST 7 - NYS Probation Conference**

(Niagara Falls Convention Center)

[www.nyspoa.com](http://www.nyspoa.com)

The DDPC recognized the vast need for first responders to receive appropriate training and education in how to properly respond to people with disabilities. Their foresight has led to NU FR-DAT being on the cutting edge of this concept.

## NU meets with Univ. of Maryland



Project Director Dave Whalen met with Alexandra Podolny, Associate Director of the UMD Center for Health and Homeland Security (CHHS), and JoAnne Knapp to begin discussion on a working relationship to address the first responder training needs in their state. CHHS has a progressive emergency preparedness/response program for individuals with disabilities. [Elizabeth Webster, Esq., put together a memo on the lawsuits that municipalities have received relative to noncompliance during disasters.](#)

### In other news...

The New York State Education Department has a current and reliable list for interpreters across the state. We've added the listing to our website. [Click here](#) to view it.

**DONATION:** A Buffalo-based company has graciously donated \$10,000 to NU FR-DAT. The company recognized the importance of the FR-DAT program and, while wanting to remain anonymous, has become the first corporate donor which will contribute to sustaining the project.