In keeping with the APSE tradition of outstanding SE Conferences, the 17th Annual APSE Conference - “Employment for All—Start a Revolution” - in Boston was 2 1/2 days of memorable networking, fun, and very important information-sharing. As one member describes APSE conferences, “They are 50% fun and 50% educational—a nice balance.” Boston kept that trend alive. The featured speakers fell right in step with the Revolutionary theme. Andy Imparato, President and CEO of the American Association of People with Disabilities, received a rousing standing ovation for his challenge to join the movement for change. Under the tutelage of motivational speaker and musician, David Harp, over 600 conference attendees stretched their personal boundaries by learning and using a new musical skill (harmonica playing) in unison. Comedian, Geri Jewell, moved the audience with her wit, motivational speaking and personal story of challenge and success, as she sent us home far more appreciative of human potential. (more on page 3)

The APSE Board of Directors recently tapped a number of national leaders as founding members of the newly established APSE Emeritus Circle. Created by outgoing Board President, Suzy Hutcheson, the Emeritus Circle honors APSE leaders who have made significant contributions to the field. Circle members will serve as a “brain trust” to the organization. According to Suzy Hutcheson, “Each person chosen is an advocate, leader and role model - working to ensure that all people with significant disabilities have the opportunity to live everyday lives! These national leaders will be involved with long range planning, reviewing position papers and helping develop new leaders. The Emeritus Circle is one avenue to ensure that our leaders stay involved with us.” The first members of the APSE Emeritus Circle are: Rebecca MacDonald (in memoriam); Dale DiLeo (FL); Karen Flippo (VA); Bob Niemiec (MN); Dr. David Mank (IN); Pat Rogan (IN); and Dr. Paul Wehman (VA).
Now that we are settling back into our daily routines, I hope all who were in Boston have had time to reflect on how this conference revitalized us individually and as an organization to truly restart the revolution. The energy at the conference was amazing. The keynotes were outstanding, as were the concurrent sessions and tributes to our award winners. It was great to reflect on our past year and pay tribute to Suzy Hutcheson, Past President, for her leadership with APSE. Suzy started several exciting initiatives that will carry us well into the future, not the least of which is the APSE Emeritus Circle. Under her reign, we became financially stronger and more unified. We have learned that for employment to remain at the forefront, we all must do our part. We can’t thank MA APSE and the ICI—UMA enough for their hard work. We also recognize the countless number of volunteers who have helped APSE by giving their time. Our volunteers make APSE. We were extremely grateful for the opportunity to rekindle old friendships with the European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE). Thirteen people from nine countries attended this year’s conference. Watch for information on the web about their EUSE conference in Belfast next June. I am honored to be your new President. Those who came before me have impacted APSE in so many ways. I have learned much from each of them, and I hope I can use their teachings to move their initiatives forward. However, it will take all of us! I hope you join me in looking forward to an exciting year for APSE and employment initiatives.

From The President

Teresa Grossi

From The Director

Celane McWhorter

Each summer we gather together in some wonderful spot in the country to learn, to network, to party, and to think big! The APSE Annual Conference is typically one of our “finest hours”, and Boston did us proud! THANKS ICI AND MA APSE. YOU ARE AWESOME!!! I had so much fun and came away rejuvenated and armed with many wonderful suggestions. For those who were unable to be in Boston, start planning now for Kansas City next July 16-18, 2007. That conference committee is already fast at work with plans for a fine time in the nation’s heartland! We hope you like the new look for the Advance. A big thanks to Faith Thomas, Indiana University, for the design and her willingness to work with us on the upcoming issues.

The long anticipated Marketing Initiative is ready. Watch for new brochures and a DVD that will promote SE and APSE activities in your community. The design is the work of Neil Romano and his colleagues at The Romano Group and America’s Strength Foundation. Finally, do not forget to sign up for the Fall Series of SE 101!
Editor's Note: There were eight theme tracks: Best Practices, Family and Consumer Issues, Job Development, Placement Support, Program Management, Public and Economic Policy Trends, Research to Practice, and School to Career Transition. We invited "roving reporters" to share commentary on selected conference theme tracks for readers unable to attend.

Self Employment Track by Chris Davies

My first stop was with Daniel Ray, a gifted musician who answered event promoters in Las Vegas questioning how he was able to sing so brilliantly with the statement, "Hey Man, I Don't Sing With My Legs!", which just happened to be the title of his session. Daniel won the Audience Favorite Award for his performance at the Unsigned Artist World Showcase in Las Vegas, NV in 2003. Daniel is in the process of building a fully accessible recording studio to enable musicians with disabilities to record their work. According to Daniel, "the only limitation we have is the limitation we put on ourselves".

Ilirjan Qirici, known to most as Liri, was my second stop. Liri, a Boston University graduate in Film and Television, has a spinal cord injury. He is the Writer, Producer, Director, and Co-Editor of "The Dinner—a Short 'Dramedy'" that won second place in the Dramatic Category at the 2004 Alliance for Community Media, Northeast Region Video and Film Festival. Liri says, "I could sit home and collect social security", but he would rather follow his dreams and live. Living he is! Liri has written, produced, directed, and edited several short films and over 120 community TV shows!

Finally, Anne Rea from the Way Station and Morris Tranen from RISE Partners have teamed to help individuals start and develop their own business. Anne Rea says, "we want people to make decisions based on good information, so we break down the myths of owning your own business". The idea is to let people discover for themselves whether self-employment is right for them and provide the supports and tools they need for success.

Job Development Track by Jon Alexander

While there were a variety of trainers from many parts of the country, one thing stood out amongst all of the trainings: NOT ENOUGH CHAIRS! Every session on job development was packed which forced several people in each session to stand or sit on the floor. Each trainer emphasized the importance of focusing on the individual job seeker’s abilities when looking for a job, as well as the concept of developing a job rather than trying to fill an opening. It seemed obvious to this reporter that there is such continued demand for jobs by people who want to work for real wages and, thus, such a great demand for training in this area!

Public Policy Track by Bob Lawhead

The number and variety of public policy related sessions at this year’s conference were unprecedented. Sessions included information on integrated employment as a civil right, state systems change initiatives, federal initiatives, and the usefulness of linkages with other public policy efforts. The Olmstead integration mandate was the topic of two presentations, (more on page 9)
Each year, APSE invites nominations from our chapters and the general membership for outstanding practitioners of supported employment for the National APSE Awards, which are presented during the annual conference. The selections were tough this year, for there were a number of outstanding nominees. The 2006 National APSE Award winners are …….

Professional Award— Rebecca Snyder

Becky Snyder has been a vocational case manager in Ohio for over 20 years, during which time she has maintained the trust of all that she serves: consumer, family/advocate, team members, coworkers, and employers. She is known for her honesty and openness and will always tell it like it is—tempered with a large dose of respect. She gets to the “heart” of any situation with the calm demeanor of a police negotiator. She can defuse potentially volatile situations with the ability to read the needs of the individual and the situation. Her perspective and wisdom allow her to help people choose the most meaningful employment opportunity for them. She is well known for employer support as well. Employers say she is always available to help and will do whatever it takes to solve problems. Becky’s outcomes are impressive: 75% of her caseload has been on the job over 2 years; 27% over 5 years; and 5 individuals have been in the same position for 10 years. “When you define ‘professionalism’, you define Becky.”

Best Practices Award— Kelley Homiller and Jodi Whalen

In 2002, the last remaining sheltered workshop in Vermont closed after 35 years of operation. Under the leadership and guidance of Kelley Homiller and Jodi Whalen, Champlain Vocational Services has taken the next step in the conversion process: the transition to community-based services. People are getting community jobs and becoming fully integrated members of their society. Kelley and Jodi have also been able to secure funding to increase job development and employment supports. They have both been active members of business groups, developing a newsletter about SE services distributed to local employers and utilizing Jodi’s marketing skills to create innovative marketing materials to promote their services in the community. They have opened new opportunities for SE as a result of these efforts. As the doors of the sheltered workshop closed, the doors to the community opened. The leadership provided by Kelley and Jodi along with their uncompromising values and determination have been a shining example of the values and philosophies held by APSE. Senator James Jeffords wrote, “As we close this chapter on work centers in Vermont, I hope that we encourage others to follow Vermont’s lead to a place where all of us work side by side.”
Leadership Award — Pat Keul

Pat Keul is an inspirational leader on a national, state and local level. She left her mark early in APSE as a member and officer of the national APSE board during the early and important formative years of the organization. In North Carolina, SE and Pat Keul are synonymous. Pat was a key player in the development of a milestone-based partnership with VR, with a focus on employment services for people with multiple, significant disabilities. Not only has this resulted in job placements for many people throughout N.C., who would probably not have had the opportunity without this partnership, this model of services has been presented in training venues at the national level. Pat is also a leader in North Carolina in setting up partnerships and networks that expand SE opportunities. The alliance of her employer agency, SET, Inc., with UCP in North Carolina has expanded the impact of SET to a much wider population across the state. Here is what colleagues say about Pat:

"Real employment options for people with disabilities in NC are the result of tireless efforts of families, consumers and professionals. Some, like Pat Keul, should be viewed as ‘hall of fame’ members.”

"Pat is a motivator. She insures that her staff always has access to her as a mentor and encourages creative and innovative approaches to service delivery.”

"Pat is a leader in many ways, but her strongest leadership is seen in how her work and commitment truly fulfills the promise of supported employment for so many people. I cannot think of anyone more deserving."

Small Business Award—Dr. Greg Livanos & Dr. Lisa Giarrusso

The APSE Small Employer Award recognizes employers with 25 or fewer employees for outstanding achievements in enhancing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Dr. Greg Livanos and Dr. Lisa Giarrusso run a small orthodontics practice, Central Massachusetts Orthodontic Associates, in Worcester and Spencer, Massachusetts. On her way home from work one evening in the Fall of 2005, Dr. Giarrusso heard a radio interview on SE. The more she heard the more she realized the two positions CMOA had much difficulty filling might be a good fit for someone with a disability. The positions had historically been filled with a succession of high school students, who were just not reliable workers. Melinda and Amanda were interviewed and subsequently hired to fill the positions of Assistants to Dental Assistant in their two offices. Both of these supported employees have become a vital part of their office team and are well supported by their office teammates.
Personal Achievement Award—John Dobos

Ten years ago, John Dobos asked for a job in the community. No one believed John could transition successfully from a sheltered workshop to a job in the community. He is a black belt practitioner of Tai Kwan Do. He also lifts weights and travels around his community by bike, often peddling sixty miles. Put this all together and you have success — except when you add in a serious problem with anger. So challenging was this problem that people were afraid of John. Even after he did become employed in a full time warehouse job with plenty of physical labor, and did outstanding work, his challenging behavior continued to be a problem. But he was not going to let it destroy his chance at success. Drawing on his inner strength and the discipline taught to him by his martial arts instructor, over the years John replaced his anger with a really cool sense of humor. Ten years later, John not only pulls candy orders and stocks grocery items, he also drives a forklift truck and uses a power jack. He goes out on large orders with drivers and makes deliveries to the grocery stores in the area. He has become indispensable to his employer.

Rebecca McDonald Award—Faith Thomas

Faith Thomas is a tireless advocate for supported employment, funneling her considerable energies into strengthening, promoting, and ensuring the financial viability of Indiana APSE: The Network on Employment. Under her guidance, the IN APSE conference committee restructured, and as a result, Faith contributed to one of the most exciting and well attended Indiana state employment conferences. Faith has worked hard to develop a comprehensive orientation and mentoring program for newly elected IN APSE Board members. She has spearheaded efforts to revise and revitalize the committee structure of the board and to create a truly professional face for IN APSE with a newsletter full of interesting, timely articles that reflect and promote the principles upon which APSE was founded. The Rebecca McDonald Award both memorializes Rebecca and recognizes outstanding APSE chapter leaders who demonstrate the spirit of volunteerism and extraordinary commitment to the mission and vision of APSE in their work with their state chapter.
Jeffrey McNary of Seattle, WA is the sole proprietor of Doc Destruction, a document shredding business in downtown Seattle. Jeff has been in business for himself for three years. Jeff was in a sheltered workshop for thirty years in a program for people with “behavioral challenges”. For the last five years of his time in that program he sat by the front door each day with his coat under his arm waiting to leave. With the help of King County Developmental Disabilities, Jeff’s sister, Sherry McNary, convinced the workshop to provide a job coach in the community, and she procured a shredding job for Jeff at a local condominium association. Jeffrey finished what the association thought would be nine months of work in three months. Jeff and his team next negotiated with King County Developmental Disabilities to sublet an office in a building in downtown Seattle. Jeff started the business with no formal funding. Later, Jeff obtained funding from VR to purchase an industrialized shredder. Almost immediately after leaving the workshop, Jeffrey’s “behaviors” plummeted. He started making new friends. A new community formed around him in the building, with his customers, and in his office. His next goal is to pay for business expenses AND for a portion of his job coaching.

“Jeff McNary is living the values that animate APSE. The journey from the back room in an activity center to his own place of business defines the journey that the founders of supported employment visualized for the whole field.”

Lisa Alford has been a Rehabilitation Counselor with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services since 1990. She is one of the founding board members and treasurer for AL APSE. Lisa is always the first to arrive at any activity supported by APSE and usually the last to leave. She is willing to spend as much time as necessary to make sure that things are done with the utmost professionalism and quality. She has somehow found time to educate herself on tax laws and filing procedures for nonprofits, so she can be accountable for the AL APSE budget. Lisa has co-written three grants that have helped support many AL APSE initiatives: a certificate-based job coach curriculum; seven successful state APSE conferences; development/expansion of the AL APSE web site; development of a lending library; and development of a SE resource guide for individuals and families. Lisa played a lead role in planning and hosting the 2005 national APSE conference. Lisa is a tireless advocate, dedicated friend, and promoter of APSE.
Large Employer Award

David Miller—The Sentinel Tribune

David Miller, Editor of The Sentinel Tribune, accepts the Large Employer Award for his newspaper in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Under the editorial leadership of David Miller, the Sentinel-Tribune has supported employment opportunities for people with disabilities at the newspaper, as well as in the community at large. In the mid-nineties, the Sentinel-Tribune sought out Community Employment Services to hire a supported employee and made the needed accommodations to meet the employee’s needs. Their first employee recently celebrated her 10th anniversary with the newspaper, and the second supported employee is nearing her second year of employment at the paper. The Sentinel-Tribune is quick to point out that they treat each employee, supported or not, as an equal, but they do whatever it takes to make it work. Mr. Miller has just stepped down from a commissioner’s position with Rehabilitation Services Commission, which he held for a number of years. That influence, plus his commitment to diversity in Wood County, has promoted the integration of many individuals into SE. The Sentinel-Tribune not only demonstrates their support with their hiring practices, they also have provided the voice for people with disabilities in Wood County by regularly publishing articles promoting integration of all people with disabilities. As a result, Wood County is recognized as one of the most consumer friendly areas in the state of Ohio. David Miller and the Sentinel-Tribune consistently go beyond the call of duty in education, employment and advocacy for people of all disabilities.

Spirit Award—Neil Romano

The APSE Spirit Award...recognizes an individual who rises head and shoulders above the rest in advancing the APSE goal and mission of employment for all.

Neil Romano accepts the APSE Spirit Award from ICI Director, Bill Kiernan.

The APSE Spirit Award is a new award, presented for the first time in 2005. It is not an annual award and does not go through the award nomination process. It is only given when an individual rises head and shoulders above the rest in advancing APSE’s commitment to employment for all. This year APSE recognized Neil Romano, an outstanding individual who is new to SE but embodies the true APSE Spirit and has made invaluable contributions to APSE’s future and the future of SE. He founded America’s Strength Foundation to advance employment for individuals with disabilities after a successful career as one of the nation’s leading authorities in the field of media and public advocacy, with a focus on national health information programs. Since selling his business, Romano & Assoc., he has been freely sharing his knowledge and expertise with APSE and others in the disability community. As a result of his work, APSE is soon to kick off an exciting nationwide marketing campaign for SE with materials designed by Neil Romano.
Europe came to Boston! In a meeting facilitated by former APSE Board President, Dale DiLeo, current and former members of the APSE board and representatives of the European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) discussed similarities between the two organizations and the challenges to advance employment in their respective countries. As stated by Dale DiLeo, “it is important to bridge our worlds” determining what we have in common and areas in which we can work together.

Monica Wilson (EUSE) explained that there are 27 million persons with disabilities in Europe. The EU includes 17 nations: Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Czech Republic, Ireland, Denmark, Scotland, England, Wales, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, and the Netherlands. Both APSE & the EUSE have funding, legislative, capacity and resource issues. Both groups are committed to continuing to build communication and a strong relationship. The following recommendations were made:

- Dale DiLeo will be APSE’s point person as we continue discussions with EUSE.
- Both organizations will work on joint conference presentations.
- Consideration will be given to an exchange program for employment specialists.
- Newsletter information will be shared.
- Global policies will be considered.

At the meeting were: Monica Wilson, Margaret Haddock, Edyth Dunlap, Northern Ireland; Maria Cabrè, Spain; Alberto Migliori, Italy, APSE reps: Dale DiLeo, Katty Inge, Pat Rogan, Steve Savage, Tom Hughes, TJ Monroe, Ron Rucker, Wendy Quarles, Jon Alexander, Teresa Grossi, Chris Davies, Laura Owens, Suzy Hutcheson and Celane McWhorter.

The 1776 Revolt Continues.

Thanks to those of you who signed the petition, and most especially to those of you who supported the campaign with your $17.76. Congress continues deliberations on our major issues. The petition will be put to good use as we deliver messages from the national office about the importance of SE to individuals nationwide. Each of you, of course, is urged to send your own message of the importance of SE to you and/or individuals whom you serve.
Shelly Brantley, Director of Florida’s Agency on Disability, and APSE Board Member, Leslie Wilson, described Florida’s response to the finding that the vast majority of people working in segregated settings wanted jobs in the community. And, perhaps the public policy highlight of the conference was the keynote by Andy Imparato emphasizing the need to expand and improve SE “from sea to shining sea.”

A Bird’s Eye View on the Exhibit Hall by Marianne Gilmore

Exhibitors displayed and shared their visions, resources, materials, and ideas. Stealing the show was Chi Chi, a capuchin monkey trained to assist individuals with mobility-limiting physical conditions with their daily tasks from Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers in Boston. VSA Arts of Massachusetts had a virtual gallery created by artists with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy shared information on their systems change programs that advance employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The Social Security Administration shared information on the Ticket to Work and other work incentives. IOS Press traveled from the Netherlands to share information about the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, which is available to all APSE members. Cardinal Cushing, Inc., provided information on academic, vocational, day and residential programs for students with disabilities. CARF International focused on the their person-centered and community oriented accreditation guidelines. APSE Chapters from Alabama, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts all shared statewide information and resources. The Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation from Boston University exhibited recovery focused information for people working through psychiatric issues. The Institute for Community Inclusion—National Center on Workforce and Disability/Adult exhibited on the inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities. Indiana Institute on Disability and Community shared research, training and employment services materials. Virginia Commonwealth University – RRTC on Workplace Supports and Job Retention exhibited resources for customized employment and supported employment. Maryland WorkFORCE Promise focused on systems change to eliminate barriers to employment. The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) shared the benefits of membership in their national organization, and CTAT discussed trainings and gave away “fuzzy dice” to contest winners. The New England Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program-ICI provided an overview of their program and marketing materials. And, finally, we ended the day with a very successful Exhibitor’s Reception, featuring music by Daniel Ray, the announcement of Silent Auction winners, food, and networking galore.

A Boston Tea Party, complete with Revolutionary musicians, right in the middle of the Marriott Hotel!

(Shelly Brantley, from page 9)

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June 29 was Supported Employment Recognition Day in Massachusetts. To read Governor Mitt Romney’s Proclamation presented in Boston by Peter Torkildsen, Director of MA Workforce Investment Boards, go to www.apse.org.

Register for SE 101 Fall Session Teletraining NOW!
Sign up and participate from the comfort of your own office!
For more information, schedule and registration materials go to www.apse.org or call 894-278-9187

APSE is more than an organization. It is a motivational force for change that would not be possible without truly committed individuals who donate time and expertise to make APSE strong. APSE volunteers provide leadership in their State Chapters, help plan local, state and national level APSE conferences and training events, serve on APSE working committees, help prepare theAdvance, serve on the APSE national board, serve on the APSE Foundation board, generously donate training time for APSE trainings, organize SE 101, and share their expertise in many, many other areas important to maintaining a strong organization with a small staff. APSE is truly a movement, and we want to recognize and thank all of our leaders who make that movement possible. We ask you to go to the APSE website to read the APSE Hall of Fame — over 100 strong and growing.

Start a Revolution … more
(from page 10) to the Boston waterfront for a terrific evening complete with a delicious meal of, well — lobsters and chicken. In addition to a delicious dinner, guests enjoyed live music and celebrations of the 2006 APSE Award winners.

SE 101
The 7th annual SE 101 featured 2 ½ days of intense training on SE by well known national SE trainers.

Employers’ Forum
Members of the business community enjoyed a networking breakfast and a morning of informative discussions on issues relative to the employment of individuals with disabilities. Look for this successful program again in Kansas City.

Membership Breakfast
The APSE Board hosted an early morning breakfast and discussion of APSE issues. Members learned what the board is planning for the upcoming year, and the board heard suggestions from members.

Visit the APSE website to view a photo slide show from the Boston Conference.
SAVE THE DATE!
JULY 16-18, 2007
18TH ANNUAL APSE CONFERENCE
KANSAS CITY, MO
Employment for All:
“Show Me” the Future—it’s Bigger Than you Think!
Hyatt Regency Crown Center
Watch APSE website for details.