

Former resident wins Easter Seals award

WORCESTER – Easter Seals will honor Nancy J. Bazanchuk of the Center for Human Development (CHD) in Springfield with its Empowerment Award on June 18. She is being recognized as a leader, role model and mentor to teens and young adults both with and without disabilities.

The award reflects Easter Seals' mission of ensuring that children and adults with disabilities have equal opportunities to live, learn, work and play. Bazanchuk was singled out to receive the Empowerment Award in the "Play" category.

Bazanchuk, of Chicopee, who grew up in Agawam, is director of the CHD's Disability Resources Program, which provides recreational and social opportunities, including competitive sports, for children, teens and adults with disabilities. Her job includes reaching out to schools, businesses and community groups about ways people with disabilities can participate in mainstream activities.

"Nancy has worked side by side with Easter Seals for many years," said Kirk Joslin, Easter Seals president. "Through her involvement with Easter Seals Youth Leadership activities, she has broadened the horizons of countless youth with disabilities and empowered them to reach their full potential."

Bazanchuk had both legs amputated by age 2. She went on to manage sports teams in high school and became a varsity swimmer at Bridgewater State University, where she earned a degree in physical education.

The Empowerment Awards are being presented for the first time this year at the annual Easter Seals Evening of Empowerment to be held at the State Room in Boston.





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Nancy J. Bazanchuk, center, with Emma Meyer of East Longmeadow, left, and Clara Dombeck of Longmeadow, right, at the Easter Seals Thrive conference.