

Easter Seals Raritan Valley Workshop to host fundraiser

Easter Seals New Jersey 2:11 p.m. EDT October 6, 2014

Easter Seals celebrates National Disability Employment Awareness month in October with its 44th Annual Employment Services Awards Dinner & Dance



(Photo: PHOTO COURTESY OF
EASTER SEALS DISABILITY
SERVICES)

EDISON – On Oct. 16, Easter Seals NJ's Raritan Valley Workshop, which employs more than 200 individuals with various disabilities, will celebrate Disability Employment Awareness Month by honoring its program participants and the community of businesses and donors who support them at its 44th Annual Awards Dinner fundraiser.

The month of October was designated "National Disability Employment Awareness Month" by Congress in 1988. Since then, October has evolved as the kick-off month for year-round programs designed to recognize social and cultural contributions made by people with disabilities, and to increase awareness of the changes still needed to create equal opportunities and community inclusion.

Easter Seals Raritan Valley Workshop in New Brunswick provides cost-efficient packaging, fulfillment and document management services for NJ businesses. New Brunswick Mayor Jim Cahill has issued a City Proclamation recognizing Easter Seals NJ for their commitment to creating solutions and providing programs that produce tangible results in the lives of thousands of families in New Jersey.

"Employment opportunities empower people with disabilities to achieve greater independence and the chance to fully participate in and contribute to society," says Brian Fitzgerald, CEO and president of Easter Seals New Jersey. "It provides the ability to say 'Yes I can!' We believe everyone has something valuable to contribute to their community."

This year's event will take place 6 to 11 p.m. Oct. 16 at the Pines Manor and guests will enjoy an evening of dinner and dancing, a gift auction, 50/50, awards presentations, and more. Among the evening's honorees are Allen Waters of the NJ Dept. of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for his support of the Raritan Valley Workshop and advocacy for employment for people with disabilities. Also featuring special event emcee and long-time Easter Seals supporter, radio host Bert Baron of 1450 WCTC AM.

The local community is encouraged to show their support by purchasing tickets to the event for \$135 per person. Donations of auction items for the fundraising event are also needed. Corporate tables and advertising opportunities are available. Further information can be obtained by contacting Donna Speizer at dspeizer@nj.easterseals.com or call 732-828-8080.

Packaging, fulfillment services provide benefits

At the workshop, the lives of many individuals with disabilities are positively impacted by the employment opportunities presented to them through a flow of sub-contract work. The facility utilizes state of the art equipment that includes shrink-wrap tunnels, L-sealers, a carton taping machine, eight 30-foot conveyor belts, a pallet wrapper, a strapping machine, and two forklifts to meet the diverse business needs of its customers.

"Over the years, we've developed a loyal customer base that relies on our packing and production services to keep their businesses running cost-efficiently," says Colleen Ward, business development manager for Easter Seals. More importantly, the workshops have also served to raise public awareness of the important contributions made to the community by people with disabilities and the integral role they play in society.

Since 1967, Easter Seals' Raritan Valley Workshop has supported individuals on their road to independence by promoting employment resources and opportunities for adults with disabilities. Easter Seals job training and employment services help people with disabilities develop skills to successfully enter the workforce or to return to work after an illness or injury and independently earn an income.

According to Colleen, it's both rewarding and exciting to see individuals with all types of disabilities engaging in work that goes beyond limitations that most people expect of them. "I think the public is used to seeing a person with disabilities bagging groceries in their local supermarket or maybe even collecting shopping carts. But, there's so much more that they are capable of doing that goes beyond that. And here at the workshop, we're providing them with that opportunity," she said.

But, with numerous cuts in funding for social service programs, the workshop now has to rely even more heavily on subcontract work in order to keep its participants employed.

“With little growth in the economy these past few years, it’s critical to get the word out that we offer this service to area businesses. We want them to know that there’s a place right in their own backyard that can not only fulfill their business needs, but also provide them with the reward of helping members of their own communities who have disabilities.”

For more information on how Easter Seals Raritan Valley Workshop can provide solutions for area businesses, contact Colleen Ward at 732-828-2032 or visit www.njpackagingservices.com.

Read or Share this story: <http://mycj.co/1xi2HMT>



MORE STORIES



[Turn in gun receive \\$250 in Union County](#)

[\(/story/news/local/2014/10/07/union-county-offer-oct-gun-amnesty-program/16825475/\)]((/story/news/local/2014/10/07/union-county-offer-oct-gun-amnesty-program/16825475/))

[\(/story/news/local/2014/10/07/union-county-offer-oct-gun-amnesty-program/16825475/\)]((/story/news/local/2014/10/07/union-county-offer-oct-gun-amnesty-program/16825475/))

Oct. 7, 2014, 12:06 a.m.



[Attention. election candidates](#)

[\(/story/news/local/2014/09/26/fill-local-election-questionnaire-responses-will-posted-online/16262369/\)]((/story/news/local/2014/09/26/fill-local-election-questionnaire-responses-will-posted-online/16262369/))

[\(/story/news/local/2014/09/26/fill-local-election-questionnaire-responses-will-posted-online/16262369/\)]((/story/news/local/2014/09/26/fill-local-election-questionnaire-responses-will-posted-online/16262369/))

Sept. 26, 2014, 11:27 a.m.



[4th Annual New Jersey Disability Pride Parade & Celebration draws hundreds](#)