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**DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

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Michelle M. Duprey Esq.
Director

Real Choice Systems Task Force Meeting Minutes

July 1, 2003

Present: Pierrette Comulada Silverman, Marc Gallucci, Marla Hinz, Ronald Manning, Maureen Novak, Toni Page, Christine Reardon, Heiwa Salovitz, Reed Smith, Iris Thompson, Robin Tousey-Ayers.

Absent: Judy Puglisi, Robin Wadsworth

Department Staff: Michelle Duprey, Kristin Barber

A.J. Pappanikou Center Staff: Andrew Bates, Kristina Gonzalez, Christine Gaynor, Diane Verde, Susan Zimmerman

Michelle Duprey, Director for the Department of Services, opened the meeting. She welcomed all members and explained the responsibilities of the Department. Introductions proceeded by all members of the task force and representatives from the University/grantor.

Chris Gaynor, Project Coordinator for the Real Choice Systems Change Grant, spoke about the two other municipal awardees of the grant, as well as about the A.J. Pappanikou Center for Developmental Disabilities in Farmington. The Real Choice Systems Grant is a federal grant administered through the Department of Social Services. The A.J. Pappanikou Center focuses on Education, Research and Services and is administratively housed at the University of Connecticut Health Center.

Susan Zimmerman, Community Facilitator of the Real Choice Systems Change grant presented the background of the grant and gave the Task Force members some literature about A.J. Pappanikou Center.

Andy Bates spoke about his role as the Workforce Developer. His work includes developing a central point of recruitment of personal care attendants.

Kristina Gonzalez, Assessment Coordinator UCONN Health Center, spoke about the development of a survey tool that will be used to assess community inclusion.

Chris Gaynor began a presentation regarding the overall goal of the Real Choice Systems Change Grant, which is to build the capacity of Connecticut to integrate persons with disabilities in our communities to support informed decision-making, independent living, and a meaningful quality of life across the life span.

Ms. Gaynor announced an upcoming workshop, by John McNight on August 1, 2003 in East Hartford, of which Task Force members are invited to attend. The presentation will encompass community linkages and principles of community inclusion.

A presentation followed given on the Real Choice Systems Change (refer to handout for details).

After the presentation, Michelle Duprey discussed in detail the goals of the New Haven Real Choice Systems proposal. Because persons with disabilities need information about resources, the major role of the task force is to contribute to a quarterly newsletter. Michelle talked about the four objectives to be accomplished this quarter, July-October 2003.

- 1) Produce an insert in the New Haven Register and the New Haven Advocate in July to celebrate the anniversary of the ADA. It was suggested that the grant award and its purpose be announced in the insert. The insert will also contain a registration for citizens with disabilities to sign up to receive the upcoming quarterly newsletters.
- 2) The Department and the Task Force members will have opportunity to participate in Disability Mentoring Day, which will take place on October 15 to encourage employment opportunities for young people with disabilities. Chris Reardon agreed to contact some of the employers from the One Stop.
- 3) A quarterly newsletter will be published and distributed with a circulation of 5,000. The first publication is scheduled to take place in September.
- 4) The grant has money set aside to provide for evaluation for accessibility through access monitoring. Michelle encourage members to think about places they may want to see evaluated as we are anticipating the ability to evaluate six sites by September 30, 2003.

Each member of the Task Force received a notebook containing information about the grant, member information, etc. Reimbursement to Task Force members was discussed and related forms are made available in each notebook.

Kristin Barber briefly presented some of the other non-specified tasks the group could accomplish through it's partnership such as increased information regarding child care providers who have skills with children with special needs. Kris also pointed out useful addition to the City of New Haven's Youth Directory which now includes symbols of camp programs which are wheelchair accessible. Marla Hinz from 2-1-1 Infoline joined in the discussion and will be exploring relevant information at infoline on the topic of childcare providers.

The next meeting of the task force is scheduled for Tuesday, August 19, 2003 at 9:30 am in Meeting Room One.