

The **ADVOCATES** Way GALA 2009

Advocates' Annual Fundraiser

It was Gala-riffic!



Advocates' Board Chairman Daniel Weir addresses over 300 guests at Gala 2009.

Advocates' Gala 2009 was an inspirational and entertaining evening that provided over 300 guests with scores of examples of "The Advocates Way" in action, from the wonderful favors and centerpieces handmade by our Bring to Light candle-makers to the lively musical entertainment provided by our own Music Jam Band and by Anthony Lu and Jun-Yang Ni of our Project Able program.

"I hope you will gain a greater appreciation of how the work we do helps to make life meaningful for individuals with disabilities and their families," Advocates' Board Chair-

man Daniel Weir told the audience.

Popular Boston radio personality David O'Leary served as Master of Ceremonies.

Held on April 30 at the Sheraton Hotel in Framingham, the annual fundraiser also featured the premiere of "The Advocates Way," a documentary illustrating "Who We Are and Who We Strive to Become."

The film was produced – and introduced – by videographer Grace Fogarty, a woman in recovery who is now an Advocates Peer Specialist.

Special Gala Guests

Speaker Dan Weir introduced several members of Advocates' extended family — "a family that continues to expand as our work in the community expands."

They included:

- Staff and families of Project Able, an Advocates program providing support services to Chinese and Vietnamese individuals in the Greater Boston area.
- Members of NAMI Greater

Framingham, the local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and President Paul N. Pappas.

- Executive Director Nanette Ohman and several members of Advocates' new autism support center, the Autism Alliance of MetroWest.
- Representatives of Advocates' highly successful Framingham Jail Diversion Program: Deputy Chief Craig Davis and Lt. Paul Shastany of the Framingham

Police Department and Chief Mark Leonard of the Marlborough Police Department, now working with Advocates to introduce a similar program in that community.

- Paul Mina, President & CPO of United Way of Tri-County
- Executives from Flagship Bank — now a division of Peoples United Bank, including President Tim Crimmins, Executive Vice President Dan Flynn, and Senior Vice President Chris Watson.



Advocates' Heart of Gold Awards: Berry & Sannicandro



Senator Karen Spilka and Bill Taylor

Advocates' 2009 Heart of Gold Awards honored two popular Bay State legislators: Senate Majority Leader Frederick E. Berry of the Second Essex District and State Representative Tom Sannicandro of the Seventh Middlesex District.

Unfortunately, Senator Berry was unable to attend the Gala due to health concerns and Representative Sannicandro was locked in budget debates on Beacon Hill that evening.

Senator Karen Spilka graciously accepted the two Awards on her colleagues' behalf from Advocates President and CEO Bill Taylor.

Thank You Gala 2009 Sponsors!

Advocates' Gala 2009 was a great success, thanks in large part to the generosity of our major sponsors, many of whom continually support our mission to provide programs and services for the disability community and those who are traveling the road to wellness and recovery.



Dancing in the Aisles



The highlight of Gala 2009 was a lively performance by Advocates' own Music Jam Band, a spirited group consisting of staff and clients whose energy rocked the room and resulted in a number of inspired guests literally dancing in the aisles.

IF YOU WERE AMONG THOSE WHO JOINED US FOR GALA 2009 – THANK YOU! IF NOT, WE SINCERELY HOPE TO SEE YOU AT NEXT YEAR'S EVENT.

2009 Gala Sponsors:

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Special Recognition for Founding Members of Advocates' New Philanthropy Initiative

Two Gala 2009 sponsors were also honored as the founding members of Advocates' new Philanthropy initiative.

"When Advocates introduced a philanthropic approach to building an infrastructure with the capacity to support its mission into the future, the stage was already set," Chairman Weir told the audience before introducing Mrs. Lucy Everts and Mr. John Parsons. "These two individuals have consistently demonstrated the ideals of Philanthropy with their unwavering support of Advocates and the individuals we serve."



Son Peter assists as Lucy Everts acknowledges a warm round of applause from the Gala audience.

Lucy Everts

Through her ongoing generosity, Lucy Everts was the catalyst for Advocates' successful and popular Internal Grant Program.

Her support has allowed Advocates to provide client-initiated activities including the Open Music Jam, a Deaf basketball team, art activities, Project Peach that provides clients with computers, and numerous health and wellness programs.

"She was particularly interested in helping to provide programs that offer clients the opportunity to socialize and learn new things," said Lucy's daughter, Nancy Rodriguez.

John Parsons

An individual who is sensitive and responsive to the needs of others, John Parsons personifies the meaning of philanthropy, Chairman Weir explained.

"The principal of Parsons Commercial Group, Inc., John and his company are committed to making the world a better place.

"Over the past five years, he has provided our organization with the best facility options at the most reasonable and realistic cost, supported our operations including the donation of rent for our Bring to Light Candle Company, and, this year, donated the sum of \$25,000 to our developmental disabilities program."

John Parsons has consistently been one of Advocates' annual fundraising donors, and is, indeed, a true "Friend of Advocates."



John Parsons of the Parsons Commercial Group enjoys the Gala. Parsons is a longtime Advocates supporter.