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Framingham Resident Honored by Human Services Agency

FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS, July 2, 2008 . . . Anita Monestime of Framingham received the Special Recognition Award from the Association for Community Living at its 55th annual dinner and awards ceremony.

Monestime is a program director with Advocates, Inc, a leading Massachusetts human services provider headquartered in Framingham. She manages Advocates' Shared Living, Adult Foster Care and Individual Support programs in Natick and serves as co-chairperson of the Massachusetts Shared Living Conference.

The award, presented jointly to Monestime and the Shared Living Conference, is given only on rare occasions. It is bestowed in recognition of outstanding support of people with developmental disabilities served by programs of the Association for Community Living.

"I feel very humbled and honored by this recognition," Monestime said. "I could not have done it without the dedication, compassion and highly motivated commitment of my colleague committee members."

Shared living is a model of residential support for people with developmental disabilities that begins with the wishes of the individual and his/her family or guardian. The mission of Advocates' Shared Living Program is to provide supports uniquely tailored to the wants and needs of each individual; to create opportunities to live, work and fully participate in communities of choice; and to provide the encouragement and hope to help realize dreams.

The Massachusetts Shared Living Conference, now in its fifteenth year, is the largest continuous event on developmental disability to focus solely on best practices of the shared living model. In recent years, the conference has focused its attention on helping families and other stakeholders, like the Department of

Mental Retardation, understand more fully how shared living works and why it may be the most appropriate living situation for their needs.

Originally from the Netherlands, Monestime earned a degree in social work from Holtlant College in Leiden. She also earned a B.A. in human services from the University of Massachusetts and a certificate in community human services management from Suffolk University. She joined Advocates, Inc. in 2002.

Established in 1975, Advocates Inc. is among the 20 largest human service organizations in Massachusetts and is a leading provider of outpatient mental health and substance abuse services; intensive home-based intervention for children and families; community education; job training and support; housing and benefits; advocacy services and community justice programs.

With a staff of over 800, Advocates, Inc. provides residential, vocational, respite and psychiatric emergency services in more than 100 sites in Eastern Massachusetts.

Additional information is available at www.advocatesinc.org.

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