



Employee News

Governor M. Jodi Rell

Commissioner Peter H. O'Meara

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DMR Nurse of the Year



(left to right) David Carlow, Director of Health Services, Olivia McGarry, Michael McGarry, R.N., DMR Nurse of the Year, MayAnn Walsh, Marie McGarry, Mike McGarry and Commissioner Peter H. O'Meara

Two department nurses and four private provider nurses received Nurse of The Year awards at the annual Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) Health Services Conference held at Rensselaer at Hartford on recently. Michael McGarry, R.N. and Joanne Coccia, L.P.N., both of West Region, were the public sector nurses honored. Mr. McGarry was also a finalist for the annual Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Nurse of the Year awards given out at the Capitol on May 10.

Private Sector nurses honored by the department were Tricia Poirier, R.N. from the Windsor Independent Living Association, Jaynette Martin, R.N. from Vinfen Corporation of Connecticut, Sharon Anderson, R.N. from Community Residences, Inc., and Sandra Parkin, R.N. from SARAH SENECA Residential Services.

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**DMR
SAFETY
CAMPAIGN
COMING
SOON**

West Region Second Annual Staff Picnic Held



West Region Employees gather for Second Annual Picnic in Waterbury.

Over 190 staff attended the Second Annual Staff Recognition Picnic hosted by the West Region Staff Recognition Committee. The event was held at the Ponte Club in Waterbury. The afternoon was full of sunshine, good food, great company, and music in the air. The event is held annually to honor the efforts of staff who work hard daily to support DMR clients in many different ways. The cost of the event is augmented by the fundraising efforts of the Committee.

Staff from all over the region enjoyed the





(Left to right) West Regional Director Dimitri E. Triantafillakis, Dr. Mona Amer, Fellow Yale University Medical School and Mr. Mark Wentzel, Director of International Services & Program Director at the University of Connecticut

The West Region's Cultural Competency Committee hosted a presentation entitled "Islam: Culture, tradition, religion and practical approaches to working with the Muslim Family."

Over one-hundred people attended the training with both DMR and private provider staff present. Mark Wentzel, Director of International Services & Program Director at the University of Connecticut gave a rich historical overview of Islam and delved into the underlying tenets of Islam. He clearly delineated the difference between the religion of Islam and the various cultural and ethnic groups who practice the Islam faith. He was followed by Dr. Mona Amer, a post-doctoral fellow at the Yale University School of Medicine. Dr. Amer's presentation specifically addressed the status of women in Islam, the characteristics of the American Muslim family and views on illness and disability. The audience was particularly responsive to the concrete suggestions made by Dr. Amer regarding proper "etiquette" tips and insights into working with Muslim families.

West Picnic *continued from page one*



afternoon playing music trivia games, softball, soccer, card games, watching professional dancers or just sitting back and listening to the music supplied by the DJ. Staff members repeatedly stated how much fun the afternoon was and how nice it was to see staff they don't get to see on a daily basis.



Thank you to all who attended and helped to make this event a huge success! And a special thanks to the members of the West Region's Staff Recognition Committee for all the work that went into making this special day a reality.

Nurse of the Year *continued from page one*

Commissioner Peter H. O'Meara and Director of Health Services David N. Carlow, R.N., gave out the awards. "The level of comfort you provide to family members who find you the source of information about their children, brothers, sisters etc. is to be lauded," Commissioner O'Meara said. "We honor you during National Nurses' Week for what you do every single day, hour and minute of your career."

Mr. Carlow spoke of the qualities shared by all of the nurses honored by the department. "Though the nominees were of different backgrounds, they all possessed special attributes which personify Developmental Disability Nursing Practice: Strength, Commitment and Compassion, which by the way are the focal points of this year's National Nurses' Week," he said.

Mr. McGarry was also named DMR Nurse of the Year and a finalist for the fifth annual Department of Administrative Services Nurse of the Year awards given out at the Capitol on May 10th. Dr. Mary Jane Williams, PhD., R.N., Associate Professor of Nursing at the University of Hartford was the guest speaker. "Nurses are the glue of the healthcare delivery system," she said. "Of all the degrees I hold, the letters next to my name I am proudest of are 'R.N.'" Patricia Knowles, R.N. of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services was named DAS Nurse of the Year at the ceremony.