

# DDS EMPLOYEE NEWS

Governor M. Jodi Rell

Commissioner Peter H. O'Meara

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## 80's Birthday Party!



(left to right) Rita Musorofiti, Beatrice Githens, and Mary Stewart celebrate their 80th birthday at the Ella Grasso Regional Center Pavilion.

It may have taken 80 years to celebrate in style but for three women, Rita Musorofiti, Beatrice Githens and Mary Stewart the wait was worth it. The women are part of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Public Support Living Program in the West Region. The event was organized by their case manager, Joanne Varrechio, with assistance from staff at the Supported Living Program, the Ella Grasso Center, and STAR, a private provider.

Ms. Musorofiti, Ms. Githens and Ms. Stewart all celebrated the milestone of turning 80 with an outdoor barbeque held at the Ella Grasso Center Pavilion. They were joined by their friends and other supported living participants. "Well at least now I know somebody loves me," said Ms. Stewart, when asked how she was enjoying her party.

DDS Case Manager Ms. Varrechio said, "This party was a wonderful opportunity for not just the women, but for all of us to celebrate such a milestone in their lives. It means so much to be able to give from our hearts and see their tears of joy."

## The Governors Care and Share Food Drive 2007

The numbers have been tallied and Department of Developmental Services (DDS) employees broke all records in donating to the *Governor's 2007 Care & Share Food Drive*.

Staff generously donated hundreds of pounds of non-perishable food and over \$5,400 dollars to Foodshare, Inc. and the Connecticut Food Bank.

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### Department of Developmental Services

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### Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

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Questions?

E-mail: Joan Barnish, Director of Communications ♦ [joan.barnish@ct.gov](mailto:joan.barnish@ct.gov) or call 860-418-6044

## Care and Share Food Drive 2007, *continued*

Central Office employees raised the most in dollars with \$5,400 while Southbury Training School (STS) employees topped the list of food donations with 1,703 pounds. The regions together donated over 200 pounds of food.

Each year, the Governor's Care & Share Food Drive collects items and donations from state employees for those in need. Over the years, DDS employees have been generous with their donations. For every dollar collected in cash, \$10 worth of non-perishable foods and hygiene items can be purchased by the food banks.

"Hunger continues to be a serious problem in our communities, with one out of ten of our neighbors around the state relying on private charities for some part of their groceries each year," said Foodshare President and Chief Operating Officer Gloria J. McAdam. "The Governor's Care and Share drive each year demonstrates the caring and generosity of our state employees, who really step up to the plate to help our hungry neighbors."

"I would like to thank this year's statewide coordinator Lori Hall, Central Office and Regional and Central Office coordinator; Latoya Ledbetter, Central Office; Linda Angelica (Schaefer) North; Eunice Rivera, West; Molli Hennessey, South; and Kathie Logan, STS, for their outstanding efforts in organizing and collecting the cash and items for the drive," said Commissioner Peter H. O'Meara. "Our efforts as an agency demonstrate our commitment to helping those less fortunate and your participation and generosity is much appreciated."

## Safety While Socializing *By Marcia Eager, LCSW, CEAP, EAP Coordinator*

You and a few of your co-workers decide to go out after work for a few drinks and dinner. There are some things to remember when leaving the restaurant. If you meet someone while at the restaurant, do not invite them home with you and do not accept a ride with them. **Be aware of your surroundings;** be alert to anyone who may be following you. Have your keys ready to open the door to your car. If you realize that someone is following you on your way home, use your cell phone to call for help or drive to a public place. Never go home, this will alert the other person where you live. Personal ads and meeting people on the internet is an increasingly popular way to meet people. If you agree to meet someone via one of these ways, remember some basic rules. Meet the person in a public place; make sure someone knows you are meeting this person. Or better yet, ask a friend to come along with you. Do not give out personal information. Someone who has mayhem on their mind can find out a lot with little information. Gather as much information about the other person as you can. If you feel uncomfortable about anything you learn, heed the warning! Drinking on the first meeting is not a good idea. Alcohol lowers your inhibitions and decreases your alertness. If you meet someone in a bar be wary of accepting a drink from them. Adding something to your drink is too easy to do. If the person is pressuring you into actions you are not ready for be suspect. Always have a way to get out of a situation. Most people who have had a bad experience while dating say they had a bad feeling somewhere in the beginning of the relationship and chose to ignore those feelings.

**TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS AND USE COMMON SENSE** - they are your best allies in these situations.

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