



## **2011 Social Worker of the Year** ***Marian Moldan, LCSW-R***

Marian Moldan has worked with children for twenty-five years as both a clinical social worker and special educator. Having overcome her own history of selective mutism, she specializes in the treatment of this challenging disorder. She maintains a private practice in Miller Place and Plainview, New York. She is a consultant for school districts on Long Island, speaks at international conferences, and has authored, “Selective Mutism and Self-Regulation”, *Clinical Social Work Journal* (2005).

Marian Moldan co-founded The Soren Center which is a program of Long Island Psychiatric in Roslyn, New York. The Soren Center is for the treatment of Childhood Anxiety Disorders. Marian Moldan developed one of the first group treatment models for selectively mute children and also worked with parents to put forth the first public service announcement on Selective Mutism in the United States.

She continues to serve as a consultant to a grassroots support and education group for parents of selectively mute children that meets bi-monthly in Hauppauge, New York. She also teaches the first credited course on Selective Mutism for teachers, speech pathologists, and school mental health professionals for SCOPE in Smithtown, New York.

Many grateful parents, one of whom is also clinical social worker, and administrators from the school districts with whom she has worked have all praised the remarkable impact Marian has had toward enhancing the lives of children with selective mutism and anxiety. This acknowledgement by the people she serves is a true testament to her work.

In addition to her professional endeavors, she has been married for thirty years to her wonderful husband, Rick and they have a terrific daughter, Lily. Marian is also known as an avid knitter among her friends and colleagues.

## **2011 Lifetime Achievement Award**

### ***Dr. Louise Skolnik***



Dr. Louise Skolnik, professor emerita Adelphi University and retired Nassau County Director of Human Services, has over the past 36 years exemplified, communicated and demonstrated the creative and transformative power of social work in her roles as educator, administrator, scholar, program developer and public servant. Dr. Skolnik has inspired generations of student practitioners and has developed nationally recognized programs designed to empower the most vulnerable members of society.

Dr. Skolnik is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Michigan. She received her MSW and DSW from Adelphi University. She served Adelphi as Associate Dean, professor in the masters and doctoral programs, and creator and director of the Adelphi Social Services Center. This unique university-based agency served as a field placement, research, and demonstration site. Among the 14 innovative social work programs launched at the Center were Services to Rape Victims, the Refugee Assistance Program, the National Committee in Support of Women in the Balkans, and the Adelphi Breast Cancer Support Program, one of the first in the nation designed by and for survivors.

In 2002, after 26 years as a social work educator, Dr. Skolnik was invited to join the administration of Nassau County Executive Thomas Suozzi. She first served as Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (2002-2004) and was later named as Nassau's Director of Human Services (2004-2009). In this position, she was responsible for staff, grant and program development for Health and Human Services and its "No Wrong Door" program. She designed and led the Case of the Week seminar, which was selected as a "promising practice" by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services for use by other NY State Counties, and was Principal Investigator of the federally-funded Family Support System of Care Project. Dr. Skolnik also was co-chair of the County Executive's Task Force on Family Violence, and co-chair of his Task Force on Homelessness. She created Scholars for Nassau, which fostered collaboration among local universities, their students, and County government. One Scholars for Nassau Program – a model MSW program taught by C. W. Post for County employees on site at the HHS building - is graduating its first class next year.

Dr. Skolnik's contributions have, on many occasions, had a direct and positive impact on existing programs and procedures. For example, her doctoral dissertation, which studied fair hearings in public assistance, influenced an administrative regulation change that benefited clients. Her Public Assistance and Your Client Manual became an empowerment tool used by professionals and clients in other parts of the state and country. Her contributions to "No Wrong Door" demonstrated social work principles in action and enhanced the appreciation of the profession among public officials. This initiative transformed a fractured system to one that viewed clients' needs holistically, injected compassion into service delivery, and facilitated access by co-locating seven

county agencies in one state-of-the-art site. Additionally, Dr. Skolnik helped to draft the platform on poverty for the 2008 Democratic convention. She has delivered well over 100 papers, lectures, and keynote presentations, and has written over 25 publications including the 2006 text, Social Welfare Programs: Narratives from Hard Times, which features the rarely-heard voices of recipients.

Dr. Skolnik's achievements have been recognized by the social work profession and beyond. For example, she was named the NASW Nassau Division Social Worker of the Year (2003) and she received the Nassau County Bar Association's Liberty Bell Award (2005). In September 2010 she was selected by the NASW Foundation as a *NASW Social Work Pioneer*.

Dr. Louise Skolnik continues to be actively involved in the profession she loves. She is an adjunct faculty member at Fordham University's Graduate School of Social Service, and a research associate with Hofstra University's National Center in Suburban Studies. She is secretary of the board of the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, and is a member (and former president) of the board of the Nassau County Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She remains passionately committed to social work, those it serves, and its vision of a humane and caring society.

## 2011 Agency of the Year



## Long Island

The Long Island Services of F·E·G·S Health and Human Services Systems is part of one of the largest and most diversified not-for-profit health and human services organizations in the United States. F·E·G·S provides comprehensive, in-depth services that heal, comfort, educate, rehabilitate and strengthen the communities and thousands of individuals and families they serve on Long Island each year. Their commitment to the highest quality of care is unprecedented. They are innovators in service delivery, building partnerships with government, businesses, and foundations; engaging communities to create networks to address a broad spectrum of critical social needs. Their passion for growth and development as an organization is evidenced not only through the expansion of their services or the number of facilities they operate but also by their investment in their employees. F·E·G·S Long Island is a major employer of social workers and serves as a rich learning environment for social work students. The professional development of their staff is supported through the provision of tuition reimbursement and study leave, continuing education reimbursement and conference leave as well as other health and well being benefits. F·E·G·S Long Island employs a workforce that is as diverse as the people the organization serves.

Through the services they provide, relationships they foster, opportunities they provide to their consumers and staff, their community engagement and action, F·E·G·S Long Island truly embodies the core values of the social work profession:

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence



#### **FEGS Copiague Multi-Service Center Dedication –**

The ribbon cutting marked the dedication of the renovated F.E.G.S Copiague Multi-Service Center. (L-R) Gail A. Magaliff, CEO, F.E.G.S; Gerald Halpern, Long Island Regional Director, UJA-Federation of New York; Judith Rose Margulies, F.E.G.S Board; Kathy Rosenthal, Vice President, Family Services and Long Island Regional Operations, F.E.G.S; Arlene Wittels, Chair, Long Island Services Committee, F.E.G.S Board; Harvey Rosenthal, Executive Director, New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services - NYAPRS; Virginia Cruickshank, Senior Vice President, Employment, Career & Workforce Development Services, F.E.G.S; Evelyn Roth, retired Executive, F.E.G.S Long Island Services; Jonas Waizer, Ph.D., Chief Operating Officer, F.E.G.S; Art Fleisher, Deputy Director, Suffolk County Department of Community Mental Hygiene; Howard Liebman, F.E.G.S Board; Ira Machowsky, Executive Vice President, F.E.G.S; and Amy Dorin, Senior Vice President, Behavioral Health Services, F.E.G.S.

## 2011 Social Work Student of the Year

### Bill Valente, MS

Bill was the new arrival to an extended Irish-Italian family from Staten Island, New York in 1971. Five years later, Mom, Dad, sis, brother and young Bill headed north to fulfill the dream of running a resort in the Catskills. After a few years of great campfires and lots of fun the snowstorm that collapsed the kitchen roof convinced the family to head south and they followed other family members to Sarasota, Florida to enjoy the sun, but the fit was not quite right, and finally in the early 1980s the family landed in Rhinebeck, New York and Dutchess County has become the home where his heart is.



Schools and subject matter which have contributed to Bill's education prior to Adelphi University include social dynamics and basic curriculum at Rhinebeck High School; liberal arts at University of Buffalo and Marist College; media and political science at Dutchess Community College and University at Albany; and a masters in web design as well as honing Spanish skills at the Universitat de Barcelona.

After nearly five years of teaching English, studying and living in Spain, Bill returned to the Hudson Valley and became the Community Program Manager at the Mediation Center of Dutchess County while also helping out at *La Voz*, a Spanish-language magazine which comes out of Bard College. It was then things crackled like wildfire as Bill started making and reestablishing connections in the community and he began his MSW studies. His community involvement brought Bill to live in the City of Poughkeepsie, where he has fallen in love with the Walkway Over the Hudson River, where you'll find him at least three or four times a week.

Through an internship at Vassar Brothers Medical Center, Bill helped to promote autism awareness and aided in the formation of an active LGBTQ advisory committee at the hospital. Meanwhile at the Mediation Center, Bill works to maintain strong bonds with local courts and the community by coordinating volunteer mediation service as well as supporting and growing peer mediation programs in Dutchess County's public schools. Bill is also hoping to develop a network of people trained in mental health services to help local people who may have barriers to accessing services they might benefit from because of language or legal documentation.

A social work education has provided Bill with a lens through which to see the beauty and resources of his community. If he can be a part of harnessing those resources as so many dedicated people are already doing, he will know that his college loans are all worth it.

Bill expects to graduate from the MSW program at Adelphi University's Hudson Valley campus this summer and sit for the licensing exam in the fall.