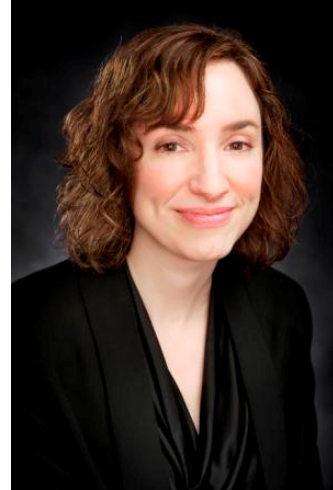


## **2012 Social Worker of the Year – Sherry Saturno, LCSW, DCSW**

Sherry Saturno, LCSW, DCSW serves as the Clinical Director of the Behavioral Health Center at the Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, NY. The Behavioral Health Center provides intensive inpatient and outpatient treatment for child, adolescent, and adult patients with severe mental illnesses. Sherry has programmatic and administrative oversight for the Psychiatric Social Work, Recreation and Expressive Therapy, Case Management, and Assertive Community Treatment departments.



Sherry is also a partner in an upcoming documentary film called *She Fi8hters* that will focus on clinical social workers helping women overcome issues such as negative self esteem and body image, depression, and abuse. Filming will begin in major cities throughout the U.S. in 2012. Sherry will be featured in the film and is facilitating social work recruitment for the project.

She was a guest on the national talk radio show *Open to Hope* this October to discuss helping people struggling with depression and grief cope with the holidays, and was a guest on WHUD NY radio this December to talk about stress management. Sherry is an advocate for social worker safety and in June her commentary on the death of fellow social worker Stephanie Moulton was published in the *NY Times*. Sherry's article *Violent Crime and Social Worker Safety* was published in *Social Work Today Magazine*, *NASW Specialty Practice Section Social and Economic Justice and Peace*, *NASW-NYS News Update*, and on *socialworkersspeak.org*. She has also interviewed such national figures as former White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers, author Lee Woodruff, *Fortune* editor Geoff Colvin, and CEO Chris Madden for the *Hudson Valley Business Journal* while serving as a freelance reporter.

Sherry has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Columbia University School of Social Work Alumni Association since 2007, and has served as a field instructor for Fordham and Pace Universities students interested in counseling. She has Master's degrees from Columbia University School of Social Work and Long Island University School of Management and Public Service. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and holds the following NASW credentials: Diplomate in Clinical Social Work, member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers, Qualified Clinical Social Worker, Certified Social Worker in Health Care, and Clinical Social Worker specializing in Gerontology.

She is a 2008 graduate of the Volunteer Center of the United Way's Leadership Westchester program, a ten-month development program that promotes social responsibility and volunteerism. She received the NASW-NY/Westchester County Social Worker of the Year Award in 2010, and was profiled in the Westchester based newspaper *Journal News* as a "Local Hero" in 2010 for her work with the elderly. Sherry has presented a business case for social work as a valuable tool in the workplace, and demonstrated an entrepreneurial side by combining her social work background with counseling, writing, and film efforts.

## **2012 Agency of the Year – Sunrise Counseling Center**



Sunrise Counseling Center, located in East Islip, New York was established in 1993 by Richard Scheinberg, LCSW, BCD. From the beginning, Mr. Scheinberg envisioned the Center as a “win-win-win” organization: Clients would love the services they received, practitioners would enjoy working in a warm, supportive environment and the agency itself would be able to survive financially as an independent social work organization, not needing to rely on outside sources for funding.

Mr. Scheinberg started Sunrise Counseling Center as a result of his fast-growing private practice. He opened the agency in humble surroundings, by subletting one room for just a few hours a week in another medical office. Gradually, year by year, the reputation of the Center spread and the practice grew into larger and larger quarters. As a result, Mr. Scheinberg is now proud to report that an agency driven by community needs has grown to become one of the largest independent counseling agencies in New York State. Now in its own professional building, Sunrise Counseling Center consists of over 45 clinicians (mostly social workers) and 11 clerical support personnel who in turn provide over 1700 sessions to individuals, couples and families each month.

The success of the organization has depended on core social work values: to make every effort to provide for each client’s individual need, regardless of their socioeconomic background, while utilizing and collaborating with every other agency in the surrounding community. To that end, Sunrise has reached out to coordinate services with every

church, school and hospital within 20 miles of the office. Staff clinicians also work on site in other facilities, such as colleges, nursing homes and group homes.

In order to make quality services available to as many people as possible, psychotherapy fees and psychiatric consultations are among the lowest in the area, even in comparison to agencies that depend on public funding to operate. In special circumstances, Sunrise also offers pro bono services: At the Center, both clinical and clerical staff members volunteer their services for many projects in the area that serve the mentally ill, underprivileged and homeless. Sunrise Counseling Center is also dedicated to supporting several charitable organizations throughout the year with cash donations. Social work principles and values are always utilized in the ongoing work to promote the welfare of the community as well as preserve the dignity of each individual client that is served.

Recognizing that any agency is only as good as the “members of the team” who provide these services, Mr. Scheinberg has made every effort to offer each staff member a beautiful, positive and supportive environment in which to work. Every clinician and clerical worker is valued for his or her specific talents and expertise. In appreciation, Mr. Scheinberg sponsors annual summer celebrations as well as winter holiday parties for all to enjoy. This offers everyone a fun break from daily responsibilities and an opportunity to relax, dine and dance together- and even a chance to win some special prizes!

In summary, Sunrise Counseling Center was founded with a solid commitment to social work values and practice. Over the past 18 years it has become a “win-win-win” environment for all of those who serve and who are served in the Long Island community. Mr. Scheinberg feels blessed that he has been able to attract some of the most talented and dedicated professional and support personnel in the area to serve on his staff. He is also very honored that his agency, Sunrise Counseling Center, has become the recipient of the NASW, New York State chapter 2012 Agency of the Year Award. But most of all, Mr. Scheinberg is humbled and gratified that so many members of the Long Island community have come to Sunrise Counseling Center to seek help at times in their lives that they feel the most confused, fearful and vulnerable. Their sacred trust is a most precious gift!



## **2012 Public Citizen of the Year – Karen La Pera**

I was born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and educated in the Philadelphia Catholic School system. Soon after graduating from school I was married and had two beautiful sons, Michael and Brian. When my son Michael was seven years old, he was diagnosed with a brain tumor. At that moment our lives changed. I spent most of my adult life raising my two boys and devoting the extra time and energy needed to raise a handicapped child. Advocating for my son through the many systems

involving the disabled was a huge challenge. My son Michael attended St. Katherine's Day School, a school for those with physical and mental disabilities, until he was 21 years old. For most parents, graduation is a cause for celebration. For a child with a developmental disability, the difficult part was just beginning.

As graduation day was quickly approaching, Karen and her friends Constance and Michael Solomon realized that there were very few job opportunities for the disabled. They began meeting at one another's homes once a month searching for employment opportunities for their children. One of Connie and Mike's good fortune was the prior friendship they had with Ken Langone, co-founder of The Home Depot. With Ken's backing, Ken's Kids was born. Now called Ken's Krew, Inc. (KKI), it is a nonprofit corporation that has provided vocational training and job placement services to young adults with disabilities since 1997.

My dream was to help make the world a better place for young adults with disabilities. Although I am not a social worker per se, my concern for my son helped me to develop persistence, determination and devotion to find a way to not only make his life meaningful, but for hundreds of other families who were challenged with similar circumstances. I was the first employee of Ken's Kids and I now serve as the Director of Vocational Training. Over 240 young adults with disabilities have found inspired employment at Ken's Krew with the assistance of corporate partners - The Home Depot, Inc., CVS Caremark and most recently, Fairway Markets. The program is currently operating in five states, Pennsylvania (where the program started), Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and New York.

The work necessary to establish what these young people needed in the way of support to be successful in the workplace has not only been challenging professionally but has also become a personally rewarding life experience. Working with our corporate partners to expand management and staff's understanding of these young people has achieved a two-fold benefit: One, Ken's Krew and its corporate partners enhance their organization by exposing the entire workforce and the general public, which is their customer base, to persons with disabilities, demonstrating these young adults can become viable, contributing members of society. And two, the pride they show in their jobs and the sheer joy at being active members of society and eagerness to work, actually has enhanced the lives of all with whom they come in contact, be it management, staff or customers.

I had a vision and persevered, accomplishing more than what I originally set out to do, always attempting to act in concert with the professional ethics and values of the social work profession. I hope to improve the quality of life for young people and their families. I have taught many to understand, accept and view the disabled population as a positive in their lives, rather than people to avoid. I have devoted my life to Ken's Krew, Inc.



## **2012 Student of the Year – V. Paige Walker**

Paige Walker is currently pursuing her MSW at Binghamton University with a certificate in Geriatric Social Work. She cultivated this interest in working with the aging population through her involvement with the Hartford Partnership Program in Aging Education as a Hartford Fellow during the 2010-2011 academic year. Her work as a fellow focused on supportive case management services for uninsured older adults with chronic illnesses in rural communities through the Rural Health Network of South Central New York. This year Paige is a fellow with the Safe Healthy Attitudes Require Education (SHARE) Project, which focuses on anti-bully education and family engagement in schools. As a high school social work intern, she provides support to students in an individual and group setting, as well as advises a student-led anti-bully group. In addition, Paige is involved with the SHARE's empowerment-based family engagement project. Most recently, she received a grant for her Curriculum Development Institute proposal to infuse aging into a traditionally non-aging field placement. Paige will be facilitating a custodial grandparent support group during the spring semester for families within the school district in which she interns.



As a student in Binghamton University's Social Work Department, Paige has been involved as a student representative on the Field Curriculum Committee, Vice President of the Social Work Graduate Student Organization, and social work representative on the College of Community and Public Affairs Student Advisory Committee. She also assisted with new student orientation by presenting on the Graduate Student Organization and life as a student in the department, as well as implemented an aging sensitivity training. Additionally, Paige coordinated volunteer opportunities and training efforts during the recent devastating flood in Binghamton this past September.

Before pursuing her masters in social work, Paige earned her BA in Geology from Bryn Mawr College. She continues her involvement as Co-Chair of Bryn Mawr Graduates of Last Decade Alumnae Association Committee where she works with the College and Alumnae Office to provide social connecting and alumnae community building events, increase recent alumni volunteerism within the college network, and encourage participation in annual giving.

To complete her certificate in Geriatric Social Work, Paige is currently working on her capstone project focusing on the attitudes of direct care services providers toward gay and lesbian elders. She would like to continue to pursue research in the area of LGBT aging while pursuing a PhD in social work in the future.