



Press Release

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ANCOR Foundation Announces 2006 Community Builder Award Recipients in Provider and Community Member Categories

(Washington, DC –February 13, 2006) – The ANCOR Foundation is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2006 Community Builder Awards—Dakota Communities of Eagan, MN in the Provider category and The Town of Littleton, NH in the Community Member Category. The ANCOR Foundation’s vision is to see people with disabilities leading meaningful, productive, personally satisfying and well-supported lives in communities of their choice. The ANCOR Foundation Community Builder Award recognizes outstanding achievement by both services providers and community members in creating communities of inclusion for all Americans.

Driven by the idea that people with disabilities should live and play alongside their families and neighbors, Dakota Communities Therapeutic Recreation Program has spent over thirty years developing inclusion training, tools, and community supports for parents, individuals with developmental disabilities, and organizations in the greater Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area. By educating the public and building community partnerships, Dakota Communities Therapeutic Recreation Program has helped make life-long changes in the lives of people with disabilities while changing societal attitudes and breaking down decades of barriers. Individuals in this program commonly attend troop meetings, adventure weekends, horseback riding clubs, and can be found volunteering throughout the community. Such experiences continue to prove that real living for people with developmental disabilities can happen when using creativity and determination.

The Town of Littleton has helped create a model community where persons who are aging and others with disabilities are encouraged to fully participate in community life, free of the physical, social, policy, and attitudinal barriers that often prevent these groups from thriving. By sponsoring forums for local businesses on hiring persons with disabilities, developing fact sheets on disability issues, and making the Town of Littleton’s buildings and programs more accessible, The Town of Littleton has provided a model that can be replicated in any community with the desire and initiative to create this type of social change.

The ANCOR Foundation’s 2006 Community Builder Awards will be presented at ANCOR’s Annual 2006 Management Practices Conference at a luncheon on March 20th from 12:30-1:45PM.

The luncheon will be followed by a special session where Dakota Communities and The Town of Littleton NH will provide an overview of their programs and how they have succeeded in building inclusive communities in Minnesota and New Hampshire.

Today there are nearly 8 million Americans with mental retardation and developmental disabilities, many of whom rely on private supports and services. There are more than 430,000 individuals served in residential settings nationwide where people with developmental disabilities live productive and meaningful lives - working and volunteering in their own communities. More than 108,000 of these Americans hold jobs and contribute to the communities where they live, yet even today many American communities do not allow our citizens with disabilities to fully participate in the fabric of American life.

The ANCOR Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization created to support the development of innovative program concepts and identify and disseminate information that will improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. The Community Builder Award recipient is selected annually from peer nominated organizations who have taken the lead and achieved notable success in building communities of inclusion for all.

The ANCOR Foundation is affiliated with the American Network for Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), a 501(c)6 trade association representing private providers that serve and support people with disabilities. To learn more about ANCOR, the ANCOR Foundation and the ANCOR Foundation Community Builder Awards please contact The ANCOR Foundation, 1101 King Street, #380, Alexandria, VA 22314. 703-535-7850 or online at <http://www.ancor.org/2004/foundation/>.

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