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Actress Cheryl Hines Headlines UCP of Central Florida Gala



United Cerebral Palsy of Central Florida welcomed Cheryl Hines, the Emmy® nominated star of HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm," as the mistress of ceremonies at its 50th anniversary black-tie gala in Orlando March 12.

The event, which raised more than \$180,000 for the affiliate's programs and services for people with disabilities, honored architect Dan Tarczynski for his design work on behalf of the affiliate.

Hines, a native of Tallahassee and a graduate of the University of Central Florida, donated an autographed "Curb Your Enthusiasm" script and other items to the event's silent auction.

She also toured UCP facilities with her brother and 2-year-old nephew who has cerebral palsy. To learn more about UCP of Central Florida, contact affiliate Executive Director Ilene Wilkins at iwilkins@ucpcdc.org.

Texas Affiliate Announces Integrated Section 811 Housing Project with Private Developer

Proposal to Slash Section 811 Funds Would Prevent Similar Projects

By Jim Baker

March 15, 2005



United Cerebral Palsy of Texas and Tekoa Partners, Ltd., unveiled Austin's first fully integrated Section 811 housing project for people with disabilities on March 5.

United Cerebral Palsy affiliates are national leaders in creating unique housing opportunities for people with disabilities, including home-ownership. UCP of Los Angeles, UCP of Rhode Island, UCP of Greater Birmingham, and many others have developed affordable accessible housing for people with disabilities using Section 811 funds.

The UCP of Texas partnership will purchase units in The Boulevard, an existing condominium development in Austin, and lease them to very-low income people with disabilities and their families at affordable rates.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program provided \$413,000 to support the project. The City of Austin Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department also contributed more than \$180,000.



The units purchased by UCP of Texas are scattered throughout the development, enabling residents with disabilities to be fully integrated in their neighborhood rather than segregated in their own "special" location.

"People thrive when they are truly a part of the community," said UCP of Texas Executive Director Jean Langendorf. "UCP of Texas has always strongly supported full integration for people with disabilities, and this project is born of that philosophy."

Tekoa Partners, the complex's private developer, was the key to the project. Working with UCP of Texas, the company responded to the affiliate's vision of integrated, affordable, and accessible housing.

"We believe public-private partnerships, such as this one, will play an increasingly important role in the future of affordable housing in Texas and throughout the nation," added Langendorf.

Administration's 2006 Budget Proposal Would Prevent Texas Project

The Bush administration's fiscal year 2006 budget proposal would slash Section 811 by nearly 50%, entirely eliminating program funding for the development of new housing for people with significant disabilities.

If approved by Congress, the cuts would prevent public-private housing projects like the UCP of Texas development.

Section 811 is the only federal program that produces affordable and accessible housing for non-elderly people with disabilities.

"United Cerebral Palsy is working very hard to prevent these cuts," said Stephen Bennett, President and CEO of United Cerebral Palsy. "We recognize that Section 811 funding is vital to developing affordable housing for our consumers."

Historically, HUD has spent 75% of Section 811 funds to provide interest-free capital advances to nonprofit sponsors who develop fully accessible rental housing such as independent living projects, condominium units, and small group homes, many of which offer voluntary supportive services for people with severe disabilities and very-low income.

However, the administration's fiscal year 2006 proposal would zero-out funds for new development.

"People with significant disabilities who have very-low income simply cannot find fully accessible housing units in the private market today," said Liz Savage, Director of Health and Housing Policy for the Disability Policy Collaboration.

Savage added, "Without federal funding for the development of new housing, many individuals with significant disabilities will have no other option than to live in institutions, nursing homes, or even homeless shelters."

To learn more about the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 811 program, as well as the administration's fiscal year 2006 budget proposal, see the Disability Policy Collaboration Fact Sheet on Housing for People with Disabilities.

NEWS AND NOTES

Disability Policy Collaboration

Take Action Now!

Urge your U.S. Senators to support the Smith-Bingaman Amendment, which will strike \$15 billion in proposed Medicaid cuts.

From this week's *Capitol Insider*:

The House and Senate Budget Committees passed their FY 2006 budget resolutions. The House resolution instructs the Energy and Commerce Committee to produce cuts of \$20 billion over 5 years in its programs. If the House resolution is adopted in its current form, it is expected that this would result in at least \$15 billion in cuts to Medicaid over 5 years.

Representatives Lee Terry (R-NE) and Lois Capps (D-CA) introduced the Direct Support Professional Fairness and Security Act of 2005 (H.R. 1264). Read the UCP press release supporting the Direct Support Professional bill.

Both Houses of Congress passed bills to reauthorize Vocational Education programs.

Read *Capitol Insider* for a complete briefing of the week's most important public policy events in Washington, D.C.

Recommended Articles

Bill Would Raise Pay for Disabled Care

By Jake Thompson

Omaha World-Herald

March 11, 2005

The Omaha World-Herald reports the introduction of the Direct Support Professional Fairness and Security Act, a federal bill aimed at equalizing compensation among the nation's direct support professionals. Congressman Lee Terry (R-NE) is leading the charge for the legislation with Congresswoman Lois Capps (D-CA).

Finding a Job Brings Music to Her Ears

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

March 12, 2005

Kara Napieralski, a young woman with mental and visual disabilities, talks to the Journal Sentinel about getting a job with the help of United Cerebral Palsy of Southeastern Wisconsin.

News Headlines

Michigan Gov. Proposes Tax to Generate Medicaid Funding

Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm (D) has proposed a tax on physicians' gross receipts to generate additional federal matching funds for the state's Medicaid program, the Associated Press reports. According to state officials, if the tax on physicians were 1%, it would generate revenue of about \$94 million, which then would be matched by federal funds totaling \$70.4 million.

Idaho Lawmakers Vote for Emergency Medicaid Funds

The Idaho Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee unanimously voted last week to appropriate \$15.5 million in emergency funding to maintain the state Medicaid program through June 30, the Idaho Statesman reports. The state House Ways and Means Committee also introduced a bill that would require Medicaid beneficiaries to contribute a \$1 co-payment for prescription drugs.

Pennsylvania Lawmakers Debate Medicaid Cuts and Caps

The Pennsylvania state Senate and House last week held budget hearings on Governor Ed Rendell's (D) proposed cuts to Medicaid, the Philadelphia Inquirer reports. The Rendell administration says the cuts are needed to close an estimated \$1.2 billion gap in the state budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The most controversial changes would reduce Medicaid coverage for hospital admissions to two per year and physician visits to 18 a year, limit coverage for prescriptions to six per month, and cap coverage for medical equipment to \$5,000 annually.

Mississippi Governor Vetoes HAVA Delay

Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour (R) has vetoed an elections bill that would have allowed counties more time to comply with accessibility requirements of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). In his veto message, Barbour wrote that the state simply does not have the authority to change the deadline laid out by the federal legislation and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC). If states do not meet federal deadlines, they could lose HAVA funds.

Pennsylvania Voter Coalition Chronicles Complaints

The Pennsylvania Voters Coalition, which includes United Cerebral Palsy of Pennsylvania, has released a report citing a laundry list of complaints about polling places from the 2004 election ranging from insufficient numbers of voting machines to physical barriers that prevented people with disabilities from voting. The coalition found that most problems were attributed to inadequate staffing and training of poll workers, lack of voter information and education, and poor administration at the state and county levels.

Attorney Settles Suit Against NBC's Apprentice

An attorney with quadriplegia settled his lawsuit against the producers of NBC's "The Apprentice" after they agreed to make clear the program accepts applications from people with disabilities. James Schottel, Jr., sued the show's producers claiming the online application requiring applicants be in "excellent physical health" unlawfully discriminated against people with disabilities.

2005 Annual Conference Update

The preconference work sessions on Wednesday, June 22, will include:

- UCP HomeAbility Partnership with Fannie Mae, for program participants
- Infinitec Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Loan Program
- Infinitec Early Intervention, Assistive Technology, and Web-based Training
- Foster Care for Children with Disabilities, in association with Children Rights
- Preparing for CARF Accreditation

Also, Wednesday's program will kick off with a golf tournament at the resort. For more information, contact Ed Benton at (501) 224-6067 or ed@ucpcark.org.

Hotel reservations can be made online today, by visiting the Arizona Biltmore Web site. Use the code "UNITEDC" to receive the UCP group rate.

Stay tuned for updates each week in UCPeople.



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