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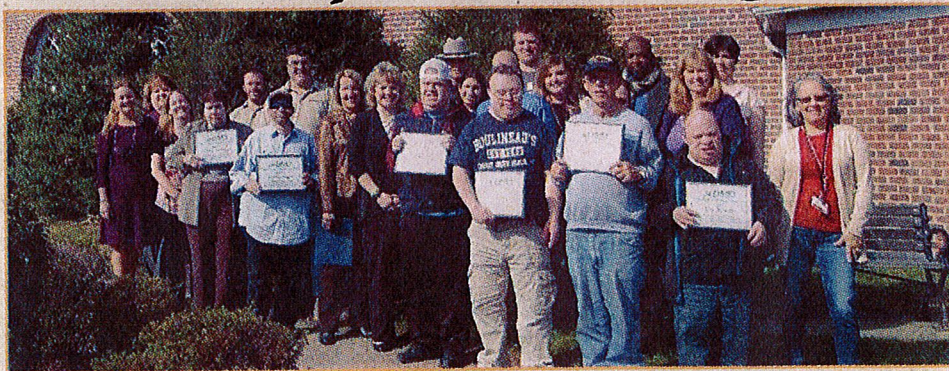
# The PUTNAM Examiner

Serving All of Putnam County

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SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

## *Putnam Hosts 4th Annual Disability Mentoring Day*



COURTESY OF COUNTY EXEC. OFFICE

About a dozen individuals with special needs spent the day working within one of Putnam County Government's departments on Wednesday, Oct. 21 as part of the fourth annual Disability Mentoring Day. Coordinated for the fourth year by Tina Cornish-Lauria, Executive Director of CAREERS for People with Disabilities, the annual event is much-anticipated by County staff and clients from participating agencies. "Disability Mentoring Day breaks down barriers—both the ones that society contrives with preconceived notions and the ones that each one of us develops of our own limits," said Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell. "Every year I hear from the departments how mentees exceed expectations and I see how proud the participants from CAREERS are to accomplish goals. Disability Mentoring Day brings awareness to the community and confidence to those with disabilities. This October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month, a time to celebrate individuals with disabilities in the workplace as well as spread awareness of the importance of hiring people with disabilities. This year's theme is "My Disability is One Part of Who I Am." "Working with Putnam County helps bring attention to a workforce available that business owners in the community may be overlooking," said Cornish-Lauria. "The goals of Disability Mentoring Day are fourfold: to enhance internship and employment opportunities for people with disabilities; to dispel employers' fears about hiring people with disabilities; to promote disability as a central component of diversity recruitment for a more inclusive workforce and to increase confidence among students and job seekers with disabilities." County departments participating in the program include Consumer Affairs, County Clerk, Finance, Health, Highways, Information Technology, Personnel, Purchasing, Senior Resources, the Sheriff's Office and Youth Bureau.