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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MARY FITZGERALD RECEIVES AWARD AT NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH BREAKFAST**

**Valhalla, NY** - - CAREERS for People with Disabilities, Inc. (CAREERS) announces that one of their clients, Mary Fitzgerald, received the prestigious Employee Longevity Award at this year's Achievement Awards Breakfast. Mary has worked for Westchester County for 23 years. The breakfast has been held annually in October since 1986 to celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month. It is sponsored by the Westchester County Office of the Disabled and the Westchester Employment Network (WEN), a consortium of organizations that serve individuals with disabilities.

Hundreds of people, including County Commissioner Andy Spano and Commissioner of Finance Kathy Thorsberg, representing public agencies, employers, and disabled individuals in Westchester County attended the event held Friday, October 2, 2009 at the Doral Arrowwood Conference Center in Rye Brook, NY. Similar events are held on the same day throughout the country in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month to recognize the workforce accomplishments of people with disabilities.

Mary Fitzgerald, the sole recipient of the award, is an office assistant in Westchester County's Finance Department. She began working for the county as a summer seasonal employee at Rye Playland and has worked in various county positions for 23 years. "Today, it's unusual to have the same employer throughout one's career," CAREERS' Executive Director Christina Cornish-Lauria says. "Despite her disability, has overcome many challenges and diligently provided her many skills to Westchester County government offices for over two decades."

Since 1987, CAREERS has provided job placement and support services to people with disabilities in Westchester and Putnam Counties and made **over 1,700 individual job placements and provided services to thousands of people**. CAREERS' mission is to insure that all disabled individuals find sustained, meaningful employment in the communities in which they live. They work one-on-one with each client and employer to facilitate ongoing success in the workplace, and help those with disabilities reach their maximum level of self-support and self-reliance. All of CAREERS services are provided free of charge to clients and employers.

For additional information about how CAREERS helps disabled individuals, or employers in need of qualified help, contact CAREERS' Valhalla office, which serves central and lower Westchester, at

914-741-8500, or the Carmel office, which serves northern Westchester and Putnam Counties,  
at  
845-225-8007.

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## **PHOTO CUTLINE**

Mary Fitzgerald, right, with Commissioner of Finance Kathy Thorsburg, CPA received the prestigious Employee Longevity Award at this year's Achievement Awards Breakfast. Mary is a resident of Hastings-on-Hudson. The breakfast, sponsored by the Westchester County Office of the Disabled and the Westchester Employment Network (WEN), a consortium of organizations that serve individuals with disabilities, has been held annually in October since 1986 to celebrate National Disability Awareness Month.