

# News Release



## For Immediate Release – March 16, 2010

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### Richland Newhope and local resident win statewide honors

(Mansfield, OH) –Richland Newhope and Frank Russo of Mansfield have been honored by Ohio Public Images (OPI) for their efforts in 2009 to support people with developmental disabilities.

Both were recognized at an awards luncheon Monday, March 15, that was held during the winter conference of the Ohio Superintendents of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities (OSCBDD) in Columbus.

Richland Newhope received the top honor, an Award of Excellence, for overall efforts to increase awareness about the agency and how individuals served by Newhope contribute to the community. Activities include the annual Richland County Third Grade Coloring Contest, Community Awareness Day, a charity golf outing, and a breakfast to recognize businesses in the community that employ people with developmental disabilities.

“It’s Richland Newhope’s mission to support people with developmental disabilities to live, work and participate in the community,” said Jane Imbody, Director of Community Relations. “One way we do this is by increasing public awareness about our agency and those we serve. We are thrilled that our efforts have received statewide recognition.”

Frank Russo was honored with an Award of Excellence for his efforts to support individuals with developmental disabilities. He was nominated by Richland Newhope.

“I was overwhelmed that I received this award,” says Russo. “It was very much appreciated. Without the support of my wife, Polly, I could never do all of this.”

Since 2005, with the support of some anonymous donors and local businesses, Russo has provided a Christmas party, gifts, and food baskets for hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities. He also actively seeks donations of wheelchairs, walkers, and other items for Richland Newhope’s Equipment Lending Center.

Russo’s generosity doesn’t end there. He also works with disabled veterans through the Veterans Service Commission and is involved with United Way of Richland County, Parent Aide, Catholic Charities, and Friendly House.

The annual Public Awareness Awards, sponsored by Ohio Public Images, are designed to honor individuals and organizations throughout Ohio who, through their exceptional efforts, have succeeded in creating a greater understanding of people with developmental disabilities. The awards are judged by impartial professionals in the communications and developmental disabilities fields.

OPI is a non-profit organization that promotes positive perceptions and understanding of people with developmental disabilities. Jane Imbody is the president-elect of the OPI board.

Richland Newhope (Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities) currently supports nearly individuals and their families through Early Intervention, Preschool, Adult, Residential, Therapy, Transportation and other support programs.

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