



Amalia Duarte
Public Affairs Director
ECLC of NJ
Cell: (973-902-8390)
E-mail: aduarte@eclcofnj.org

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Summit Resident is Named ECLC of New Jersey's First 'Volunteer of the Year'

CHATHAM – A heartwarming video featuring P.R.I.D.E. clients, an inspiring poem and moving speeches were all part of a tribute that tried to capture the impact of a man who walked away from a lucrative Wall Street career and strode into the doors of ECLC of New Jersey's program for adults with special needs called P.R.I.D.E.

For the past three years, Richard Gatward of Summit has spent several days each week at the P.R.I.D.E. Center in Chatham supporting clients in their daily activities, leading yoga classes, teaching new skills and driving clients in a van, like any other staff member.

In addition to this selfless volunteerism, Gatward has served on the Board of Trustees as the Treasurer, since 2006, and he and wife Katherine organized and hosted an event in their home in 2010 that raised \$84,000 for P.R.I.D.E., allowing it to nearly double its capacity and to purchase two vans to bring clients into the community.

For this incredible passion and dedication, ECLC named Gatward its first ever "Volunteer of the Year." In making the presentation at ECLC's annual Board meeting on May 22, that title didn't seem to suit Executive Director Bruce Litinger of Short Hills, who joked, "Richard Gatward isn't just the 'Volunteer of the Year, ' he is the 'Volunteer of the Century!' Tonight, we honor our most outstanding, remarkable and highest achieving volunteer who works some weeks almost the full week and earns not a dime for this time."

Gatward said this recognition is more meaningful than any received during his professional career. "I feel truly honored to receive this wonderful award," said Gatward. "The kindness, dedication

and selflessness of the entire ECLC family is an inspiration to me. My life has been tremendously enriched interacting with the clients at P.R.I.D.E. I am thankful to be a small part of such an extraordinary organization."

Gatward of Summit joined the Board of Directors in 2006, after hearing of the nonprofit through a co-worker. At the time, he was looking to connect with a local organization that supports people with disabilities, and it was perfect timing because ECLC was about to expand its adult services by launching the P.R.I.D.E. program.

When the P.R.I.D.E. Center opened in 2008 in Chatham, he began volunteering on occasion, as his busy work schedule permitted. Two years later, when he took a sabbatical from the high-pressured world of Wall Street, he knew that he wanted to hang up the suits, pull on a pair of blue jeans and commit to "working" at P.R.I.D.E. Gatward has no formal educational training in the field of special needs, yet, from his first day as a volunteer, he has been a natural, relating to clients in a respectful manner and gaining their trust and friendship.

About ECLC

Established in 1970, ECLC of New Jersey offers lifelong services -- education, enrichment and employment -- to children and adults with special needs, including those diagnosed with autism, Down syndrome and severe learning and/or language disabilities. ECLC has schools in Ho-Ho-Kus and Chatham enrolling more than 300 students.

As students prepare to graduate, transition specialists from ECLC's affiliate Community Personnel Services (CPS), take over, guiding them into the next chapter of their lives. CPS specialists help students find meaningful jobs in their communities and provide ongoing support and advocacy in the workplace.

Graduates who are not ready for work are guaranteed a spot in the P.R.I.D.E. program, where they enhance their independent living skills, socialize with peers and volunteer. A defining hallmark of P.R.I.D.E. is that clients choose their activities and are rarely in the center all day. P.R.I.D.E. Centers are located in Paramus and Chatham. Learn more about ECLC at www.eclcofnj.org.