

Voice



At a Glance: The Henry Viscardi Achievement Awards



At a ceremony in New York City last December, The Viscardi Center proudly announced ten recipients of the 2016 Henry Viscardi Achievement Awards. Honoring the legacy and spirit of the Center's founder, Dr. Henry Viscardi, Jr., the annual awards are bestowed upon exemplary leaders with disabilities who, through the example of their professional accomplishments and advocacy efforts, are reshaping societal perceptions and breaking down barriers.

These remarkable men and women hail from six different countries, and have distinguished backgrounds in academia,

healthcare, major league sports, government, and non-profit and corporate sectors. They're making a difference by empowering women with disabilities in Pakistan; campaigning for landmine victims in Colombia; mainstreaming disability in Japan; influencing healthcare policies that benefit prosthetic users here in the U.S.; guiding wounded veterans toward recovery; and more. Most importantly, they're inspiring a whole new generation to stand up for disability rights at home and abroad.

Read more about the recipients at ViscardiCenter.org/HVAA.

2016 VISCARDI AWARD RECIPIENTS



Saima Aslam
National Forum of Women with Disabilities
Rawalpindi, Pakistan



Senarath Attanayake
Uva Provincial Council
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Peggy Chenoweth
Author/Advocate/Blogger
Gainesville, Virginia



PJ Edington
IBM Government & Regulatory
Affairs Executive
Washington, D.C.



Hiroyasu Itoh
Chairman, Japan Abilities
Tokyo, Japan



Jim Mayer
U.S. Army/Vietnam Veteran (ret.),
Walter Reed Hospital
Washington, D.C.



Dave McGill
VP, Reimbursement & Compliance, Ossur
Centerport, New York



Curtis Pride
Former MLB player/MLB's Ambassador
for Disability Inclusion
New York City



Juan Pablo Salazar Salamanca
President, National Council on Disability
and Presidential Advisor
Bogotá, Colombia



Dr. Louise Sinden-Carroll
International Federation of Hard
of Hearing People
Auckland, New Zealand

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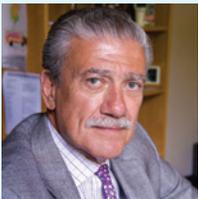
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COMMENTARY

America... we're 56 million strong — and have rights, too.

One in five Americans has a congenital or acquired, visible or non-visible, disability.

People with disabilities are America's largest minority group and the only one anyone can join at any time due to an accident or illness.

Yet... Only a mere 20% are part of the labor force.

1 in 4 people with disabilities live in poverty.

Physical assaults are double for those with a disability.

Why, then, is there no public outcry for the blatant disregard for the civil and human rights of people with disabilities?

In early January, the vulnerability and safety of people with disabilities was thrust into the news as a result of a horrifying assault in Chicago on a gentleman with a mental health disability. There will be many headlines in the coming weeks about the proposed cuts to Medicaid that could have a devastating effect on hundreds of thousands within the disability community, including Viscardi students and program participants. An effect that will negatively impact their healthcare and their lives.

Closer to home, we will once again have no choice but to storm Albany this spring to fight for critical funding that the Henry Viscardi School at The Viscardi Center needs to operate, so that medically fragile children with severe physical disabilities have a place to receive a high-quality education — just like any other child. Our old and new friends in the Senate and Assembly have proven their support for our school. Once again, we will need their help.

Only time will tell what the new administration has in store for the people who need its support the most. But we hope it will recognize that individuals with disabilities are entitled to the same education, employment, and healthcare opportunities as any other American. That we, too, are employable, and can be homeowners and taxpayers, too — and very much part of the essential fabric of our communities.

What we ask of you is that you stay involved and take action on behalf of children and adults with disabilities. You never know when you may be that 56 million and one.

John D'Amico
President & CEO



S&P Global:
Setting the Standard for Fortune 500



S&P Global

On our mission to improve disability employment on Long Island and beyond, we're grateful to have some global influence in our corner. S&P Global influence, that is. We honored S&P Global's commitment to workplace diversity and inclusion at our annual Golf Outing fundraiser in September for good reason: S&P Global is a multinational company with world-class corporate citizenship standards.

S&P Global keeps the dialogue on disability going through EASE (Enable, Achieve, Succeed, Empower), one of nine employee resource groups set on attracting diverse talent and supporting professionals with different abilities internally and externally. Internally, the group implements appropriate skill-building workshops and hosts guest speakers relevant to its employees with disabilities, as well as family members and caretakers touched by disability at home.

Externally, it works beside Viscardi's vocational training and employment placement services programs; conducting mock interviews, reviewing resumes, and equipping job seekers with vital career-ready skills. The company also participates in Emerging Leaders (EL) — a now year-round program of the National Business & Disability Council (NBDC) at The Viscardi Center that places high-achieving college students with disabilities into competitive internships in his or her chosen field.

S&P Global isn't stopping there. On April 12, the company is sponsoring our Career Fair for People and Veterans with Disabilities, which connects qualified job candidates with disabilities — including veterans — to over forty Long Island companies of various sizes and industries.

Diverse workplaces are stronger workplaces. Join S&P Global at our upcoming Career Fair for People and Veterans with Disabilities. It's free to exhibit. For more information, call 516.465.1546.

Meet Frank

A life built on Viscardi



When the Town of Hempstead unveiled a historical marker at the original site of Abilities, Inc. —the earliest incarnation of what is now

a part of The Viscardi Center — it was a moving moment for all in attendance. But it was especially meaningful for Frank Pfister, one of the first people employed at the site when it opened its doors sixty five years ago.

Frank began using a wheelchair after contracting polio at a young age, and like many with a disability during the 1950s, struggled to land steady work. It wasn't until

Dr. Henry Viscardi, Jr. offered him a position in the shipping and receiving department within a modest garage in West Hempstead that his life took turn for the better.

“Dr. Viscardi was the only person who was willing to give me a chance back then,” explained Frank. “He changed everything for me.”

Founded by Dr. Viscardi in 1952, the organization provided groundbreaking employment opportunities for wounded war veterans and people with disabilities, subcontracting manufacturing projects for Grumman Aircraft, General Electric, IBM, and the U.S. Department of Defense. Services have since expanded to include work readiness, job placement, and school to work transition programs.

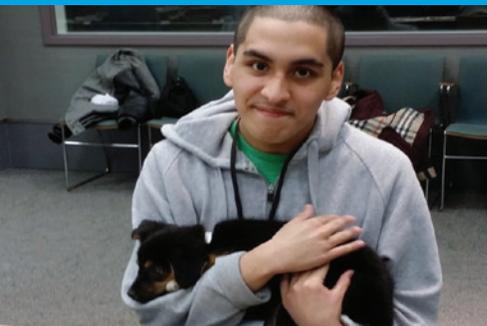
Over the course of a four decades long career in building operations and maintenance, Frank married a coworker, bought a home, and raised a family. Frank's

son, David, says he practically grew up at the Center's current location — even attending the Celebrity Sports Night fundraiser each spring with his father.

“I remember Dr. Viscardi telling me about the opposition he faced when he wanted to move the business,” David said about the local backlash the organization received while relocating to today's facility in residential Albertson. “You look at the way things are now, how accepting people are toward people like my dad, and it's a testament to the work Dr. Viscardi did.”

For Frank, visiting that old garage meant catching up with colleagues he hadn't seen since his retirement. David says it also meant reconnecting with a past that shaped his father's identity.

“I couldn't think of a better memory or experience for him to have than a visit back to a place he called home for forty plus years.”



out & about

Tails were wagging as students from the Youth Transition Services program coordinated with representatives from North Shore Animal League (NSAL) to design colorful adoption posters for overlooked dogs and cats at the

shelter — some of which are considered special needs and require extra TLC from potential adopters. The posters support NSAL's ongoing “Mutt-i-gree” movement; an initiative focused on finding loving homes for mixed-breed rescue pets.

These community-based learning experiences are the core of Youth Transition Services. By stepping out of the classroom and into real-world environments, young people with disabilities balance vital social and problem-solving skills that set them on the path to becoming self-sufficient adults.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES



The Cougars brought their A-game to the 25th annual Sportsmanship Tournament hosted by the Henry Viscardi School's Wheelchair Basketball Program. Several nail-biters culminated in a final championship round, where the varsity team faced off against the competitive Westchester School for Special Children. The Cougars claimed victory on their home turf, beating Westchester 24-14.

The excitement continued off the clock. Emma, a senior set on studying social work next year in college, received the “Bubba” Pollock Award — an annual honor named in remembrance of a late Viscardi Cougars captain who was passionate about basketball—for demonstrating school spirit on and off the court.

NewsBytes



Learn more about the recipients of the Henry Viscardi Achievement Awards. Catch exclusive interviews and footage from the ceremony held at the Mutual of America building in New York City at [youtube.com/AbilitiesOnline](https://www.youtube.com/AbilitiesOnline).



Read how Viscardi empowered others like Frank Pfister. Browse through inspiring stories about alumni, students, employees, and more at [ViscardiCenter.org/OurStories](https://www.ViscardiCenter.org/OurStories).



Attention: Local Businesses!

Does your company offer internships? Would you like to be a guest speaker and share your expertise? Interested in recruiting qualified job candidates with disabilities?

If yes, get in touch at 516.465.1490.

You're



35th Annual Reach for a Star Luncheon Presented by Americana Manhasset

4 APR | Crest Hollow Country Club
Woodbury, NY

Join us for an uplifting afternoon featuring Jennifer DiNoia, star of Broadway's *WICKED*.



Celebrity Sports Night

18 MAY | The Viscardi Center
Albertson, NY

Mingle with sports legends. Enjoy cocktails, dinner, and auctions. Special guests to be announced soon.



For tickets, sponsorships, and more info, visit ViscardiCenter.org or call 516.465.1595.

YOUR LASTING IMPACT



John Kornreich has a knack for recognizing overlooked opportunities that can make measurable

differences for those who need it most. He doesn't just fund new initiatives; he helps realize them. And as a tireless ally of The Viscardi Center for over twenty years, the proof of his generosity and expertise can be traced down each wing of our facility.

"Janet and I realized many years ago that our own needs had been met," explained John, who, through the John and Janet Kornreich Charitable Foundation that he manages with his wife, makes long-term commitments to Long Island non-profits with clear-cut needs, definitive missions, and strong leadership. "We don't need anything else, and so we give back."

John sees the value in technology, as he believes it can level the playing field for the

children and adults we serve. That's why he started up the Nathaniel H. Kornreich Technology Center in 1996, and more recently, backed the renovation of the Viscardi Multimedia Learning Center—now a sophisticated conference area and studio that is used by employees and students for distance learning, on-site media production, and conferences.

The focus on technology continues in 2017. His most recent gift facilitates a state-of-the-art security system upgrade to ensure the safety of our students and teachers. And soon, he will champion a project to convert an underused playground at the Henry Viscardi School into a thriving outdoor classroom so K-1 children can experience a unique learning environment in nature—an idea that John proposed after sitting in on a Kindergarten class.

When it comes to philanthropy in the future, John says he and his wife will continue to stand by a simple philosophy: "To those whom much is given, much is expected."

For more information on how you can make an impact, contact us at 516.465.1594.