

2013 Henry Viscardi Achievement Award Recipient



Laurie Ahern **President, Disability Rights International**

Laurie Ahern is president of Disability Rights International in Washington, D.C. She overcame a psychosocial disability to become a successful journalist. She also co-founded the National Empowerment Center (NEC), serving the mentally ill and their families, and has brought attention to the abuses of mentally ill children and adults in the U.S. and in other nations. She is a former vice president of the National Association of Rights, Protection and Advocacy.

“Throughout the world, children and adults with disabilities are systematically neglected at a level that could easily fit the definition of torture,” Ahern said. “I am proud to receive this honor, and I hope the awareness that is raised by the Viscardi Awards program will help the world understand that all people have the right to live dignified, meaningful lives. It is our obligation as humans to ensure this occurs.”