

NEWS



Edward A. Diana
Orange County Executive

March 1, 2011

For Immediate Release

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Orange County Film Festival Recognizes National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Goshen – March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. According to the National Institute for People with Disabilities, more than 45 million Americans and their families are affected by developmental disability. To honor the many children and adults in Orange County who live with developmental disabilities, the Orange County Developmental Disabilities Education and Training Consortium, a partner organization of the Orange County Department of Mental Health, will host a film festival to recognize the individuals for their contributions to our community, as well as the families, friends, caregivers, and advocates who support them.

The festival will showcase five films on Saturdays, March 6, 12, 19, and 26 at two different Orange County locations. One of the featured films “Chad’s Story” is a documentary about a young man from Orange County.

“People who have developmental disabilities may face a more challenging future than others, but they can still enjoy a full and active life,” said Orange County Executive Edward A. Diana. “Orange County is proud to support the Consortium’s efforts and the annual film festival. The films selected highlight the challenges and achievements of individuals coping with disability,” Diana added.

“Developmental disabilities come in many forms and may cause mental or physical limitations or both,” said Chris Ashman, Orange County Commissioner of Mental Health. “These conditions include autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, mental retardation, and other neurological impairments. Whatever challenges an individual faces, it’s important to remember that what they need most is encouragement, understanding, and the willingness of others to help them maximize their opportunities for becoming a vital part of their community,” continued Commissioner Ashman. “I encourage community members to see one or more of these five moving and informative films selected by the Consortium.”

The Orange County Developmental Disabilities Education and Training Consortium is

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comprised of 19 Orange County-based government and non-profit providers of community services for children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families.

Film Schedule

Emma's Gifts

Emma has Down Syndrome, her twin does not. This documentary film is told from her parents' perspective.

Location: SUNY Orange, Harriman Hall Room 111, Middletown

Date: Saturday, March 5 **Time:** 2 – 4 pm

Burt's Story

79 year old Burt has been in and out of institutions throughout his life. This film gives a chronological history of his life and times.

Location: Cornwall High School, 10 Dragon Dr. (off of Route 94), New Windsor

Date: Saturday, March 12 **Time:** 12 – 2 pm

Shooting Beauty

This film is about a photographer who forms a bond with a group of individuals with developmental disabilities. It follows the group for seven years and shows how they learn to express themselves through their remarkable photography.

Location: SUNY Orange, Harriman Hall Room 111, Middletown

Date: Saturday, March 19 **Time:** 2 – 4 pm

Asperger's Difference

Annie is in Middle School, Noah is in High School and Jeffrey attends college. The three represent a range of ages and circumstances, but share many of the common challenges and strengths of individuals living with Asperger's Syndrome.

Chad's Story

From MTV's popular series "The World of Jenks," this documentary is about 20 year old Chad's life in Orange County, New York. Chad and his family will be in attendance.

Location: Cornwall High School, 10 Dragon Dr. (off of Route 94), New Windsor

Date: Saturday, March 19 **Time:** 12 – 2 pm

For information about developmental disability services, providers, training, and events in Orange County, visit www.orangecountynyddconnection.com.

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