**Announcement of new City of Portland Commission on Disability by Commissioner Amanda Fritz**

**Thanks everyone… I am so excited to be here. I have the distinct honor of being the Commissioner in charge of the Portland Commission on Disability. As a long time practicing nurse I am no stranger to some of the challenges facing Portlanders with disabilities. As a long time neighborhood activist I am also aware of the importance of a community coming together to have a united voice for what is important to them. The New Commission is just one way the disability community has to connect with all of my colleagues here. There are many organizations and grass roots efforts happening around Portland and I urge all of you to consider getting involved somewhere. Tonight is a great example of what a group of people working together can accomplish. I understand about fifteen different organizations came together to bring this wonderful event and the ensuing collaboration to fruition**

**Let’s give them another round of applause!**

**I would now like to announce the Portland Commission on Disability Commissioners. When I call your name could you raise your gavel, and keep it up until I am finished; so we can acknowledge you. In alphabetical order:**

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| **Mellani Calvin** |
| Christina Cooper |
| Therese Grayson |
| Scott Hatley |
| Adam Kriss |
| Nyla McCarthy |
| Carrie Jo Stairs |
| Michael Szporluk |
| Bhell, Sokpak |
| DeLa Torre, Alan |
| Nguyen, Linda (Lehang) |
| Soto, Rudy (Rodolfo) |
| Westwood, Dean |
| Jackson, Jim |
| King, Molly |
| Jewls Krentz |
| Channah Pastorius |
| Wong, Mei Ling |
| Charles Davi*s* |
| Phyllis Pettys |
| Martha Simpson |
| Travis Wall |
| Amy Anderson |
| Anne O’Malley |
| Caitlin Wood |
| Jan Campbell |
| Joe Vanderveer |
| Catherine Todd |
| Reena Wagle |

**These folks will be volunteering their time to help make the disability community voice be heard. They are your representatives so make sure to let them know what is going on with the community as you experience it. You might find that you are sitting next to one now ☺ You can visit the Commission at the Disability Program website on portland online and you are all invited to attend commission meetings when they get started. They should be announcing the date of the Commission meetings sometime in December so if you want a status update or need any other information about a City bureau or program you can always call us at 503.823.4000**

**Commissioners, we welcome you and applaud your efforts past and future. (Applause)**

It is my pleasure now turn the mic over to **Commissioners Dan Saltzman for the announcement of the 2009 Making a Difference Awards.**

**Dan Salzman: thank you Amanda and with us now on stage to present the awards are Nick Fish, Multnomah County Chair Ted Wheeler, Auditor LeVonne Griffin-Valade, and Office of Neighborhood Involvement Bureau Director Amalia Alarcon de Morris**

And Thank you everyone for being here tonight. Last year I was honored to be asked to be the master of ceremonies at the Making a Difference Awards and am pleased to be here again this year. And I am excited to see the progress the disability community has shown us by this event and the through the individuals receiving awards tonight.

The Making a Difference Awards started three years ago under the direction of Disability Coordinator Nickole Cheron and The Portland Citizens Disability Advisory Committee. It was conceived to both bring the committee together to celebrate its diversity and to recognize those organizations and individuals who through outstanding leadership and service make a difference in the disability community here in Portland….. And Now for the awards (please hold your applause for the end):

**Nick Fish : Inclusion Award to Helen Daltoso**

Whereas some arts administrators do not understand or take the issue of access seriously, Helen, with the support of her colleagues in the RACC Grants department, has addressed this issue head on, with enthusiasm and clarity. Her approach and efforts are making an impact on the arts landscape to make the arts more accessible to all citizens. Her advocacy efforts have brought the issue to the attention of many artists and arts organizations and resolved issues that have been longstanding and problematic for people with disabilities in Portland. Starting with this year’s Project Support grant applications, RACC has changed their process to assure that grantees are both aware of their obligations to be accessible to the full community and that they are responsible to actively take steps to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Helen is an active participant in an Oregon Arts Commission process to look into increasing access to the arts at a State level.

Helen thank you

**Ted Wheeler: Transportation Award to Michael Levine**

Michael Levine’s dedication to transportation issues has made a tremendous impact on things you probably see and use every day. Michael now resides in California but prior to his move he was a tireless advocate for transportation issues serving as Chair of the Transportation Sub-committee of the Portland Citizens Disability Advisory Committee and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Accessible Transportation. In his time on the PCDAC Michael was instrumental in initiating policy that ensured all tactile warning strips on non-brick sidewalks be yellow. He also worked closely with the bureau of transportation on right of way concerns in regards to the new bus mall, including concerns around placements of curb-ramps and lift access. He was instrumental in organizing the Roll and Stroll event that each year asks City officials and key employees to navigate Portland streets with simulated disabilities. He likewise committed to his work on CAT providing trainings, advocating for bus drivers to call out stops and doing ride- alongs, always stressing the importance of transportation access that is universal for everyone.

Michael Thank you

**Amalia Alarcon de Morris: Advocacy Award to Marjorie McGee**

I am thrilled to be giving this award to my friend Majorie. I have had the pleasure of knowing Marjorie………………..Recently she was the force behind the Women with Disabilities Health Equity Coalition. Marjorie’s dedication to empowering women with disabilities through education and training projects resulted in over 10 women becoming community health workers. Today, they are giving back to their communities throughout the city and state.

Marjorie’s advocacy for the disabled community to be represented in regional emergency preparedness created a valuable report that focused on how members of the disability community communicate, and the communication channels that should be used in the event of an emergency. Marjorie's dedication to the health and well being to her community is remarkable.

Thank you Marjorie

**LeVonne Griffin-Valade: Youth Award to Amy Sharer**

Amy was the valedictorian of her high school and yet because of her multiple disabilities once in college she had to fight for her right to take the "normal" requirements just like everyone else. Amy is currently working with the Rehabilitation and Research Training Center as partial fulfillment of her course work. The team she works with says Amy is nothing less than amazing. Her creativity and attention to detail has been invaluable. Folks at the RRTC now know if they need something done to send Amy as she knows everyone on the floor and everyone who knows her adores her. Living in McMinnville Amy commutes two hours both ways to school here in Portland and work at OHSU. In her free time Amy has taken it upon herself to educate both riders and drivers about service animals. She developed a brochure featuring Tux, her service dog, explaining what service animals are, why they may be needed, and how to behave around them. Amy is a member of Emerging Leaders North West and I have a feeling this is not the last we will hear her from this spectacular youth.

**Dan Saltzman: Life Time Achievement Award to Bill West**

As the Commissioner in charge of police I am no stranger to the name Bill West. He has served on the Developmental Disability Advisory Committee for over a decade and has worked with Portland Police in several other capacities. Bill has worked at The Arc of Multnomah/Clackamas for nearly 30 years.  The Arc is the largest and oldest membership-based organization in this country (and this community) working for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.  He is one of first professionals to provide services that are and have been directed by the person with intellectual and developmental disabilities and for the purpose of obtaining positive and personal outcomes to meet their myriad needs.  He has worked with special populations effected by the criminal justice system, advocated and trained many law enforcement personnel as well as professionals in the areas of child welfare, vocational services, housing programs, professionals in the medical and mental health communities and those working with people who are elderly and have intellectual and developmental disabilities, religious organizations and myriad others.

**Amanda Fritz:**

Last year a very special award was created to recognize individuals whose achievements are exemplary. This year we have two recipients of the Silver Star award: Arthur Honeyman and Scott Lay

Arthur Honeyman

Arthur Honeyman was the first person with a significant disability to be enrolled at PSU without an attendant. Art’s father had to fight for Art to attend PSU, and Art ultimately got BA in English and two Master’s degrees. He helped start the Student’s with Disabilities Union at PSU and eventually taught literature classes at PSU, one of which looked at the portrayal of people with disabilities in literature.

Art was an accomplished author; his most famous work is the children’s book “Sam and his Cart.” He also wrote astounding epic poems and wickedly funny stories. He was also an activist—in his home was a picture of him from the 70’s when police dragged him away from the Trojan Nuclear Plant.

He hasinsisted on accessibility and inclusion his whole life and has always lived independently. In 2007, he was portrayed in the movie, Music Within. One particularl scene that really captures Art’s dedication and tenacity is when he is denied service at a pancake house because of his disability. Rather than leave, he let the restaurant call the police. We thank him for his contributions.

Scott Lay

Not all people can say that work they did while here on earth enabled others, even those they never met, to live more independent, successful, rich and happy lives, but Scott Lay can. While Scott passed away in July of this year, his fingerprints remain and make a difference everyday in the lives of so many.

Scott made it his mission in life to facilitate the dreams of people with disabilities to live in their communities, to work at a job of their choosing and to enjoy life like their non-disabled peers. For all the laws, programs and policies that empower, to buildings, parking spaces, work places, and other areas throughout our community that are more accessible, to the thoughts, attitudes and actions of those more enlightened, all the way to the smiles on proud faces, to the heads held high and the hearts more full of pride and dignity.

We thank him for his contribution.

**Presentation of 2009 Making a Difference Awards**

KEN BODDIE: Congratulations to all our award recipients for a job well done.

It is time now for a musical intermission of 15 – 20 minutes. I am so delighted to introduce the very talented pianist, Jeremy Doney.