

# The Talent That Makes This Program Special

## GOVERNMENT

**John Cochran** - Assistant Director, Intergovernmental Affairs and Strategic Planning. Mr. Cochran was a front line lobbyist for Malkin & Ross from 1998-2008 representing several clients associated with the world of long term care and aging. His list of clients included the NYS Coalition of Alzheimer's Association Chapters, NY Association of Rehab Services, Advocates for Adult Day Services, New York Coalition for Quality Assisted Living, New York Academy of Medicine and the Experience Wave which sought to advance the notion of civic engagement/ volunteerism by older persons. Before joining M&R Mr. Cochran was employed by the NY Assembly from 1992-1998 as the Director of the Aging Committee for the Speaker's Office of Program and Counsel. During his tenure as Committee Director he worked with former Assemblyman Paul Harenberg and Assemblymember Barbara Clark. From 1989-1992 Mr. Cochran worked in the New York State Assembly, Research Office to Majority Leader James R. Tallon, Jr, who is currently the President of the United Hospital Fund. He analyzed impact of pending legislation and budget proposals for the Assembly Majority Leader to ensure orderly floor debate; represented the Majority Leader at public functions and maintained contact with consumer groups, industry representatives and constituents involved in development of human services public policy. His previous post with the Assembly (1986-88) was as Legislative Aide in the District Office of Assembly member Tallon (Binghamton, NY).

**Robert Herz** - Mr. Herz is the Director, under Senator Martin Golden (chair) of the Senate Aging Committee, and has worked in the State Legislature since 1975. In his work with the Legislature, he has authored and negotiated over 1,000 bills, touching on all aspects of the law, including work on healthcare legislation under Senator Tarky Lombardi, chair of the Senate Health Committee until 1989. He is principal draftsman of the Compact for Long-Term Care.

## CONSUMERS

**Richard Iannello** - Mr. Iannello is the Executive Director of the Albany Guardian Society. He became a licensed nursing home administrator in 1975 and in 1982 he received a Master's Degree in Public Administration with an emphasis in health care. His experience includes positions such as administrator at Genesee County Nursing Home; Vice President, Programs and Administration at St Anne's Home, a 591 bed nursing facility campus in Rochester, New York; and health care consultant for Ernst & Whinney (now Ernst & Young). In 1987 Mr. Iannello was appointed executive director at Eddy Cohoes Rehabilitation Center and went on to serve as director of all Eddy health care sites. With the creation of Northeast Health, Mr. Iannello spent his final two years as executive director of LTC Eddy, Inc., the holding corporation that oversaw all Eddy activities. After leaving the Eddy at the end of 1996, Mr. Iannello assisted numerous chronic care providers with strategic planning engagements and also facilitated planning sessions to help organizations refocus their services in response to the changing needs of the senior populations they serve. Since July 2000, Mr. Iannello has served as executive director of Albany Guardian Society, an operating foundation that undertakes projects to improve the quality of life for seniors. At Albany Guardian Society, he has collaborated with the Foundation for Long Term Care to develop statewide nursing assistant training programs. Albany Guardian Society has convened numerous public forums to help encourage and promote community dialogue on matters important to the aging services community. Mr. Iannello wrote and co-produced, with WMHT Educational Telecommunications, several 13-part television series which aired on public television stations across the country. In 2007, Albany Guardian Society expanded its efforts by publishing a new journal, "Capital Commons Quarterly: The Dynamics of Aging and Our Communities," with Mr. Iannello serving as Publisher.

## HEALTH CARE

**John Baackes** - Mr. Baackes is a nationally recognized leader in the managed care industry, bringing 30 years of management and executive experience to Senior Whole Health. He was most recently a Senior Vice President of Group Health Incorporated (GHI), New York's only statewide nonprofit health insurer. In this role, he launched the company's Medicare and Medicaid managed care lines of business. Mr. Baackes previously served as President of Kaiser Permanente Northeast Division and also as the President and CEO of Community Health Plan in Latham, New York. Mr. Baackes oversaw the merger of these two organizations into an expanded division that increased membership by nearly 20% and grew revenues to nearly \$1 billion. He has served as consultant to the American Association of Health Plans as well as numerous federal and state agencies. He continues to serve on New York's Medicaid Managed Care Advisory Review Panel and is active in a number of community leadership roles.

**Nora Baratto** - Mrs. Baratto is currently employed at St Peter's Hospital as the manager of The Case Management Department and the CHOICES Program, which is a fee for service case management program for older adults. She is a Master's prepared, NYS licensed clinical social worker, a member of the Professional Association of National Geriatric Case Managers and is an Accredited Case Manager in Hospital/Health Care Systems through the American Case Management Association. Additionally, she is also certified in case management through the American Case Management Association. Mrs. Baratto has a broad range of clinical expertise and experience working with older adults & families within the health care delivery system and community. She is Prior to being a manager, Nora developed and implemented the CHOICES Program in 1989 at the hospital. She was a geriatric case manager for the program until her promotion as the Department Manager in 1998. Prior to her employment at St Peter's Hospital, Nora worked for several years in a skilled nursing facility as a social worker/ admissions coordinator.

**Carol A. Rodat** - Ms. Rodat joined PHI as its New York Policy Director in 2005 after serving for eleven years as the president and CEO of the Home Care Association of New York State. PHI is a national organization that is dedicated to improving the quality of care by improving the jobs in long-term care. Her work in the health care field includes her appointment as Executive Director of Hospital Trustees of New York State, a voluntary organization that trains the hospital directors. Under her leadership the organization produced one of the first studies of the uninsured in New York State. Prior to coming to New York, Ms. Rodat was a senior policy analyst for the Child Welfare League of America, based in Washington D.C. Ms. Rodat was a New York delegate to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging, and was recently appointed to the Downstate Long Term Care Advisory Committee of the New York State Department of the Aging. She is a member of the Albany County Long Term Care Council and serves as the chair of the New York Consumer Health Collaborative, a group of consumers, payers, and providers, which promotes patient-centered care and education in order to improve the value of health care. Ms. Rodat has written and published numerous articles in the areas of long-term care, quality of care, and workforce development. Ms. Rodat works out of offices in the Bronx and Albany, New York.

**Joe Twardy** - Mr. Twardy has served as the President and CEO of the Visiting Nurse Service of Schenectady and Saratoga Counties (VNS) since February of 2006. Prior to his post as President and CEO he served as the Vice President of Finance and Information Systems at the VNS since 2004. He has been an agent for change within the organization by facilitating multiple financial and quality milestones. The VNS was established in 1919 to make homecare available to the residents of Schenectady County "regardless of race, creed, or ability to pay". Today, the VNS has expanded its care into Saratoga County and is recognized for its many accomplishments. Included in those accomplishments is the lowest re-hospitalization rate in the Capital District and ranking in the top 4th percentile in New York State - per Medicare Home Health Compare. Joe has also held positions within a hospital setting and in mental health advocacy.

## INSURANCE

**Philip C. Gallant** - Mr. Gallant is the Managing Director of The Optimus Group, LLC, an insurance planning and consulting firm located in Albany, NY. A nationally recognized leader in the Long Term Care Industry, Phil has published several trade journal articles about Long Term Care and has been a key note speaker at industry forums on topics such as "Long Term Care in a Changing Society", "How to Build The Perfect Long-term Care Policy" and "Developing a Successful Long-term Care Brokerage Agency". In addition, has spoken before the Eastern New York Society of Financial Services Professionals, The Brookings Institute On Aging, and the New York State Bar Association about long-term care planning and long-term care insurance. Prior to forming The Optimus Group, LLC Phil served as Executive Vice President New York Long-Term Care Brokers, a nationally recognized insurance brokerage firm from July of 1997 to October of 2007 after having served as General Director and Brand Manager for Retail Long-term Care at John Hancock Life Insurance Company in Boston, MA; and Vice President of Long Term Care Sales for NYLACOR, a New York Life subsidiary in Austin, Texas. In addition to building his own retirement and estate planning practice, Phil works extensively training agents and brokers about the long-term care sale, retirement and estate planning concepts. He has trained over 20,000 agents throughout his career and spoken at Long-term Care Seminars and forums in 45 states.

**Gail Holubinka** - Ms. Holubinka is the Vice President of Legislative Affairs at MedAmerica. Ms. Holubinka's knowledge of long term care financing is the result of over 25 years of experience that includes both the public and private sectors. She is currently the Vice President of Legislative Affairs for MedAmerica Insurance Company, but was also the original developer and Director of the New York State Partnership for Long Term Care. Ms Holubinka has had the unique experience of creating viable long term care funding systems for Medicaid, private insurers, and what's between, the NYS Partnership. She has also been a union fund administrator and health care financing researcher. In 2007, Ms. Holubinka was named one of the 10 most influential people in the nation in long term care insurance by Senior Advisor magazine. Among other awards, Ms. Holubinka has earned the Chairman's Award for Excellence in Innovation from Prudential, the Innovations in Government Award from the Ford Foundation, and the Innovation Award from the Center on Productivity at Rutgers University.

## ELDER LAW BAR

**Louis W. Pierro, Esq.** - As the managing member of the Pierro Law Group, and an elder law practitioner, Mr. Pierro has counseled thousands of clients through the intricate maze of access to and financing of long term care. He has served as Chair of the New York State Bar Association Elder Law Section, a member of the Governor's Task Force on long term care reform in 1996, and currently Chairs the Elder Law Section's Long-Term Care Reform Task Force, which has worked with the Legislature on the Compact for Long-Term Care.

**Philip A. Di Giorgio, Esq.** - Mr. Di Giorgio is a partner with the Pierro Law Group and practices in the areas of Estate Planning, Estate and Trust Administration, and Estate and Gift Taxation. Mr. Di Giorgio joined the firm after having served as an Internal Revenue Service Estate Tax Attorney ('91 through '99). He is a member of the NYSBA Trust and Estates Section, and the Estate Planning Council of Eastern N.Y., and serves as Vice Chair of the Estate Planning Committee of the NYSBA's Trusts and Estates Section.