

The Connecticut General Assembly

House Democrats



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REP. ABERCROMBIE WELCOMES THE 11TH AUTISM DAY AT THE STATE CAPITOL

State Representative Cathy Abercrombie (D-Meriden/Berlin/), Co-Chair of the legislature's Human Services Committee, along with several colleagues and state leaders, hosted the 11th Annual Autism Awareness Day at the State Capitol on April 6.

Autism advocacy groups and families from around the state visited the Capitol to share their personal stories and celebrate what has become an annual tradition in Hartford.

"This is one of the most exciting days that I look forward to at the State Capitol every year," **Rep. Abercrombie** said. "When I first came to the legislature, I wanted to take ownership of one issue to call my own to help make a difference. I can tell you today, I couldn't have picked anything more important than this. It is an honor to work with families and advocates helping autistic individuals achieve their maximum potential. I am delighted to add my voice to their ongoing efforts, and do what I can to support them."

This year's event recognized the creative work of members of the autism community with three prizes. The first prize was awarded to Woodstock Academy for a video-production by Denver Jones, the second prize to Wesley Elkind-Greenwich for a comic book with the main character on the spectrum, and the third to 18 year old Josh McClure with ASD, for a video production explaining through humor what autism is.

In addition, the Employer of the Year Award was presented to Big Y Foods, Inc. for their commitment to providing a work environment that welcomes individuals from the autism community.

Autism is characterized by impaired social interaction, problems with verbal and nonverbal communication, and unusual, repetitive, or severely limited activities and interests.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the prevalence of autism is 1 in 68 children. ASDs include Asperger syndrome, Rett syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder, and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (usually referred to as PDD-NOS).

To learn more about autism and ways you can make a difference in this cause, please visit www.autismspeaks.org.

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