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Kennedy Willis Center and NDSS to host Aging, Dementia and Intellectual Disabilities Symposium at Pathfinder Village

Conference to feature OPWDD Acting Commissioner Kelley and leading experts in care programs and research

Edmeston, NY, March 19, 2014 ... The Kennedy Willis Center and the National Down Syndrome Society announce the **2014 Symposium at Pathfinder Village** on Aging, Dementia, and Intellectual Disabilities **for Friday, May 16, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Key speakers will include the Acting Commissioner of the State Office for People With Intellectual Disabilities Laurie Kelley, author Rachel Adams, and the co-chairs of the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices of the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry (AADMD).

Registration is available online at the Pathfinder Village website, www.pathfindervillage.org, and is \$45 for professionals, \$25 for family members and students. Complete information on the topics, schedule, and logistics is also available online or by contacting Pathfinder Village at (607) 965-8377, ext. 156.

"Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) are living longer," explained Helen Stepowany, director of the Kennedy Willis Center. "While longer life expectancies offer new milestones for adults living with disabilities, this trend also presents challenges for which care agencies, direct care staff, and families may feel unprepared."

"The Kennedy Willis Center, the National Down Syndrome Society, and our other sponsors hope to present a thoughtful day-long discussion by experts from across the U.S. on ways to support aging individuals with ID/DD, dementia or Alzheimer's disease," she continued. "We will also present information on emerging research into this growing population as well as best practice methods to prepare direct support staff and families who share in their lives."

The 2014 Symposium will begin with a continental breakfast and a performance by the Pathfinder Village Hand Bell Choir. Laurie Kelley, the Acting Commissioner of the State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, will offer opening remarks on the scope of aging in the disabilities community, and on innovative ways that funders, policy makers and care providers may collaborate in supporting older individuals.

The National Task Group (NTG) on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices was formed as a response to the National Alzheimer's Project Act, signed into law by President Obama in 2011. The NAPA is to create a coordinated national plan to meet growing caseloads of dementia patients, and to coordinate national efforts in research, clinical care, and residential care. A key objective of the NTG is to highlight the additional needs of individuals with ID/DD who are living with dementia, and to make sure that their needs are considered as part of national policy and required outcomes.

The 2014 Symposium will close with a panel discussion with the presenting experts, ***Challenges and Solutions in Aging, Dementia, and Intellectual Disabilities***; this closing session is sponsored by The Bonadio Group.

Symposium sessions will feature:

Matthew Janicki, PhD, a professor of human development in the Department of Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois, Chicago. He is the author/editor of numerous books and articles on aging, dementia, public policy, and rehabilitation with regard to people with ID/DD, has provided training on aging and ID around the world. He currently serves as co-chair of the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices. This session sponsored by the Frank and Marian Mullet Chair at the Kennedy Willis Center.

Seth M. Keller, MD, the past president of the AADMD and a board certified neurologist in private practice specializing in the evaluation and care of adults with ID/DD with neurologic complications. Dr. Keller is actively involved in national and international ID/DD health education as a speaker and participant. He is also the co-chair of the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices. This session sponsored by Schlather & Birch, Attorneys at Law.

Keynote Luncheon Speaker Rachel Adams, PhD, an author and Columbia University Professor of English and Comparative Literature. She is the author of numerous academic articles and book reviews, as well as two academic books *Sideshow U.S.A.* and *Continental Divides: Remapping the Cultures of North America*. Her latest book, *Raising Henry: A Memoir of Motherhood, Disability, and Discovery*, relates her experiences as a parent to a young son living with Down syndrome. The Keynote Luncheon is sponsored by Bassett Healthcare Network and Reece's Rainbow.

Kathleen Bishop, PhD, a clinical senior instructor in the Department of Medicine, Geriatrics and Aging at the University of Rochester Medical Center. Her research interests include environmental assessments and aging, and health care for women with disabilities. Dr. Bishop is a co-author of several articles on aging with intellectual disabilities. She also consults for numerous organizations including the Oneida County Office for Aging and Continuing Care, and is the co-chair of the National Task Group on Dementia and IDD Group to develop a national curriculum of care for adults with IDD and dementia. This session sponsored by Utica College.

Wayne Silverman, PhD, the co-director of the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center at the Kennedy Krieger Institute/Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore. He is also a professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Johns Hopkins, and has spent the last 25 years directing one of the largest multi-disciplinary research programs focused on the psychological and biomedical aspects of aging among adults with Down syndrome. This session is sponsored by Janet and Bernard N. Raasch, MD.

About the National Down Syndrome Society: NDSS, has its headquarters in New York City, and serves as the national advocate for the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome. The NDSS envisions a world in which all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations and become valued members of welcoming communities.

About Pathfinder Village: Pathfinder Village is an internationally respected open-access community in upstate New York, and was founded in 1980 to provide people living with Down syndrome and related disabilities an independent, engaging, and fulfilling lifestyle. As it works to provide quality supports for older individuals living with intellectual disabilities, the Village also offers highly successful educational and pre-vocational programs, and will open a two-year post-secondary program in 2014, Otsego Academy at Pathfinder Village.

To learn more about Pathfinder Village, please call (607) 965-8377, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., visit the website at www.pathfindervillage.org, or visit our fan page on the popular social networking site, Facebook.

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