

IMMEDIATE NEWS RELEASE

Invitation to Cover

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Gala event planned to celebrate artists

April 29, 2011 Geneva, NY – The Collaborative of the Finger Lakes and Hobart and William Smith Colleges invite the community to experience a showcase of talent in Geneva, NY on May 4, 2011 at the Vandervort Room of the HWS Scandling Center from 5 to 8pm. The finale arts event, “The Gala” is the culmination of a month long series of workshops, presentations, and sessions that make up the disAbility and the Arts Festival devoted to celebrating the arts.

The Gala will include an art show, dance and movement performances, mime, poetry and readings, film shorts, a video montage of the festival, and refreshments. Additionally, short commercials produced by festival workshop participants advertising the 2012 disAbility and the Arts Festival will be aired throughout the gala. Attendees will be invited to vote for their favorite videos to be used to promote next year's festival. The disAbility and the Arts Festival is hosted by the Collaborative of the Finger Lakes - eleven regional New York agencies supporting people with disabilities and their families - and Hobart and William Smith Colleges. On hand for the evening's festivities will be Provost and Dean of Faculty Teresa Almott, and Collaborative Board of Directors members Jim Wilson, executive director of the Arc of Schuyler and Bill Castiglione, executive director of Ontario ARC. Sponsors of the Festival include HWS' Offices of the President and the Provost and its Center for Learning and Teaching, the B. Thomas Golisano Foundation and the Collaborative of the Finger Lakes.

“The festival has provided an amazing opportunity for so many of us to explore the arts. The Gala will be the culminating finale to a festival that has brought in more than 700 participants already to enjoy art workshops, performances, and speakers,” explains festival co-director, Mary Kelly, HWS Assistant Professor of Education. Kelly, along with Professor David Weiss of the Department of English and Jean Jensen of the Collaborative of the FL's Community Inclusion Team and the Arc of Steuben in Bath served jointly as directors of this year's festival and worked with several design teams representing professionals from both the HWS community and the ARC/Arc member agencies of the Collaborative of the Finger Lakes. The design teams developed workshops and performances from four different artistic disciplines – creative writing, film making, dance and studio art. Jensen notes, “The success of these events was not due to any particular individual but to this year's incredible collaboration between Hobart and William Smith Colleges and the Collaborative agencies making up diverse design teams which resulted in a variety of entertaining events and opportunities for experiential learning.”

The aim of the festival is to showcase the achievements of artists, writers, actors, filmmakers and performers with disabilities, and to make their art available to others with disabilities and to the general community. The Festival celebrates the work and lives of these artists, and provides them with an opportunity through workshops and classes to share their craft, skills and vision. Critical conversations about issues of inclusion, normalcy, creativity and art are an essential outgrowth of the Festival.

The Collaborative of the Finger Lakes, Inc. is a not-for-profit regional association of eleven New York State ARC/Arc (NYSARC) human service agencies serving nearly 9,000 individuals with developmental disabilities, and their families, in thirteen central upstate New York counties. Collaborative agencies individually provide services in residential day treatment programs, family support, pre-school education, service coordination, and job training and placement. Member agencies associate to enhance individual and collective effectiveness. For more information: www.collabfl.org