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WELCOME HOUSE TREASURER STEVEN M. LICCIARDI WINS OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER AWARD FROM STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION

OPRA award recognizes non-paid volunteer for invaluable contributions to help developmentally disabled

Cleveland, Ohio – November [xx], 2009 – Welcome House, Incorporated is proud to announce that the treasurer of its board of trustees, Steven M. Licciardi, has been awarded the Outstanding Volunteer Award from the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA). The award recognizes a non-paid community volunteer for invaluable contributions to people with developmental disabilities.

“Steven is an exceptional volunteer for Welcome House and one of the most energetic and dedicated individuals I have ever met,” said Tony Thomas, executive director for Welcome House, Inc., which helps people with MRDD live a full and rewarding life by providing a variety of residential services.

Licciardi, a fraternal twin brother to someone with Down Syndrome, received the award Wednesday at a luncheon in Dublin, Ohio. More than 300 people attended the event, many having also nominated volunteers for the award.

“It is an honor to receive this award,” Licciardi said. “My volunteer efforts include everything from serving food to major fundraising, and I do so because I believe in the mission of the organizations I serve. There is no better gift than working with special needs individuals and sharing their happiness and joy of life. I truly appreciate receiving an award and recognition for my efforts as it indicates that I am making a difference, which I hope will encourage others to get involved.”

Licciardi volunteers at many events in the community for persons with developmental disabilities and is involved in many charitable activities. He serves on the non-profit Board of Trustees of Wesco Housing Corporation; Welcome House Inc. (treasurer); Solutions at Work Inc. (treasurer); the Rocky River Adult Activities Center’s Parent-Teacher Community United Foundation Board (as treasurer and delegate to the county); and the Plexus Education Foundation. He also serves as a member of University Hospitals Health System’s Diamond Advisory Group and was a 2008 nominee for the Center for Community Solutions “Most Treasured Volunteer Award.”

He previously served on the West Haven Foundation Board of Trustees as treasurer and chairman of the Investment Policy Committee and was the recipient of

their Board Leadership Award in 2009. Licciardi was also profiled in WVIZ's *Make a Difference* documentary.

Licciardi, an associate vice president at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, works as a financial adviser and portfolio manager. He lives in Westlake, Ohio.

About Welcome House

Established in 1972 as the West Haven Foundation, Welcome House is dedicated to helping individuals with MRDD live a full and rewarding life by providing a variety of residential services in an atmosphere of a caring community. Residents and their families rely on Welcome House not only to provide the ongoing care that is so critical to their loved ones but also the special extras that create happiness. Welcome House currently serves over 130 people each day through 10 group homes, another 20 smaller community living sites and a highly successful supported living program.

The overall goal of Welcome House's residential program is to create a supportive family atmosphere in which the residents of the house will develop independence and a sense of competence by experiencing success in both the home and the community. Welcome House attempts to meet each individual's mental, physical, social and spiritual needs by actively seeking out and building on their strengths, interests and talents.

About OPRA

As a statewide association of service providers, the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA) is a leader in efforts to collaboratively build a statewide service system to meet the needs of our ultimate customers – Ohioans with developmental disabilities.

Currently, OPRA's membership consists of more than 150 organizations providing services to more than 15,000 Ohioans with Developmental Disabilities. The association represents approximately 70 percent of the state's community-based providers.