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NEWS CONTACT: Kelly Buck, Director of Marketing & Development, 315.253.6227 x313

UNITY HOUSE ANNOUNCES VOLUNTEER AWARDEE

Jill Fandrich selected for 3rd Fred Atkins Community Service Award



Auburn, New York – The Fred Atkins Community Service Award selection committee is pleased to announce that Ms. Jill Fandrich of Auburn has been chosen as its 3rd annual awardee. Ms. Fandrich, an outstanding community volunteer at a number of organizations in Cayuga County, will be honored at Unity House’s annual dinner on April 22 at the Holiday Inn. There, she will receive a \$500 cash prize - \$250 for her and \$250 to be given to a Cayuga County non-profit of her choice.

Unity House of Cayuga County, Inc. introduced the community-wide fund and award in 2011 in memory of beloved Cayuga County volunteer and 30-year Unity House board member Frederick Atkins. The Atkins Award recognizes an outstanding individual who volunteers in Cayuga County and who exemplifies Fred’s high moral standards and philanthropic spirit.

“When I think of a person who truly cares about our community and has made a difference in many lives, I instantly think of Jill Fandrich,” said County Clerk Sue Dwyer, who nominated Jill for the award. “Jill is smart, honest, hardworking, selfless, compassionate and sincere. She works behind the scenes and is seldom in the spotlight. Jill does the homework needed in order to make tough decisions, and has an innate ability to sum up ideas in a way that everyone understands.”

Actively involved in the community for 30 years, Fandrich’s volunteer service is well-known. Currently, she serves as a member of the Leadership Council for the Cayuga Community Fund; a committee member for the Adams Piano Series; and a board member of the Seward House Museum. Westminster Presbyterian Church is the grateful recipient of most of Jill’s volunteer hours. She is an elder at the church, serves as its newsletter/webpage editor, assists with a variety of mission and service projects, and is an adult and youth education teacher. She also volunteers at the Salvation Army’s Miracle Kitchen and Options for Independence’s personal care pantry.

Previously, Jill has served as a board member of the Seymour Library, YMCA-WEIU, United Way of Cayuga County, Human Services Coalition, and the Auburn Zoning Board of Appeals, among many others.

Jill Fandrich grew up in the Syracuse area. She holds a B.A. in English literature from Colgate University and a master's in educational communications and public relations from Syracuse University's Newhouse School. Jill was the supervisor of the local Department of Motor Vehicles office from 1980-1989. Since 1990, she has worked for the NYS court system, first as a Supreme Court justice's secretary, then in the Cayuga Law Library as law library clerk. She has been married to Judge Mark Fandrich since 1978; they have three children.

Ms. Fandrich will be honored at Unity House's annual dinner on Monday, April 22 at the Auburn Holiday Inn, 75 North Street. The public is invited to attend; the evening will begin at 5:30 pm. Gwen Webber-McLeod will be the keynote speaker. Cost is \$35 per person. RSVP by April 15 to 315-253-6227 or email: annualdinner@unityhouse.com.

Donations to the Atkins Fund are gratefully accepted at any time. Corporate sponsor for the dinner is Key Bank. Table sponsors are Owasco Beverage, the Allyn Foundation, Johnston Paper, and Auburn Knights of Columbus.

For more information about the Fred Atkins Community Service Fund and Award or Unity House's annual dinner, please contact Director of Marketing and Development Kelly Buck at 315.253.6227 or kdbuck@unityhouse.com, and visit www.unityhouse.com/fredatkinsaward.

Unity House of Cayuga County, Inc. provides transitional and permanent housing, rehabilitative, and employment services for individuals with mental health illnesses, developmental disabilities, and/or chemical dependencies from which they are recovering. A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, Unity House partners with these individuals to develop their personal skills and potential, enabling them to live more full and independent lives. The agency serves more than 700 consumers a day in six central New York counties. Unity House is committed to freeing our communities of misconceptions associated with disabilities through innovation, education, and advocacy. The agency celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2012.

Unity House ~ Empowering Lives, Securing Futures