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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EAST HOUSE EMPLOYEE HONORED

Gail Begley, Program Director of East House's Career Services Program, has received a statewide award from the International Association for Workforce Professionals. Begley is the second place winner of the 2008 Individual Specialized Customer Service Award.

Begley picked up the award at the Association's annual conference held in Saratoga Springs at the end of April. Gail was nominated by her staff and colleagues from Unity Health, VESID, Rochester Works, and the Rochester Area Employment Network (RAEN).

Gail's qualities cited in the nominations include her "exceptional" dedication and commitment to helping people with disabilities; her exemplary customer service practices that improve the lives of disabled and disadvantaged clients, and her inspirational leadership and mentoring of staff members. "Gail has a passion for the difficult job of working with individuals with mental illness to obtain employment. It is her passion that has made the program a great success," stated Karen May, Coordinator, Action Toward Employment, a division of Unity Health System. "She has clearly touched and changed many peoples' lives,"

Gail began an innovative vocational program for East House in a small carriage house eighteen years ago, with a staff of four. Today, she manages a dedicated team of fifteen employees in a large office, providing services that include career assessment, GED training, career counseling and planning, computer training, a college enrichment program, and job placement and retention services. Gail and staff members also participate in several outreach activities in the community,

such as the city clean sweep and gift-giving to the needy during the holidays. Begley has also served as past Chairperson, Co-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of RAEN, and is currently the leader of their Professional Development Committee. In 2007, Gail's program was recognized by the United Way of Greater Rochester and the Rochester Business Journal as one of three finalists in the Impact Area for exceptional work of local non-profits in the human service sector.

Begley states, "The award ceremony in Saratoga Springs was an amazing experience, and I was completely humbled by the things people said about me. I just wish my team could have been there with me. The award is just as much theirs as it is mine."

Begley lives in North Chili with her husband and three children. Founded in 1966, East House is a private, nonprofit agency that provides rehabilitation, residential and career services to individuals recovering from mental illness and/or chemical dependency. East House serves more than 1,300 clients and their families each year and is funded by New York State, Monroe County, United Way, client fees and donations. For more information, call 585-256-3800, ext. 213.

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Gail Begley, right, Program Director of East House Career Services, receives the IAWP second place Individualized Specialized Customer Service Award from Pamela Bedford, New York State IAWP Awards Chair.

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