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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Policy Experts Explain How to Improve Long Term Care in Wisconsin

Ways to strengthen the expansion of the state's Family Care Program among topics at Rehabilitation & Transition Conference April 1-3 at The American Club.

Kohler, Wis., March 30, 2009 – More than 400 human services professionals and teachers working in the areas of long term care, special education, and disability services will arrive at The American Club April 1-3, to learn how they can strengthen the state's frontline caregiving system and improve education and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Roberta Gassman, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development kicks off the conference with a keynote address on Wednesday. As the leader in the state's efforts to transform employment and training services to better meet the needs of Wisconsin in the 21st century economy, Gassman will discuss how government can help get our workforce on the road to economic recovery, while keeping a positive focus on employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Discussion of how Wisconsin's Family Care program is funded will be among the highlights of the conference. Expansion plans for Family Care will be discussed in another keynote address on Wednesday by Fredi Bove, the Interim Administrator for the Department of Health Services' Division of Long Term Care. As counter-point to this presentation, on Thursday, conference speaker John Villegas-Grubbs will discuss the evidence for using a standard fee funding system for long term care instead of the risk-based funding system used by Family Care. The future of long term care will depend on how the funding issues are resolved. Villegas-Grubbs is Principal and Partner in Arizona-based Johnston, Villegas-Grubbs & Abraham, a public health and social services consulting firm with a significant history of assistance to state and county governments.

Grassroots issue management and execution is the featured topic in Jeff Britt's discussion of the National Advocacy Campaign "Get to Know Me." The campaign seeks public support for recruiting, training and retaining a sustainable workforce of frontline caregivers. This session will discuss the campaign and the "Direct Support Fairness and Security Act" (H.R. 868 in the 111th Congress). Attendees will learn how to build a grassroots network to garner additional Congressional sponsors for the bill. Britt is Vice President of Grassroots Issue Management at Virginia-based McGuireWoods Consulting.

The agenda of national disability advocates and recent developments in their discussions with the Obama administration will be the focus of Thursday's keynote address by Andrew Imparato, the President and CEO of the American Association of People with Disabilities. Later in the day, Imparato will discuss changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act and Higher Education Act, describing the changes in innovative disability-related programs and new financial aid mechanisms to support special non-degree programs.

The annual Rehabilitation & Transition Conference is hosted by Rehabilitation For Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Association.

Rehabilitation For Wisconsin, Inc. (RFW) is a state-wide, non-profit association of more than 50 member organizations who are dedicated to addressing the employment, residential and community support needs of people with disabilities. For more information, visit www.r fw.org.

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