



State of Connecticut COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 2, Hartford, CT 06103
Promoting Equality and Justice for all People

EDWARD R. MAMBRUNO

COMMISSIONER BIOGRAPHY

Edward R. Mambruno is the Independent Ombudsperson for the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services (DDS). The Independent Ombudsperson advocates on behalf of consumers and their families. The office addresses complaints and/or problems regarding access to services or equity in treatment. Additionally, any systemic issues that may better direct resources of the department and to improve services used by its consumers are recommended.

Mr. Mambruno started his tenure in state service by being appointed as the State Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Director, a position he held for more than six years. He also served as ADA Legislative Liaison where he developed many progressive and proactive programs for persons with disabilities. He has been instrumental in the development and passage of bills protecting, empowering and bettering the lives of persons with developmental disabilities in the State of Connecticut.

A priority as ADA Legislative Liaison was his support for employment for people with disabilities. He lobbied for legislation that would assist individuals with disabilities in finding meaningful employment without having to worry about losing their medical benefits. One program that was developed to promote employment was the Governor's Career Internship Program (GCIP). The program offered internships to qualified students with "abilities" to work for state agencies.

However, before qualified persons with disabilities could be employed, Mr. Mambruno realized that having the opportunity to get a good education was key. He helped establish and implement the Governor's Committee for Youth with Disabilities Scholarship Fund (GCYD) in 1996. GCYD awards scholarships to high school students seeking to further their education through higher learning. A priority of GCYD is to award scholarships to minorities and inter-city youth with disabilities wishing to further their

education. To date this 501(c)(3) non-profit organization has awarded more than 250 scholarships worth approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ million dollars to Connecticut students attending Colleges and Universities throughout the nation. In 2008, Goodwin College was the first private institution to award two full scholarships. GCYD sponsors include The Hartford, Pfizer, Newman's Own, Northeast Utilities, McDonalds, CIB/Oak Hill, The Board of Education and Services for the Blind, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Education to name a few.

In addition to serving as the Ombudsperson for DDS, Mr. Mambruno is a Commissioner for the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), a position he has held since 2002. Mr. Mambruno was elected to serve as Secretary during his second term as Commissioner. Mr. Mambruno sees his role on this commission as an opportunity to serve as a watchdog for the human rights of persons with disabilities in Connecticut.

Mr. Mambruno's advocacy for persons with intellectual disabilities has been recognized nationally and was appointed by the President to serve on the President's Committee on Mental Retardation (PCMR). This two-year appointment is bestowed on only twenty-one individuals in the nation. The President's Committee acts in an advisory capacity to the President and the Secretary of Health and Human Services on matters relating to programs and services for persons with intellectual disabilities.

Mr. Mambruno was instrumental in supporting advocates who approved of changing the name of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation to the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities (PCPID). The change was made by Executive Order and took place at a special ceremony in the Oval Office. The Chair of PCPID appointed Mr. Mambruno Chairman of the PCPID Subcommittee on Employment.

Mr. Mambruno is a graduate of University of Connecticut with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. He was awarded a fellowship to attend the University of Connecticut's Master's Degree Program and graduated with a Master's Degree in Public Affairs.