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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**OCI Hosts 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Founders Award & Service Excellence Awards Dinner**

*Wilmington, DE*— OCI recognized a total of 29 community partners and employees with disabilities at their 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Founders Awards dinner held November 18, 2009 at the DuPont Country Club in Wilmington, Delaware. The event is held each year in celebration of the tireless efforts and commitment of individuals and businesses that have contributed to OCI's mission of empowering individuals with disabilities through employment, training, rehabilitation and support services.

ServiceSource Network Board Member Pete Booker kicked the event off by recognizing 25 OCI employees with *Service Excellence Awards* for exceptional work accomplished throughout the year at 14 different worksites.

After dinner, OCI staff recognized a number of community partners including:

The *Community Partner of the Year Award* was presented to Edward Tos, Deputy Director of the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), who received in recognition of DVRs more than 50 years of working with OCI to provide resources and opportunities to individuals with disabilities.

The *Business Partner of the Year Award* was presented to Bradford Clark, Assistant General Manager of Embassy Suites, Newark/Wilmington South. In its 10 years in the community, Embassy Suites has become a local industry leader in providing accommodations and embracing the employment of people with disabilities.

The *Government Partner of the Year Award* was presented to the Pennsylvania Army National Guard located at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania. Thirty-one OCI employees are currently employed on food service, custodial and laundry contracts at Fort Indiantown Gap.

The *Program Participant Employee of the Year Award* was presented to Travis Wunderlich, an OCI employee at the Pennsylvania National Guard's 166<sup>th</sup> Regimental Mess located at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania.

The *Community Placement Employee of the Year Award* was presented to Anwar Palmer, an individual who received services through the Brandywine School District FrameWORK for Success Program and now provides custodial and maintenance work for Buvera Building Services in Wilmington..

The evening ended with a presentation of the *17<sup>th</sup> Annual Founders Award*. The 2009 award was presented to Morton Richard Kimmel, Esquire, President of Kimmel, Carter, Roman & Peltz, P.A. Mr. Kimmel's affiliation with OCI began in 1999 when he became a Board Member. He was instrumental in positioning the Blue Gold All Star Basketball Games as OCI's premier event. For the past 10 years, his direction, leadership and vision resulted in more than \$1.6 million being raised in support of OCI's programs for individuals with disabilities in the State of Delaware. Mr. Kimmel has further shown his commitment to OCI's mission by providing employment for an individual with a disability at his law firm for the past eight years.

As one of the largest employers of people with disabilities in Delaware, OCI directly employs nearly 100 people with disabilities and serves more than 500 people with disabilities through various rehabilitation, employment and training programs. Learn more about OCI at <http://oci.ourpeoplework.org>.

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