



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Resources for Children WITH Special Needs and United We Stand of New York Provide Important and Admirable Support for Youth WITH Disabilities and Their Families

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR September 4, 2014

Queens, NY (September 4, 2014) – Tom Huang, 9, is a Cub Scout and loves to sing “loud and proud” in his church choir class. He also has autism, and thanks to the help of Resources for Children with Special Needs (RCSN) and United We Stand of New York (UWSofNY), he has been given the tools needed to grow as a student and a person.

Together, RCSN and UWSofNY form the New York City Parent Partnership: the state-funded special education parent center for Brooklyn and Queens.

Two years ago, the special education team at Tom’s Queens school placed him in a small class consisting of only of students with disabilities. While this served him well initially, his mother, Jackie Huang, noticed her son’s speech, activity level, and social behavior improved when he was exposed to mainstream students. She then approached the school’s team to have him placed in a less restrictive learning environment.

She was met with overwhelming resistance, and “didn’t know what to do,” Huang said. “I was ready to give up. I was on my own.”

Huang reached out to **RCSN Program Manager Jean Mizutani**, who coached her on how to request and execute a team meeting, how to be prepared for any potential disagreements and all other ins and outs of the process. Mizutani is currently in the process of guiding Huang through her strategic next steps.

“This is not something I could have handled on my own,” **Huang said**. “I needed someone to help me and Jean was there. I just want Tom to have a life like other kids.”

State Senator Joseph Addabbo, Jr. recently met with Mizutani regarding RCSN, as well as Special Education Parent Centers in individual boroughs, and the work it does, helping parents and families of youth with disabilities understand, navigate and access the services and supports they need to help their children reach their full potential.

They provide free workshops, resources and individual assistance to help parents like Huang.

“In situations such as Jackie’s, it’s a blessing that she was able to turn to a place such as RCSN. In these circumstances, parents need individual attention that they are oftentimes not afforded. I encourage all parents struggling with their children with disabilities’ schooling to work with the Queens Special Education Parent Center,” **said Senator Addabbo**. “I look forward to working with RCSN and UWSofNY to assist Queens families with their youth with disabilities.”

Sometimes, parents need someone who will listen and help them make the next steps. The partnership’s expert staff, many of whom have children with disabilities of their own, is there to help families along the road toward the best possible future for their child.

“Joe’s interest and concern for children with disabilities and education makes for lively conversation,” **Mizutani said**. “It’s good to know that parents have an advocate in him, too.”

Families can reach the Resource Line in English at [212-677-4660](tel:212-677-4660) and in Spanish at [212-677-4668](tel:212-677-4668). They can also call UWSofNY at [718-302-4313](tel:718-302-4313). For more information, visit RCSN’s website at www.resourcesnyc.org or UWSofNY’s website at www.uwsfn.org.