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## **Senator Jones Challenges County Boards To Help Legislators Find Funding Solutions**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – A legislator from Southwest Ohio was honored as the “legislator of the year” by a statewide organization that supports all 88 *County Boards of Developmental Disabilities* in providing services and supports to individuals with disabilities.

State Senator Shannon Jones was introduced to the about 600 participants at the 27th annual *Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB) of Developmental Disabilities Convention* by Eugene Rose, president of the *Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities*. Senator Jones represents all of Warren County and the eastern portion of Hamilton County. She recently was named Majority Whip of the Ohio Senate.

The award was given Dec. 1 at the Hilton Hotel at Easton.

“Shannon Jones has a heart for people with disabilities and empathy for their families,” Rose said, noting Senator Jones made his family a priority when his son Aaron died in May 2009 after complications resulting from his developmental disabilities.

In the past two years, Senator Jones has participated in the *OACB’s Call2Action* trainings, introduced legislation that will give autism assistance dogs the same rights and regulations as guide dogs, and has exhibited a clear understanding of Medicaid and the *County Board of Developmental Disabilities* systems.

“Shannon understands that each individual *County Board of Developmental Disabilities* can make better, more thoughtful decisions for their people with developmental disabilities compared to a group of people in Columbus or Washington,” Rose said.

While thanking the *OACB* for the award, Senator Jones issued a challenge to Ohio’s 88 *County Boards of Developmental Disabilities’* Board Members and staff. “All of you understand the financial situation Ohio finds itself in,” Senator Jones said. “I want to leave you with a challenge. I’m asking you to dig deep and think about the things we can do to move forward. We need options and creativity.”

Senator Jones asked the crowd to think how the General Assembly can help *County Boards of Developmental Disabilities*. “If we cannot provide you with resources, what can we do to help you do more with less,” she said.

The “legislator of the year” award is presented annually to an elected or appointed official who exhibits high accomplishments in legislative leadership for people with developmental disabilities.

“Senator Jones has demonstrated she wants to be part of the funding solution in Ohio. Through her actions, she has shown herself to be a friend to everyone who cares about people with developmental disabilities,” said Dan Ohler, *OACB* Executive Director.

“It is our pleasure to honor Senator Jones for her hard work. We appreciate the time and respect she shows not only individuals with developmental disabilities, but those of us who work to enhance the lives and opportunities of the disabled,” Ohler said.

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**CAPTION: State Senator Shannon Jones earned the OACB’s Legislator of the Year award. Pictured above are Eugene Rose (president, Warren County Board of DD); Cheryl Phipps (superintendent, Hamilton County Board of DD); Megan Manuel (superintendent, Warren County Board of DD); Dean Fadel (president, OACB Board of Trustees); Senator Jones; Dan Ohler (OACB Executive Director); and John Martin (Director, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities).**