



**Office of
General Services**



**Council on
Developmental
Disabilities**

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NEW YORK STATE OGS & CDD GARNER NY EMMY AWARD FOR PRODUCTION OF WILLOWBROOK DOCUMENTARY

Full Documentary Available to View [Here](#)

The New York State Council on Developmental Disabilities (CDD) and Office of General Services (OGS) today announced that “The Path Forward: Remembering Willowbrook,” a documentary produced and distributed by CDD and the OGS Digital and Media Services team has received a NY Emmy Award in the Diversity/Equity/Inclusion – Long Form Content category.

“Congratulations to the OGS Media Services team and our partners at the Council on Developmental Disabilities for winning this well-deserved Emmy award,”

Commissioner Moy said. “I encourage the public to watch and be inspired by the Willowbrook documentary. Under Governor Hochul’s administration, our state is taking the path forward to advance the rights of people with disabilities.”

Under Governor Hochul’s leadership:

- [Person-centered supports and services are being strengthened](#),
- [Employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities are being enhanced](#) by preparing them for the labor market, and
- There is a [multi-faceted effort to provide direct support professionals with career advancement and growth opportunities](#) through professional credentialing and certification, training reimbursement, and bonuses.

“Many people have never heard of Willowbrook, and in order to keep moving forward in our advocacy work we must remember and learn from our history. This recognition can only elevate Willowbrook’s important story,” **said CDD Executive Director Kristin Proud.** “It is an additional honor to have those with disabilities at the center of the diversity, equity and inclusion conversation with the NY Emmy Award in the DEI category.”

The documentary was an integral part of the state's campaign to mark the 50th anniversary of Geraldo Rivera's groundbreaking 1972 exposé, which shed light on the horrific conditions and abuses at the Willowbrook State School on Staten Island. Willowbrook was the largest institution in the world for people with disabilities at the time, and Rivera's exposé shocked the nation and forever changed the way people with disabilities were cared for and treated in New York State and beyond.

In recognition of this landmark moment, CDD and OGS produced a half-hour documentary highlighting the importance of lessons learned, the positive change that resulted, and Willowbrook's legacy.

The documentary includes insightful interviews from parents and siblings of former residents and former staff who tell personal stories of what happened at Willowbrook and how it affected their lives. You'll hear from influential journalist Geraldo Rivera, former Willowbrook resident and self-advocacy pioneer Bernard Carabello, and the Willowbrook physicians who helped pave the way to the deinstitutionalization movement.

OGS Media Services team members nominated for their work on the documentary are Kathryn Schmieding, executive producer; Joseph Walsh, director; Catherine Greninger, lead motion graphic artist; John Armstrong, editor; Shamus O'Donnell, creative director; and Casey O'Donnell, producer. CDD producers, former Interim Executive Director Vicky Hiffa and CDD communications team members Regina Dalpiaz-Bulman and Drew Webster were critical in the development of the documentary.

The winners were announced at the New York Chapter of The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences' 67th New York Annual Emmy® Awards on October 26 in New York City.

"The Path Forward: Remembering Willowbrook" has aired on PBS stations across New York State and has been selected to screen and won best documentary at several NY Film Festivals. The half-hour documentary has more than 238,000 YouTube views and is available in Spanish, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, and Audio Descriptive translations.

"The Path Forward: Remembering Willowbrook" documentary can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/ev80qEtp2u4>.

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