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## **Tracy Rackensperger Bubbles Up**

*by Richard Ellenson*

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, USSAAC hosted its Second Annual Bubbly Ball, sponsored by Microsoft, at the 20<sup>th</sup> CSUN Conference. The event got its name because it surrounds the achievements of individuals who use AAC with the right things: caviar, chocolate covered strawberries, and champagne. This year's theme was "The Class of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Among those honored was one of the AAC-RERC's own: Tracy Rackensperger.



Tracy not only manages the online forums that the AAC-RERC runs through ACOLUG and participated in the first AAC-RERC Writers Brigade, she has also been an avid advocate for people with disabilities, serving in leadership positions on several national, state, and local boards and committees and publishing many works related to people with disabilities.

But at the Bubbly Ball, Tracy managed something more up close and personal. She shared her dreams, accomplishments, and a keen sense of humor with nearly 300 people, including William H. Macy, the evening's celebrity host.



Tracy batted clean-up, taking the fourth and final spot of four women who spoke about their "Fantasies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." As a Radio and TV major, her dreams were about not only working in Hollywood, but helping to build a world where we use our available technology to allow individuals who use AAC much greater access to true roles in the entertainment industry: doing everything from screenwriting to finding significant roles in movies and, egads, soap operas!

"As the idea of inclusion spreads," Tracy said, "individuals will say... 'Inclusion? What is that?' Nobody will know the term, 'inclusion', because people with significant disabilities and those who use augmentative communication will be seen as being a natural part of their lives.

Bravo to Tracy on all the efforts that led to her appearance at the USSAAC Bubbly Ball. With Tracy's inclusion in AAC-RERC and our community, we're sure the more global notion of inclusion will, indeed, one day be a thing of the past.

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