The 2012 recipient of the NYS AHPERD Bernard E. Hughes Award is the Black River Outdoor Education Program. Black River Outdoor Education Program, formerly Potato Hill Farm is dedicated to establishing awareness, understanding and appreciation of the environment, the responsibilities associated with preserving the environment and providing an opportunity to increase the physical health of visiting students by engaging them in various outdoor activities. Located in the foothills of the Adirondacks, Black River Outdoor Education Program is funded by a private family trust as a “gift to the children of Central New York.” The program began in 2008 with 2,800 students participating and has grown to over 15,000 visitors each school year. The mission of the program is to reconnect children to nature in a peaceful picturesque and educational environment. It is a dream come true adventure that is available to school children in seven counties surrounding the village of Boonville. Not only are all the activities free, but transportation costs, covering fuel and bus driver wages, are also included, so every child has the opportunity to enjoy the experience. Activities offered include mountain biking, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, nature hikes and horse drawn carriage or sleigh rides. The long range goal of the program is to offer students a new educationally layered experience each time they return to the program utilizing the seven campuses, each with unique seasonal activities. Elaine Hage, Program Director says, “it is our hope that each child will be inspired and interested in nature as a lifelong learner, and that a respect for the environment and the animals inhabiting our world will continue to grow.” President Quitoni, it is my honor to present to you the recipient of the 2012 Bernard E. Hughes Award, Black River Outdoor Education Program being accepted by Elaine Hage, Program Director.