

On the Road to Independence



For Jeff Mathes, independent living is on the horizon. After 6 years of living in an AccessCNY sponsored apartment with 24/7 access to staff support, he's thinking about moving out. Jeff says he hopes to move down the hall. Though it might not seem like it, this is a big change. Jeff will go from living in an apartment where he has the constant support of staff, and is helped with day to day activities, to only seeing staff as needed.

"I'd like to stay in the same building as my friends, and still have some access to staff," he said. "Now that I can do my own medication, I think I can live on my own." Though he is still working on mastering his cooking and cleaning habits, he's made great progress.

Jeff's journey toward independent living has been a long one. In 2005, he had surgery to relieve symptoms of cerebral palsy, including debilitating seizures. The surgery was successful, and with proper medication, he no longer has seizures.

While Jeff's physical health improved, his mental health began to decline. During his recovery, Jeff began to hear voices, and was diagnosed with schizophrenia. In 2006, he started visiting Unique Peerspectives (UP), AccessCNY's mental health peer support center. Jeff says that when he was really struggling he would visit every day to receive one on one and group support services from the program. Jeff credits his success to the services at AccessCNY, both at UP and at his residence saying, "the most helpful thing is the support I get from the staff."

As he learned to cope better with his mental health struggles, Jeff volunteered for open mic night at UP, singing and playing

Continue inside...



Ariel Makes Anything That Rolls Go Farther



Anything That Rolls raised over \$45,000 this year, a strong showing that came close to breaking the events record. Turnout was boosted by a great effort from the newest member of the Anything That Rolls Event Committee -- Ariel Servadio.

Ariel has been to the event for the last four years, and always encourages not only her fellow Derby Lite and Syracuse Skate Gang members to come out and roll, but other members of the New York roller derby community as well. "We really value her hard work reaching out to this unique and spirited community. The roller derby ladies add a lot of energy to Anything That Rolls!" said Matt Seubert, Associate Executive Director of Development and Communications at AccessCNY.

Ariel will be the first to tell you that the initial draw to participating in Anything That Rolls was

Continue inside...

On the Road to Independence Continued...



guitar for others. Jeff has even volunteered for Unique Peerspectives' "warm line" to talk with and help those who are struggling. At the same time, Jeff began to work a 20-30 hour a week retail job, and volunteer at two radio stations. Through AccessCNY's services, support, and help getting out into the community, Jeff has worked his way toward independence.

Today, Jeff is doing well, and will be the first to tell you that he feels like a success. His newfound confidence is infectious, and he bashfully brags about how he is ready to move out. "It will be sad to see Jeff move out, just because the staff love working with him. But we are all so proud that he is achieving his personal goal of independent living," said Russ Gentile, Program Director of Developmental Disability and Acquired Brain Injury Residential Services for AccessCNY. "We wish him the best, and will be happy to see him any time."

Please give today to support people like Jeff.

Ariel Makes Anything That Rolls Go Farther Continued...



the opportunity to skate outside, her first time doing so. "It was like a skating 5k, and that's awesome," Ariel remarked, "but after I did the event for the first time I realized how much I loved the spirit of inclusion, of making sure anyone of any ability can have fun. That's the same spirit we have for Derby Lite and SSG, too."

Servadio fully intends to keep attending Anything That Rolls for years to come. "I love what AccessCNY does to keep giving people in our community the access they need. That's always a good thing," she said.

Anything That Rolls Sponsors:

Empower FCU
Wegman's
Custom Wealth Management
Walmart
Avalon Document Services
Kinney Drugs Foundation
Connetquot West
Service Alert Systems

AccessCNY in Albany; Focus on Wages



In May, twenty AccessCNY program participants and staff went to Albany to be recognized on the floor of the Assembly. Assemblywoman Pamela Hunter, who represents parts of Solway, Salina, and Southern Syracuse, invited the organization to be recognized for outstanding work in the community.

"It was an honor to be recognized by our local leaders for the work we do each day, and all of us really enjoyed the trip and a chance to see state government at work," said Deb Chandler, a staff member who was part of the visit.

The Majority Leader stood and celebrated the organization's great work in Central New York. He thanked Assemblywoman Hunter for recognizing AccessCNY's impact on the community.



On the trip, program participants and staff watched votes occur on the Assembly floor and heard local issues being raised. Earlier this year the state passed a minimum wage increase, which will have a major impact on AccessCNY.

"We wholeheartedly believe that our staff deserves a higher wage for the difficult and intimate tasks they

perform," said Paul Joslyn, Executive Director of AccessCNY. "As a non-profit, AccessCNY relies heavily on government sources for much of our funding. After eight years without a significant pay increase it's becoming more difficult to recruit and retain staff to work with people with disabilities. Staff are skilled, knowledgeable and deserve a wage that reflects the complexity of their work. Much progress has been made in the last forty years to empower people with disabilities. We must continue to advocate for those who rely on our care."

Visit our website at accesscny.org/advocacy to learn how you can make a difference for direct care providers and AccessCNY programs.

Executive Director Prudence York Retires



Prudence York, Executive Director of AccessCNY, has announced her retirement from the agency, effective September 1, 2016.

"After a career that began in 1979 working directly with people with disabilities, I am retiring to spend time with my husband kayaking, hiking and finding new ways to give back to our community," York stated in an announcement to staff. "Over 37 years I had the rare privilege of being part of a revolution – a revolution that fought to establish basic human rights for people with disabilities."

York's steady leadership was one of many guiding forces that led to the creation of AccessCNY in 2015. The agency was formed as the result of the merger of Enable and Transitional Living Services.

Under York's guidance, the agency grew from serving 1,500 individuals with developmental disabilities with a budget of roughly \$18 million

dollars, to an agency that serves over 3,000 people with developmental disabilities, acquired brain injuries or mental health issues. AccessCNY has an annual operating budget of over \$32 million dollars.

Prior to being named Executive Director in 2012, York served as Enable's Director of Community Services for individuals with developmental disabilities. Her philosophy was formed by her direct care experiences. "I have found that learning comes at unexpected times from unexpected places and that the greatest rewards are relationships."

"It's with great sadness that the AccessCNY Board of Directors accepts Prudence's letter of retirement. Her leadership over 37 years has transformed the lives of thousands of individuals with disabilities in Central New York," said Ricky Ryder, President of the AccessCNY Board of Directors.

The AccessCNY Board has completed a broad search for a new Executive Director. Paul Joslyn, formerly of Unity House of Cayuga County, began work in August.



26th AccessCNY Golf Classic Another Success



On June 17th, AccessCNY held its 26th Annual Golf Classic at Lake Shore Yacht and Country Club. The captain and crew tournament featured many teams from businesses all over Central New York.



This year's tournament raised nearly \$55,000 from a variety of sources, including tournament fees, a silent auction, and two raffles. Sponsors also contribute a lot to the tournament, according to Matt Seubert,

Associate Executive Director of Communications and Development for AccessCNY. "The Golf Classic is not possible without our sponsors. With their support, we can provide critical services in our community."

There was a buzz throughout the tournament about the headline auction item—a week's stay at a premiere resort in Cabo St. Lucas—that carried throughout the day. The prize sold for \$2,600 at the live auction. "That was really exciting, because \$2,600 is enough for two adapted bikes for children with disabilities," said Diane Weiermann, Director of Outreach Services.

"There was great energy out on the course this year. It's always great to see such support from our community here in the greater Syracuse area," said Seubert. The tournament had another hole in one this year, shot by AccessCNY Board Member Jon Law on the 14th hole. He won a trip to French Lick, a golf resort in Indiana.

Be sure to join us for the AccessCNY Golf Classic again next year!

A Big Thank You To:

MassMutual of Central New York
Brown & Brown Empire State
Usherwood Office Technology
KeyBank
Hummel's Office Plus
MMRI
PMCS

Your support provides access in our community!

Matt Seubert
Associate Executive
Director -- Development

Ricky Ryder
Board President

Paul Joslyn
Executive Director

Upcoming Event Dates

AccessToday Awards Dinner..... September 29th, 2016
Celebrate independence, innovation and community. Tickets at www.AccessCNY.org/events/accesstoday/

Disability Mentoring Day October 19th, 2016
Helps to promote career development and make employers aware of a unique job pool.

SADA Charity Preview February 15th, 2017
Syracuse Auto Dealers Charity preview fundraising event. Tickets on sale soon!

For more details on these events contact
Matt Seubert, Associate Executive Director -- Development
at 315.410.3383 or mseubert@accesscny.org

1603 Court Street
Syracuse, NY 13208
315.455.7591

420 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
315.478.4151

1010 James Street
Syracuse, NY 13203
315.478.4151

Administrative Offices: 315.410.3343

Clinical Services: 315.410.3319

Communications & Development: 315.410.3383

Consumer Directed Homecare: 315.410.3332

DD/ABI Services: 315.410.3301

Exploring Your World Preschool: 315.362.2664

Human Resources: 315.410.3312

Mental Health Services: 315.218.0880

www.accesscny.org

Agency Services

AccessCNY provides a dynamic array of services for people with physical and developmental disabilities, acquired brain injuries (ABI) and/or mental health issues.

Services for those with a Developmental Disability or ABI

Adaptive Equipment Loan Program	Early Intervention Services	Physical Therapy
Advocacy	Environmental Modifications	Preschool Evaluations
Assistive Technology	Family and Individual Supports	Self-Direction
Augmentative Communication	Home and Community Based Services	Sensory Integration
Certified Residential Settings	Inclusive Preschool Education	Social Work Counseling
Community Habilitation	Individualized Support Services	Speech and Language Therapy
Consumer Directed Homecare	Medicaid Service Coordination	Supported Employment
Day Habilitation	Occupational Therapy	

Services for those with a Mental Health Issue

Certified Residential Services	Housing Supports	Supported Education
Community Supports	Peer-Based Support	Supported Employment
Family Supports	Social Skills Training	Vocational Rehabilitation

Affiliations

Association for Community Living	New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services
Association for Persons in Supported Employment	Supported Housing Network of New York
Cerebral Palsy Associations of NYS	United Way of CNY
National Association for the Education of Young Children	