

TAKING STEPS TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

AccessCNY helps those with disabilities access independence.

For Tommy change started 18 months ago.

Tommy, who has a developmental disability, used to live on his own and relished the independence that it provided him. That independence was taken from him when he was told he would never walk again as a result of back surgery.

Tommy was in constant pain, which eventually forced him to trade his apartment for a nursing home. As Tommy's physical health deteriorated, so too did his mental health. He became depressed and angry at the world.

In August of 2017, Tommy's life was altered again; this time in a positive way. He was able to leave the nursing home and move to a house operated by AccessCNY. This move, and the new level of support Tommy received was a turning point. Shortly after moving in, AccessCNY staff realized that Tommy's struggles came from being prescribed over 36 different medications!

After this discovery, staff helped Tommy advocate for a reduction in his medications. As a result, his reliance on prescriptions decreased and gradually he became himself again. Tommy will tell you this change allowed him to truly live again! He became more engaged with friends, had more energy and was able to devote extra effort to his physical therapy at AccessCNY.



Tommy at his AccessCNY home.

If staff were surprised to see such a drastic change in Tommy, it was nothing compared to what happened in July!

One afternoon Tommy came into the living room and announced he could walk again. Staff were shocked by this sudden announcement. Kristy, the house manager, grabbed a walker and challenged Tommy to prove it. Step by step he walked across the living room. Tommy could walk again! Staff members cried from joy and Kristy cites seeing Tommy walk as the best moment in her 20 years serving people with disabilities.

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RESPIRE SERVICE COMES TO ACCESSCNY

The merger of AccessCNY and Spaulding Support Services has brought new staff and resources to AccessCNY – along with a new program option, Spaulding Respite Care.

Spaulding Respite Service provides caregivers with a break from the day to day care needs of their family members with a disability. Short term, planned respite services are available at two supervised homes by staff who provide care to meet the unique needs of each person. Respite also provides social activities with peers at the program site and recreational activities in the community.

Both homes offer two types of respite services; weekend overnight and weekday afternoon/evening care. Weekend respite rotates groups of individuals who share common interests and similar abilities. This allows groups to bond more easily, enjoy their stay and form friendships. Afternoon and evening care provides meals and recreation time, often following day time activities.

"The Spaulding Respite program is a great example of why AccessCNY and Spaulding came together," said Paul Joslyn, Executive Director. "AccessCNY did not have a respite program; through the merger more individuals can now benefit from this unique service." 🌱



SPAULDING MERGER COMPLETE

From the desk of Paul Joslyn, Executive Director

On November first Spaulding Support Services became part of AccessCNY. We are excited to officially welcome Spaulding staff and those receiving services to the AccessCNY family.

We have been operating as one team since earlier this year, but to mark the close of the merger we celebrated with pizza and cake with many of our 1,800 employees. As one agency AccessCNY now supports over 3,000 people with disabilities.

The merged agency will continue to operate as AccessCNY, but the Spaulding name will live on.

This spring we announced that we would preserve Spaulding's history through the agency's Respite Care program. This vital service is new to AccessCNY and will now be called the Spaulding Respite program. AccessCNY was born from the merger of Enable and Transitional Living Services (TLS); we know how important it is to preserve an agency's legacy.

Our shared values are why AccessCNY and Spaulding have merged. While all services will be carried out under the AccessCNY name, those services will continue to be delivered with dedication, compassion, innovation and commitment.

AccessCNY will continue to adapt to meet the changing needs of our community. Our expansive, person-centered services for those with a disability mean we can help create more opportunities for those we serve. Please visit www.accesscny.org to see the wide array of programs and services that we offer.

AccessCNY now offer more services, to more individuals, all with the goal of creating more independent lives for people with disabilities. The more expansive our services, the greater support we can provide to our shared community. ♻️



Members of AccessCNY mental health team celebrate the merger.

HELP ACCESS INDEPENDENCE

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Address: _____

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GIFT AMOUNT

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☐ \$30 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000

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AccessCNY
1603 Court Street
Syracuse, NY 13208

Give securely online at
www.accesscny.org/donate/
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ACCESSCNY EXPANDS PEER-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

This year, AccessCNY has made new commitments to expanding peer-based mental health services--both by opening the new Berkana Crisis Respite House, and relocating and renovating a new space for Unique Peerspectives. AccessCNY's peer support staff includes team members who have themselves had their own mental health diagnosis and are now in recovery.



Local officials cut the ribbon to open Berkana.

"Berkana is a first of its kind program in Onondaga County and is up and running thanks to a partnership between AccessCNY and the Central New York Care Collaborative," said Sue Schultz, Chief Operating Officer.

"We are grateful for the many elected officials, including Rep. John Katko who helped open the program and talked about the change Berkana can make for our community."

The new program, Berkana Crisis Respite House, is located on James Street and is open 24/7. The home has 6 beds which individuals can utilize during a mental health crisis to avoid the emergency room. Program participants can receive peer supports and can stay up to 7 days. During their stay, guests will work with staff to build crisis coping skills, connect with resources and create a recovery plan.

"Berkana provides a place where members of our community in mental health crisis can recover in a place other than the emergency room and with people who know their struggles. With peer support guests make a recovery plan and move forward from crisis," explained Ken Mack, Associate Executive Director of Mental Health and Employment Services at AccessCNY.

AccessCNY has also relocated and renovated the long running Unique Peerspectives. The peer support center has moved down Salina Street and is now located across from the Centro Bus Terminal at 572 South Salina Street. The new space is updated, has room for more members and activities and is conveniently located near the mass transit hub.

Unique Peerspectives provides a variety of support groups and activities designed to help those with mental health diagnoses make progress in their recovery and provides an alternative to the mental health system. Staff members are all peers who are themselves on the path to recovery.

"The true strength of peer-based support is the powerful message of empathy that staff send," Paul Joslyn, Executive Director of AccessCNY says. "When staff are able to say 'I've been there and I can tell you how things get better' it sends a message that those receiving services really understand."

Both Berkana and Unique Peerspectives are open to anyone in the community who is in need of help. The programs are free to those who utilize the service. 💚

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As inspiring as Tommy's story is, it's not unique. Each year, AccessCNY serves more than 3,000 individuals with a developmental disability or mental health diagnosis. Every day staff enable each individual to set their own goals and reach their own unique level of independence.

With your year-end donation, AccessCNY can empower more people to reach their pinnacle of independence. By making a donation, you: help Berkana peer respite provide a safe place for individuals in mental health crisis to recover; give a four year old with autism the chance to speak for himself using a communication device from Project Adapt; or support a member of the David Clark Learning Center in using art and music to recover memories lost to an acquired brain injury.

All this and more is possible when you support AccessCNY. Donate today to help create more independent lives.

With a lot of hard work and a little support from AccessCNY, Tommy is now happy and thriving. He's even working towards getting his own apartment again. Tommy's reached a level of independence he never dreamed possible just a few months ago.

With your contribution AccessCNY can continue to help individuals like Tommy set and exceed their own goals. Please be part of their success with your gift today. 💚

Clip and send the enclosed coupon inside or save a stamp and give online at: www.accesscny.org



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Executive Director

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WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Help with AccessCNY events and make a difference for people of all abilities! Join us by:

- Volunteering for an event
- Donating auction items
- Helping us promote an event

Contact Nikki at nikkibomasuto@accesscny.org to get started!



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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

Agency Services

AccessCNY offers person-centered services that empower individuals of all ages and abilities to reach their full potential in our shared community. Services are provided with dedication, compassion, innovation and commitment.

Services for those with a Developmental Disability or Acquired Brain Injury

Adaptive Equipment Loan Program
Advocacy
Assistive Technology
Augmentative Communication
Certified Residential Settings
Community Habilitation
Consumer Directed Homecare
Day Habilitation

Environmental Modifications
Family and Individual Supports
Home and Community Based Services
Inclusive Preschool Education
Individualized Support Services
Occupational Therapy
Physical Therapy

Preschool Evaluations
Respite Services
Self-Direction
Sensory Integration
Social Work Counseling
Speech and Language Therapy
Supported Employment

Services for those with a Mental Health Issue

Certified Residential Services
Community Supports
Family Supports

Housing Supports
Peer-Based Support
Social Skills Training

Supported Education
Supported Employment
Vocational Rehabilitation

Affiliations

Association for Community Living
Association for Persons in Supported Employment
Cerebral Palsy Associations of NYS
National Association for the Education of Young Children

New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services
Supported Housing Network of New York
United Way of CNY

