



THE INDEPENDENT

*the hardest battle is to be nobody-but-yourself
in a world that is trying to make you like everybody else.*

e.e. cummings

Spring, 2009

**TRANSITION NEWS
BEGINS ON PAGE 8**

INSURANCE FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

On October 9, 2008 then President Bush signed Public Law 110-381. It amended the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that dependent students who take a medically necessary leave of absence do not lose health insurance coverage, and for other purposes.

As I was doing further research on this, I found New York State already had a similar law, Insurance Law S. 3237, effective April 1, 2000.

The text reads:

Health Insurance Coverage for full-time students on medical leaves of absence.

(a) Every individual's health insurance policy and every group or blanket accident or health insurance policy that provides coverage for dependent children who are full-time students to a higher age than other dependent children shall continue the coverage of a covered dependent student who takes a leave of absence from school due to illness for a period of twelve months from the last day of attendance in school, provided, however, that nothing in this section shall require coverage of a dependent student beyond the age at which coverage would otherwise terminate.

(b) In order to qualify under this section, the medical necessity of a leave of absence from school must be certified to by the student's attending physician who is licensed to practice in the state of New York. Written documentation of the illness must be submitted to the insurer.

(c) The rate charged for such extended coverage shall be the same as that charged while the dependent is enrolled as a full-time student.

You can find the text of the law at <http://www.ins.state.ny.us/acrobat/3237.pdf>.

HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCES

The Harvard Project on Disability has published several resources on human rights for persons with intellectual disabilities, their organizations and their allies. These resources are available for download from their website at www.hpod.org

"We Have Human Rights" is an easy to read explanation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This publication is designed for people with intellectual disabilities and their allies. It is also useful for children with

disabilities, and for any one wanting a straightforward explanation of what the CRPD is and what it says about the human rights of people with disabilities. This publication is also available in Chinese and Spanish.

"Change Your Life With Human Rights" is an easy to read explanation of how to advocate for your human rights. Learn what human rights can do, what advocacy is, and how to take action to help yourself and other people with disabilities. This publication is useful for anyone wanting a straightforward explanation of how to advocate for their human rights.

"Human Rights. Yes!" is a human rights training manual developed for people with disabilities and their representative organizations. This publication explains the meaning of the rights enshrined in the Convention, provides guidance on self-advocacy tactics, and how to take a human rights approach to disability rights whether at the community or national level. It is an important resource for all individuals or organizations wanting to incorporate a human rights approach to disability into their work, including human rights groups focused on children and women.

Information appeared in NYS E- Bulletin, March, 2009 <http://www.ebulletin.us/index.htm>.

**FREE LIBRARY SERVICES FOR
THE BLIND, VISUALLY IMPAIRED,
AND DISABLED**

New York State Talking Book and Braille Library (TBBL), coordinates with the nation-wide program by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of the Library of Congress.

To be eligible for books and magazines on cassette, and a special cassette player, NYS

residents must have a visual or other physical limitation which prevents reading printed materials, or holding a book, or turning its pages. Those who have a reading disability, such as dyslexia, are also eligible for this free service. Borrowers may live independently, or in an institution such as developmental centers, nursing homes, or other health related facilities, or attend school. This TTBL program is for the school-aged through adult.

To register for this free library service, or if you already belong but have equipment problems, you may contact Pat Johnson, Outreach Coordinator, Chautauqua Cattaraugus Library System(CCLS), 106 W 5th ST, Jamestown NY 14701, 716.484.7135, ext. 243 for an application form, or a replacement player. CCLS is a sub-lending agency of the NYSTBBL, providing local service. To contact the library, call the toll free number 800-342-3688 (V/TTY).

ARE YOU CONNECTED?

CSD-DTV Help Center for Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf blind is open 7:00 AM to 1:00 AM (CST) 7 days a week.

The FCC (Federal Communications Commission) is working with community-based organizations to help educate consumers, assist with converter box procurement and installation, establish and staff help centers and conduct post- deadline assistance with respect to the transition to digital television (DTV).

The CSD-DTV Help Center is tailored to meet the communication needs of 28 million deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, and speech-disabled consumers seeking information related to the DTV transition, assistance with coupon and converter box procurement, installation and post-deadline assistance across the country.

The CDS-DTV Help Center will communicate with individuals, one to one, and their families to educate them about the DTV change and troubleshoot issues as needed to ensure a converter box is successfully obtained and installed.

Consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing will be offered a choice of communication modes that matches their needs whether it is by voice, videophone, TTY, Instant Messaging, IP Relay, Voice Carry-Over Relay, Captioned Telephone, Video Relay and Spanish Video Relay.

Contact the Help Center at -1-877-dtv-4you (1-877-388-4968 (v); 1-877-tty-4csd (1-877-889-4273); e-mail- dtvhelp@c-s-d.org.

Videophone- direct 866-351-1950 or 866-401-3519.

Direct videophone IP addresses:
dtv03.csd.dtv05.csd.tv; dtv05.csd.dtv;
dtv04.csd.tv; dtv06.csd.tv.

AIM- dtvcsr07; dtvcsr08.

**HAVING A VOICE AND A CHOICE:
NEW YORK STATE HANDBOOK
FOR RELATIVES RAISING
CHILDREN**

The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) has published a new handbook for relatives raising children. It is designed for families where a grandparent, other relative, or family friend has taken on the responsibility of providing a child with a stable home. Every situation will be different and this guide will help you to know the legal arrangements, financial support, and other benefits that will influence the decision on what is best for you and for the child.

The handbook is available on OTDA's web page <http://www.otda.state.ny.us/main/publications/>.

Information appeared in NYS E- Bulletin, March, 2009 <http://www.ebulletin.us/index.htm>.

FREE HOUSING REGISTRY

Introducing NYHousingSearch.gov, a FREE service provided by New York State to make advertising and searching for affordable and accessible housing easier and more efficient. Thousands of listings located throughout the state are just a click away, and it is always FREE to search and list. The service is also available through a toll-free, bilingual call center at 1-877-428-8844. Representatives can assist with listings and searches and can even mail the results.

With this FREE service, you will be able to...

- Search properties for FREE with a toll-free phone call or via the Internet.
- See listings described in detail with pictures, maps, and information about nearby amenities. Landlords willing to modify units for accessibility needs are noted.
- View current vacancies and access lottery information and active waitlists.
- Rely upon trained call center staff to assist in locating listings.
- Search for housing by geographic area, type of housing needed, price, and accessible features.

Whether listing or searching for housing with accessibility features, age-restricted housing, affordable or market-rate housing, www.NY*HousingSearch.gov can help.

NYHousingSearch.gov is a collaborative effort between the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal, Department of Health, and Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. The site is maintained by Socialserve.com, a national non-profit provider of housing locator services. The Center for Independence of the Disabled of New York (www.CIDNY.org) is under contract to assist with marketing www.NYHousingSearch.gov to the disability community throughout New York State.

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Special Report: Economic Recovery Bill Provides Social Security with Resources to Help Americans

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*. Among its provisions are one-time payments to Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries, as well as funding to help the agency address critical needs.

One-Time Payments of \$250 For Social Security and SSI Beneficiaries

Nearly 55 million people who receive Social Security and SSI benefits will get a special one-time payment of \$250. They should receive the one-time payment by late May 2009.

The payments will be automatic, so people receiving benefits do not need to take any action.

People who receive both Social Security and SSI benefits will receive only one payment of \$250. The legislation also provides for a one-time payment to recipients of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) benefits. However, if a person receives Social Security or SSI benefits and also receives VA or RRB benefits, he or she will only receive one \$250 payment. Social Security will send that payment.

In April, Social Security (SSA) will send an advance notice with further information to each person who is eligible for the one-time payment.

So that SSA can issue the payments as quickly as possible, they ask that people not contact them unless their payment is not received by June 4, 2009.

Meanwhile, the SSA encourages people to visit www.socialsecurity.gov/payment for answers to frequently asked questions about the economic recovery one-time payments.

PARTICIPATE IN THE GRANDPARENTS SURVEY – GET PAID

The Cornell University Grandparents Raising Youth Project is seeking families headed by grandparents. Each participant (both grandparent and youth) will receive a \$30 stipend and a meal for just answering a few survey questions. For more information, view the PDF at

http://ebulletin.us/archive/2009/march/03_09_grandparents_survey/grandparents.pdf

**U.S. LABOR DEPARTMENT TO
BEGIN NEW MONTHLY DATA
SERIES ON PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES**

On February 6, the U.S. Department of Labor started releasing employment and unemployment data on people with disabilities. This information will assist the nation in understanding how changing labor market conditions affect Americans with disabilities. Although it is widely believed that this group faces a higher rate of unemployment than individuals without disabilities, official estimates were not available until now.

“Now that so many Americans are suffering job losses, there is a tremendous amount of attention being paid to employment problems and solutions affecting the general population. Americans with disabilities typically experience similar employment difficulties- even when there is a robust economy. The economic downturn may just exacerbate their struggle. These data will go far toward efforts to increase the employment of people with disabilities,” said John Davey, deputy assistant secretary for the department’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

ODEP is sponsoring the collection of these data by the department’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) using the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides comprehensive information of the employment status of the civilian, non-institutional population 16 years of age and older. Six disability questions have been added to the CPS to satisfy a requirement specified in Executive Order 13078, signed by President Bill Clinton, to measure the employment status of people with disabilities on a timely basis.

On February 6, the BLS and the ODEP started publishing on their web sites-at www.bls.gov/cps./cpsdisability.htm and www.dol.gov/odep respectively- data on

individuals with disabilities. The data will be updated monthly.

ODEP is leading a 21st century federal response to the historic underemployment of people with disabilities. In collaboration with other government agencies, public and private employers, and additional stakeholders, ODEP facilitates the development and implementation of innovative policies and practices necessary to achieve a fully inclusive workforce. ODEP’s work falls into three categories: employers and the workplace; workforce systems; and employment-related supports, which include education and training, health care, reliable transportation, affordable housing and assistive technology.

You can find the news release at <http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/odep/ODEP20090133.htm>.

**ANNOUNCING THE NYS OFFICE
OF ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE
ABUSE (OASAS) NEW HOPELINE**

If you or someone you know needs help for drugs, alcohol or gambling, there is hope and help.

All calls are free and confidential 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Information and referrals are available from masters-level clinicians.

The phone number for HOPELINE is 1-877-846-7369.

A big thank you to those of you who have been saving labels for us. Campbells has changed its policy. The company no longer wants simply the Campbells name; now it is asking people to send in the UPC code along with the clip and earn logo.

UPC codes from Franco-American Gravies, Prego Italian Sauces, Market Day products, Swanson Broth, Canned Chicken and Cooking Stock, Prego and Pepperidge Farm products are accepted. Caps from V8 Vegetable and V-Fusion 100 % juice are also accepted.

For a complete list of what to save, go to www.labelsforeducation.com.

THIS NEWSLETTER CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS- LARGE PRINT, BRAILLE, TAPE AND E-MAIL. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL CHRIS AT 661-3013(V/TTY) OR E-MAIL ME AT chris@ilc-jamestown-ny.org.

MAILING COSTS

Postage rates are going up again in May. In addition, the regulations for bulk mail are changing. The postal service will return each undeliverable newsletter at the cost of \$.44 (the new rate first class rate).

You can help us control our rising postal costs. If you are moving, let us know. If you no longer read the newsletter, let us know.

Keeping us informed of your current address helps us serve you more effectively in a variety of ways, not just the newsletter.

NEW YORK PRESCRIPTION SAVER CARD

The application for the **New York Prescription Saver (NYPS) Card** is now available. It is located at the following link: <http://nyprescriptionsaver.fhsc.com>.

This is a discount card (it is not insurance), administered by the EPIC program for the following individuals:

- New York residents aged 50 to 64, **OR** people under 50 years old and who have been determined disabled by the Social Security Administration; **AND**
- have annual household income less than \$35,000 (single) or \$50,000 (married); **AND**
- are not on Medicaid (including Medicaid spend-down or Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities).

Savings will vary depending on the quantity, type and brand of drug purchased. In general, you can expect savings up to 60% off the price of generics, and up to 30% off the price of brand name drugs. You cannot use the card when Medicare Part D pays for a particular prescription drug, although you can use the card in the “donut hole” or for excluded drugs. The card will also be useful for people with disabilities who are in the 2-year waiting period for Medicare. A list of discounted drugs and participating pharmacies is available on the website above.

You may apply through the website above or by calling 1-800-788-6917, 1-800-290-9138 TTY. The card will be effective April 1, 2009.

THANK YOU LUCY AND KENT FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATION

PAVING THE WAY TO YOUR FUTURE

DDAWNY WNY Transition Committee, WNY Transition Coordination Site, Parent Network of WNY, and the Erie 2-CC BOCES Transition Committee are sponsoring a transition conference- **Benefits, Services & Eligibility** for parents, agency and school personnel Saturday, May 30 from 9:00 am to noon. This will be a panel presentation of providers of services in the Chautauqua area discussing the services available and admission procedures and eligibility to those services. They will also discuss Social Security.

These are important topics for you to consider as your family member moves from school into adulthood.

This conference will be held at the Erie 2 CC BOCES LoGuidice Center A Bldg, Large Group Room, 9520 Fredonia Stockton Rd, Fredonia.

Call 716-332-4170 or 1-866-277-4762 to register. The workshop will be subject to cancellation unless there are a minimum of 5 people registered for the session. Make sure you call to register.

FACING DEATH, A PLEA FOR THE DIGNITY OF PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS

We received this information from NYAPPS (New York Assoc. of Psychiatric Rehabilitation).

NYAPRS Note: Here's a very powerful statement by one of our greatest leaders, Judi Chamberlin, from the Boston area hospice where she is living and receiving care for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Chamberlin was hospitalized against her will for depression in 1966, and was shocked by how she was treated. Her seminal book, "On Our Own: Patient-Controlled Alternatives to the Mental Health System," came out in 1978, and became a manifesto for the movement. Chamberlin's activism for patients' rights spanned the next 31 years, and evolved with the history of mental health treatment in this country.

You can read her blog at <http://judi-lifasahospicepatient.blogspot.com>.

CAMP FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS

YMCA Camp Speerd-ElJabar's Access Program in Dingman's Ferry, PA is a mainstreaming program enabling campers with mild to moderate developmental disabilities 8 to 19 to participate in traditional camping activities.

For more information, call 877-773-3779; e-mail campers@campspeersymca.org; or write to P.O. Box 7, Cranford, NJ 07016.

Chris has brochures. Call 661-3013 for information.





TRANSITION NEWS



DISCLOSURE RESOURCES FOR YOUTH: “THE WHY, WHEN, WHAT, AND HOW OF DISCLOSURE IN AN ACADEMIC SETTING, AFTER HIGH SCHOOL”.

This fact sheet, the newest in a series for youth with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who work with them, is available on the Web site of the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment, www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/www.htm

SPECIAL EDUCATION GUIDE

Special Education in Plain Language : A User Friendly Handbook on Special Education Law, Policies and Practices in New York was created by the Special Education Task Force to help families and educators gain the knowledge that they need to be able to effectively support students with disabilities during their school years. It includes information on the laws, regulations and policies affecting special education programs and services.

The Special Education Task Force is comprised of over 200 parent advocates, school district staff, attorneys, and other individuals who specialize in Special Education Law, and work to ensure that children with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive setting and

receive a free and appropriate education. DDPC staff contributed to this article.

To access this publication, go to www.ddpcmonthlyupdate.us/publications/spec_ed_guide.pdf, open Johanna Hudak's site and open the link for Special Education Information for Parents.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY PARTNERS FOR PREVENTION

Chautauqua County Partners for Prevention provides no cost breast exams, pap tests, prostate cancer information and colorectal cancer screenings for men and women who are 40 years of age or older and have no health insurance or limited health insurance. and meet income guidelines. (For colorectal screenings you may be insured.)

For more information and to see if you qualify, contact Chautauqua County Partners for Prevention, 20 West 3rd St., Suite 21, Jamestown, NY 14701, phone 716-665-3750, toll free 1-800-506-9185.

Remember: Early Detection is Your Best Protection!

SOUTHWESTERN INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, MAY 25 FOR MEMORIAL DAY.

TO GET MORE INFORMATION

If you would like to receive more information about the services we provide, please fill in the information below, check the appropriate box/ boxes and return it to Southwestern Independent Living Center, Inc., 843 North Main Street, Jamestown, NY 14701. Or you may call us at (716-661-3010); or 661-3012 (TDD). E-mail- info@ilc-jamestown.ny.org; web site- <http://www.ilc-jamestown-ny.org>

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Peer Support | Individual and Group sessions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Advocacy | Assistance with legal and economic rights. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Housing | Assistance in locating adequate, affordable, and accessible housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation | Wheelchair Accessible van available for medical and social appointments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Information and Referral | Information about other area services and organizations. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | TDD Relay Calls | For hearing impaired individuals with <u>T</u> elecommunication <u>D</u> evices for the <u>D</u> eaf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Education | Regarding issues pertaining to people with disabilities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Newsletter | A bi-monthly publication of SILC. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | SILC Membership | A one year membership is \$5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | WIPA | Work Incentives Planning and Assistance |