



For the Hope and the How

1650 South Avenue, Suite 200
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starbridgeinc.org

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Proceeds will support children and young adults who are striving for success in school



What's Inside...

This issue of *Bridges* highlights **Employment**.

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Volume I, Issue 2 • Fall 2015

Bridges

Bridges continues the legacy of The Bridge, connecting people with disabilities, their family members, and people who work with them, with resources, support, and information.



An Evening to Benefit Starbridge

Saturday, November 14, 2015 | 7–11 pm
Locust Hill Country Club
2000 Jefferson Road, Pittsford, NY 14534

Join us for a festive and inspiring evening!



Ginny Ryan, Emcee and 13WHAM-TV news anchor, will help us honor people and organizations making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Our second Celebration of Champions as partners, and our first Celebration as Starbridge, will be a night to remember – great food, music and welcome company. Enjoy the evening's festivities including:

- Hearty hors d'oeuvres and decadent desserts
- Complimentary glass of wine and non-alcoholic beverages
- Silent Auction items, including two roundtrip Jet Blue tickets, for yourself or to give away as holiday gifts
- Wine Pull featuring many wines valued at up to \$100
- Music by Mambo Kings
- Photo Booth to capture fun with family and friends

Tickets are \$60 per person.
Discount student rate is \$36.

For more information or to make your reservation, click [here](#), call (585) 224-7248, or email us at events@starbridgeinc.org.





Is there an Advocate in the House?

How do students gain employment skills? Laura explores the topic with Maggie Herman and Jen Cacioppo, Transition Specialists with the Midwest RSE-TASC (Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Center). They work with school districts to improve the school- to- post school transition planning process for students with disabilities.



by Laura Arrington,
*Parent Center
Coordinator*

Q. When should families start thinking about transition?

A. It's never too early or too late to start thinking about transition. We should start by thinking about how we can promote independence and what skills students need to become successful adults. We want the same thing for all students - to be healthy, happy, productive adults - but it will look different for each student. It's important for the team (members of school, family, outside supports) to include the student and start asking questions about what the student's definition of success is and what may be getting in their way of being successful.

Q. What are some ideas or suggestions that can help promote independence?

A. Independence is measured individually. Look at what would be some natural steps to gaining independence by exploring the student's current activities. For example, if a student uses books on tape, then actually making the phone call to order an item promotes independence. The teacher can demonstrate how to do this or write a script for the student to use. Parents can continue this type of learning at home. Some other examples are: advocating for testing

accommodation, selecting their own courses, involving them in the development of their IEP, talking to them about their strengths and challenges, and asking the student what they want to do in a given situation. Remember that no opportunity is too small.

Q. What is work based learning?

Work-based learning gives students a chance to use employment skills in a business or community organization. Work based learning is NOT a job coach doing the job for the student or school personnel doing the job. It's about the student really doing the job.

For a complete description of work-based learning, please see: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/cte/wbl/>

Q. What are the challenges we face through work-based learning?

A. Transportation is one of the biggest challenges for schools. Usually the work-based learning experiences are scheduled within the school day. Depending upon location, some schools are a long drive away from these experiences, so providing transportation in a timely way may prove difficult. We encourage families and schools to let students try new opportunities. Families may be nervous about their child going out into the community; they may feel it makes them vulnerable. It's important to voice your concerns

with your child's teacher and work out what supports your child may need to make them successful. It's ok for students to fail as long as the student and school team learn from the situation and make adjustments to supports and services.

A barrier for some students is that most work based learning experiences are unpaid. Balancing student academic needs with work-based learning needs can also prove to be difficult.

Any advice for students and families?

Work with your school and be creative. Explore additional opportunities. It's really about student, family and school working together for positive student outcomes.

For families who have questions, please contact:

Starbridge
1650 South Avenue, Suite 200
Rochester, NY 14620
P: 585-546-1700
www.starbridgeinc.org

For professionals who have questions about work-based learning, please contact:

RSE-TASC
Monroe BOCES
15 Linden Park
Rochester, NY 14625
P: 585-383-6693
www.monroe.edu/rsetasc.cfm

Starbridge Workshops, Conferences & Special Events

Family Empowerment Series (Formerly Lay Advocacy)

October 6, 13, 20

(No class October 27)

November 3, 10 & 17,

Tuesdays, 8:45am - Noon

Are you a family member of a child with disabilities?

Take part in a free, six-session training to learn about the special education process and acquire skills to effectively advocate for your child!

Locations include:

Starbridge, 1650 South Avenue, Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14620

or

Remote webcast locations

Literacy West NY, Inc.
5455 State Route 19N
Belmont, NY 14813

Literacy West NY, Inc.
Wyoming Works Building
29 North Main Street
Warsaw, NY 14569

To register, please contact Linda Chadderton at (585) 224-7325 or lchadderton@starbridgeinc.org.

Computer access is required for homework assignments.

This series is open to all families of children with disabilities and suspected disabilities. If space is limited, priority will be given to those whose children have developmental disabilities.

Presented by Starbridge in partnership with Literacy West NY, Inc.



What are the opportunities?

Putting the Pieces Together in OPWDD Self-Directed Services Learn from Individuals and Families Living Fulfilling Self-Directed Lives!

Please note individual locations and registration deadlines



Wednesday, October 14, 6:00-8:00pm

Happiness House, 731 Pre-Emption Road, Geneva, NY 14456

Registration is required by 10/9/15.

Thursday, October 22, 7:00-9:00pm

Wellspring Ministries, 5993 Co Rd 16, Belfast, NY 14711

Registration is required by 10/19/15.

Tuesday, December 1, 6:30-8:30pm

Starbridge, 1650 South Avenue, Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14620

Registration is required by 11/29/15.

This workshop highlights the opportunities Self-Directed Services provides to individuals and families through managing their own budgets, hiring their own staff, developing their own person-centered plans, and implementing those plans.

This workshop is **FREE to family members**.

To register, please go to the event calendar on our website at www.starbridgeinc.org or call Registration at (585) 224-7399.

Friends Helping Friends Monthly Meetings

3rd Wednesday of each month,
from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm.

**October 21, November 18,
December 16**

Starbridge, 1650 South Avenue,
Rochester, NY 14620



Friends Helping Friends is a group for self-advocates and their supporters. Friends believe all individuals have value, talents, and gifts. We will not be defined by a label or the limitations of disability. We believe that with determination, we can achieve anything we put our minds to.

Join us on Facebook by liking the Friends Helping Friends page.

For more information, call us at (585) 224-7212 or email: ebarto@starbridgeinc.org.

Friends Helping Friends Annual Concert

**Saturday, October 17,
7:00 - 9:00 PM**

Asbury First United Methodist Church, 1050 East Ave,
Rochester, NY 14607

Tickets are \$10.00 at the door.
Come and enjoy performances by many of the members of FHF.



Starbridge Workshops, Conferences & Special Events



Stress!

The Impact on Learning and Behavior in Students with Attention, Learning and Emotional Challenges – What to Know and What to Do

Educators, other professionals and parents:

Join us for an informative, interactive session to learn why children and adolescents with learning disabilities, ADHD and other challenges are particularly at risk for stress-related disorders and reactions. Dr. Jerome Schultz sheds light on the brain/stress/learning connection and explains why executive functions take a back seat to survival behavior in kids who are threatened by the challenges of school.

Dr. Schultz's presentation will provide the tools to understand and manage behaviors that get in the way of learning. Come with questions and leave with answers and no-cost strategies you can implement tomorrow!

Registration is open now. \$99 fee includes continental breakfast, lunch and conference materials. Register today!

Proceeds from the 2015 Annual Conference will support our Education Services, helping children and young adults who are striving for success in school.

A limited number of parent scholarships are available. Please inquire at events@starbridgeinc.org.

Questions? Call (585) 224-7248 or email events@starbridgeinc.org.



Featuring
Jerome J. Schultz, Ph.D.,
Clinical Neuropsychologist,
Author and Speaker

Friday, November 6, 2015
8:00 am – 3:30 pm

(Registration 8:00-8:20 am;
Conference 8:30 am.)

Burgundy Basin Inn,
Pittsford, NY 14534



We're going BIG for YEAR 5 – our goal is \$2,500!

ROC the Day is a 24-hour, online event that provides you an opportunity to support Starbridge. Just go to www.ROCTheDay.org, a secure online giving platform, between 12 am - 11:59 pm on Tuesday, December 1, to help us support people with disabilities.

You can also call ROC The Day directly at 1-800-242-0238 anytime between 12 am - to 11:59 pm on ROC the Day to give via telephone. Please have your credit or debit card number ready—no cash or checks.

A handful of lucky ROCstar donors will be randomly chosen to give a free, additional \$500 to the charity of their choice! Visit www.ROCTheDay.org for more information or call Starbridge at 585-224-7248.

**Tuesday,
December 1.**

Get ready for
#GivingTuesday,
ROCstars!

Lunch & Learn

Bring your lunch & learn the basics of special education. All sessions on Thursdays, 12:00-1:30 pm at Starbridge, 1650 South Ave., Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14620

October 15

RTI, 504 & IEP: What's It All About?

October 22

Discipline and Suspension

November 5

Effective Communication

December 10

Functional Behavioral Assessments

Registration is required. This workshop is FREE to family members. To register, please go to the event calendar on our website at www.starbridgeinc.org or call Registration at (585) 224-7399.

Employment



October is

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Celebrating 70 Years! | 1945-2015

Held each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a time to celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The theme for this year — which marks 70 years since the first observance — is "My Disability is One Part of Who I Am."

What is Vocational Rehabilitation?

VR is designed to help people with disabilities meet career goals, from entry-level to professional.

What is ACCES?

The Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES) is part of the New York State Education Department and is comprised of three primary areas: Vocational Rehabilitation (including Independent Living Program Administration), Adult Education, and the Bureau of Proprietary School Supervision.

What services can ACCES-VR provide?

- Assessment to help identify skills, abilities, interests and limitations
- Career counseling and guidance
- Benefits advisement
- Rehabilitation and assistive technology
- Training at a vocational school, community college, or on the job
- Supported employment
- Information on the Americans with Disabilities Act and reasonable accommodations
- Job placement and job retention
- Other services necessary to achieve the employment goal

To learn more about ACCES-VR, please visit www.acces.nysesd.gov/vr/.

An interview with

Stacy Russell

Employment Services Director, Starbridge



Beginning the Job Placement Process

We use an evidence-based approach to supported employment, called the IPS Model, originating at Dartmouth University. One of the tenets of it is Rapid Job Search, which means that from the first time we meet the individual, until we start job development, should be less than a month. We usually take a week to two weeks, depending on the person's schedule and ability to meet.

All of our referrals come from ACCESS-VR right now. And they come with a vocational goal from the Vocational Rehab Counselor at ACCES. I study their evaluation and referral from ACCES-VR and based on that information, connect them with an employment counselor.

Assign an Employment Counselor

Choosing an employment counselor may be based on any number of factors. For example, if I have an employment counselor who has relationships with the businesses that match

the interests of the person, then that counselor might be a good assignment.

Intake Appointment with the Employment Counselor

Once a counselor is assigned, they set up an intake appointment with the individual. This is a meet-and-greet and a paperwork appointment to verify the vocational goal they and ACCES have picked together. Then they create the first part of their employment plan which includes their preferences for employment, such as where they want to work, what hours they want to work, how much they'd like to make, or what type of learner they are.

Write a Resume

They set up their next appointment to craft their resume if they don't already have one. If they already have one, then we'll look it over and might tweak it, but after that, it's time to get going with the job search!

Job Search

That job search can vary widely, from a week to several months.

Interview with Stacy Russell

It depends on a lot of things. Perhaps the person needs interview practice or tips on selecting appropriate interview clothing.

As employment counselors, what's really important for us to work on with individuals is rapport. Trust and rapport is vital for communication. If we are throwing out job leads, and the person is not interested in those job leads, we need to know why. We don't want to just know that they don't like the job. We need to dig deeper. Is it too far from home? Is transportation a problem? Have you had a bad experience as a customer there? We also encourage their own motivation to come up with job leads. They are out in the community, too. We ask them to do their own networking.

If an employer is on the fence about hiring an individual, we will ask that business to give us an opportunity to support this person in a way that they can be successful. The basics are there: they want to work, they want to do a good job, they've been attentive to us with our appointments and proven to be dependable. Give us a shot to make this work.

Ongoing Support

After they are hired, we make sure that they are getting the same long-term support that other employees get on the site such as workplace integration, mentors, or a supportive environment.

Even when the employee doesn't need a lot of support, we check in with the individual and with the employer to see how it is going. We prompt for other needs: is there anything we need to work on? How are they getting along with everybody? Are they meeting your bottom line? Are they productive? How is their speed?

When It's Not a Good Fit

We also support everyone when it's not a good fit. We support the individual in taking this as a learning experience and not a failure, and in moving forward. We also support the business by not forcing the issue. They do need to know that we trust their judgment, and that we respect that they've given it as much of a chance as we would like, and then we move forward. If there's not a position that is a better fit within the company, then we will work on something else externally

It's important to note that in cases where the fit is not good, the person is not suddenly removed from employment. There is usually ongoing communication about how to make a good fit, how to implement accommodations.

We talk with the employee about the pros and cons of that particular job, what did and didn't work out, and move forward with that information. Sometimes, it's talking with the VR Counselor about switching the field in general by discussing particular strengths- maybe the person was not good at stocking, but was fabulous at customer service.

And then we move forward! I do stress to people that we are a *placement service*. When someone is referred to us, it's for employment.

Advice about Getting Children Ready for Employment

While I have worked with adults only, I would advise parents and teachers to work on self-advocacy skills. Teach children to know what kind of support needs they have and how to articulate that. That sets us ahead of the game so much more than starting out with none of that information.

Another suggestion is to give your child opportunities for

work experience. Any kind of experience, whether it be occasional volunteer work or a formal volunteer program, gives your child not only skill development but the confidence to get out there and know they have something to contribute. And it looks great on a resume.

Trends

A lot of businesses now understand Supported Employment, where we are not reinventing the wheel in explaining what it is. Ten years ago, we had to make a strong business case for businesses. But today, they are generally on board. They understand that diversity is the way to go. You want your work force to look like your customer base. People with disabilities are everywhere. We are all temporarily able-bodied individuals. To the extent that we can make a workforce inclusive for people with disabilities is the extent that we can cater to their customers. We don't have to convey that idea as much as we used to.

Another strong trend is that a lot of businesses contact us for repeat business, as a referral source, for jobs they want to fill. We used to have to solicit that from them. Once we develop a relationship, they know that if we have referred one person to them, there are probably five more people we know who could fill spots as well.

Starbridge's Employment Team

I would just add that there is a lot of turnover in human services, but our team members in Employment tend to come here and stay. And it's such a blessing, that it's worth mentioning that while we do juggle people on caseloads once in a while, there has been continuity with the core staff that are here. They are the reason why this service is so great. They are committed.

They are passionate about helping people get jobs.

How do you get started?

For questions or more information about Employment Services, please call (585) 224-7239 or email Stacy Russell, srussell@starbridgeinc.org.

If you want to develop or increase skills:

Starbridge's Employment Track program is a community-based service focused on developing or increasing transferrable skills for the adults who participate in this program.

Our Employment Track program offers a great way for individuals with disabilities to develop skills and references for their resumes. For questions or more information about the Employment Track program, please phone Derek Bruins at (585) 224-7224 or email dbruins@starbridgeinc.org.



ACCES-VR (Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services, New York State Education Department)
www.acces.nyses.gov/vr/

Upcycling Sheltered Workshops: A Revolutionary Approach to Transforming Workshops into Creative Spaces

by Susan Dlouhy and Patty Mitchell; Ohio University Press, 2015 <http://www.ohioswallow.com/book/Upcycling+Sheltered+Workshops>

New York State Education Department Workplace Learning
<http://www.p12.nyses.gov/cte/wbl/>

Works For Me

Save the Date

Thursday, October 22, 2015
10 a.m. to Noon
Huxley Theater at the New York State Museum
222 Madison Ave., Albany, NY

A Initiative of the NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

2015 WORKS FOR ME

OPWDD's Works for Me event celebrates successful businesses that hire people with developmental disabilities as part of their workforce strategy. Each Works for Me event highlights the inspiring stories of employees with developmental disabilities who enhance the productivity and success of businesses across New York State.

To nominate an employer or for more information, contact Dan Prince at 518-474-9882.

Self-Advocates: "We Want to Work."

We believe in the idea of Employment First. We want to work; we want to earn money; we want to use the skills we have, and learn new skills. And we want to work alongside other members of our communities. We have a lot to offer as employees and co-workers.

[Read or listen](#) to the full testimony provided by Clint Perrin of SANYS (Self-Advocacy Association of New York State, Inc.) at Employment First Commission Public Comment Session, February 19, 2015.



New York State Partners in Policymaking®



Enrollment Starts November 1st for Spring 2016 session.

BECOME A LEADER IN DISABILITY ADVOCACY

- Learn about using social media for advocacy
- Connect to policymakers and lawmakers
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- Create positive change for people with disabilities

For more information, please visit: www.nyspip.org.

**Business Hours:**

Monday to Friday, 8 am to 5 pm

Location:

Wolk Campus of the
Al Sigl Community of Agencies
1650 South Ave., Suite 200
Rochester, NY 14620

Phone: 585-546-1700**Fax:** 585-224-7100**Email:** info@starbridgeinc.org**www.starbridgeinc.org**

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EDITOR: Maria Schaertel
PRESIDENT/CEO: Colin Garwood
DESIGN & PRINT: Sarah Stein

This issue underwritten by James Traylor,
Upstate Special Needs Planning

 **Upstate Special Needs Planning**
Preserving Choices

from the Editor:

"It's payday, Mom."

Ah, what sweet words to my ears! Nick has been working part time at Charlie Riedel's in Webster, a family-owned fast food staple in the area. He busses tables, washes windows, greets customers, refills condiments, and occasionally busts a move if the restaurant sound system warrants it.



When owner and manager Jeff Riedel described Nick's employment there as a "win-win," I had a good feeling this could work out. Nick's co-workers are respectful, understanding, and appreciative of his strong work ethic and solid work performance. They treated Nick from the start not as a spectator or visitor, but as part of a team.

Job coaches from the Employment Alliance at Heritage Christian Services have provided Nick with excellent support. They worked with Charlie's staff to identify and teach Nick his job duties along with how to prioritize tasks. Under their guidance, Nick has gained confidence in himself in this new role as a wage earner.

Co-workers and customers alike have expressed their affection for the new guy who strides into work and attacks table clutter with resolve. On Nick's watch, customers will be greeted by a friendly face; the tables, chairs, and booths will be neat and clean; and customers will enjoy their scrumptious food dressed with the ketchup and pickles he has carefully replenished. And that's that.

One priority my husband and I always had for Nick was for him to be an active participant in his community. Nick's first job fits the bill.




Are you Ready?

Make your experience count as you learn to make an even bigger impact in the lives of people with diverse needs.

The Warner School of Education will prepare you to work with students and clients in school, community and counseling settings. Consider these exciting options:

- Special and Inclusive Education Teacher Certification
- Annotation to Teach Students with Severe and/or Multiple Disabilities
- Specialization in Applied Behavior Analysis
- Master's Degree in Human Development with a Specialization in Developmental Differences

Generous grants and scholarships are available to qualified applicants.

The Warner School offers graduate programs in:

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Educational Policy
School Leadership
Health Professions Education



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Starbridge 2015 Annual Appeal!

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Starbridge is a not-for-profit agency. Your gift is 100% tax deductible.

Please complete form and mail with your gift to Starbridge, 1650 South Avenue, Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14620, or make a secure donation online at www.starbridgeinc.org/donate, or call us at 585-224-7248