



The Bridge

Connecting individuals with disabilities and their families with resources, support and information



Preview of Art, Celebration of Champions



What's Inside...

 **Series on Meeting Children's Medical Needs**

 **The Front Door**

Celebration of Champions

Celebrate With Us! Get Your Tickets Today!

Purchase tickets online by clicking here:
<http://www.advocacycenter.com/2013-celebration-of-champions>
or order by phone: 585-546-1700, ext. 265.

The previous "Art and Jazz" event has been recreated in 2013 with a new emphasis on our annual Community Awards. **Celebration of Champions**, our 8th annual evening of art & music happens in a new season and at a new location.

October 5, 2013 7:00pm - 11:00pm
The Center at High Falls
60 Brown's Race, Rochester, NY 14614

Emcee Jennifer Johnson of 13WHAM-TV and special guest **Coach Jim Johnson** will join us in recognizing individuals and organizations making a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities.

Enjoy great music courtesy of the **Mambo Kings**, a silent auction, a wine pull, and time to mingle with friends and take in the views of the gorgeous High Falls district—all in support of the work The Advocacy Center does with and for people who have disabilities and their families.

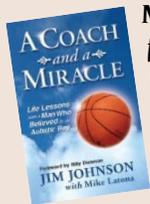


If you have questions, please contact Seneca Brashear at 585-546-1700 ext 265 or brashear@advocacycenter.com.

J-Mac's Coach



Greece Athena basketball Coach Jim Johnson is known worldwide for providing Jason "J-Mac" McElwain the opportunity to play in the last minutes of his high school basketball game. Jason scored 20 points in four minutes and was suddenly known worldwide. Don't miss the opportunity to meet Coach Johnson as he formally begins his speaking career with us at Celebration of Champions. He is the author of **A Coach and a**



Miracle, Life Lessons from a Man who Believed in an Autistic Boy. Coach Johnson will be selling and signing books at the event, with a portion

of the proceeds donated to The Advocacy Center. (Hmmm... Need a unique holiday gift?)



Day of Caring - Thank You

A group of volunteers from Mengel, Metzger, Barr came to The Advocacy Center offices in Rochester on Friday, Sept 20th for their annual "Day of Caring", a day when they close their offices and give back to nonprofits in the community.

Both the large and small conference rooms are now freshly painted. The Advocacy Center provided supplies while the volunteers provided the labor.

Thank you for brightening up our work space!



UPFRONT & PERSONAL by Mary Kate Olds

Josh and I met a little over two years ago while volunteering at a SportsNet expo, a local cause we are both very passionate about. After talking for a short time, we realized that we graduated from the same high school and have always lived within 10 minutes of each other. Our paths never crossed, though, as we are five years apart in age.

That day was the beginning of a beautiful friendship that escalated quickly and, well...the rest is history. We will be getting married this November.

We love being involved with SportsNet for so many reasons, it truly brings you into a community filled with support and encouragement. It is such a great feeling to see a person participating in a sport they never thought they could, due to their disability. SportsNet is a wonderful program that promotes healthy active lifestyles despite challenges one may have, and we are both so proud to be a part of that.

We both graduated from Wayne Central High School, Josh in 2003 and myself in 2008. Josh then went

to St. John Fisher and majored in Sports Management. I went to Alfred State College and majored in Court Reporting. I realized court reporting wasn't for me though, and I began working with kindergarteners at the Bay View YMCA, which I love! Josh's passion has always been basketball; he heads up the Rochester Wheels basketball team and wheelchair basketball recreation nights on Mondays. He also volunteers occasionally at Strong Hospital in the rehab unit as a mentor.

Josh has some advice for people who are reluctant to try a new sport: "Get out and try it, you never know what you'll be passionate about unless you give it a try."

When you join an adaptive team or sport, you meet people who are in similar situations, who understand what you are going through. You can't have a better support system than that.

For more information on SportsNet offerings, please see

<http://www.rochesterrehab.org/services/sportsnet/>

SportsNet is a service of Rochester Rehabilitation.

The Advocacy Center Upcoming Events & Workshops

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL WORKSHOPS

Positive Behavior Interventions

**November 7, 2013,
6:00pm-8:00pm**

This workshop will explore the nature of a child's behavior and help to determine when a positive behavior plan is appropriate.

Presenters will discuss the essential elements of a positive behavior plan. Participants will learn positive interventions and strategies to support students with challenging behaviors in affirming and constructive ways.



**Family-School Partnership
at the Advocacy Center**

Breaking Down Barriers and Building a Team

**November 25, 2013
10:00am-12:00pm**

Do you come away from educational meetings not saying what you intended? Or feeling as though your viewpoint is misunderstood? Do you listen to what other team members say? How do you respond? Communication is key to effective partnerships. This workshop will strengthen your collaborative skills by learning effective communication strategies. *The last 30 minutes of this workshop will be an open forum of Ask the Advocate.*

Workshops are FREE to family members and will be held at The Advocacy Center, 590 South Avenue, Rochester NY 14620. You may register for one or more workshops. Register online via our calendar at www.advocacycenter.com or by phone at 585-546-1700 ext. 399

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED
for all workshops.

The Inside Scoop: Meeting Children's Medical Needs in the Home, School, and Community

A Free Three-Part Series Ideal for Parents and Professionals Supporting Children With Medical Needs

Develop your knowledge and skills to effectively navigate the health, education and disability service systems - Participate in engaging, interactive sessions - Learn from experienced presenters - Build your resource binder

Please plan on attending all three sessions: information builds on previous sessions. All sessions will be held Wednesday mornings at The Advocacy Center, 590 South Ave., Rochester, NY 14620.

Session 1: Building Effective Relationships: Parents and Medical Professionals Working Together

Wednesday, October 2, 2013 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

- Parent/Physician Communication: How to Make the Most of Your Visits
- Finding Quality Medical and Related Information Online
- Organizing Records

Session 2: Bridging the Gap: How to Access Information and Resources

Wednesday, October 23, 2013 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

- Meeting the Educational Needs of a Child who is Medically Fragile
- Financial Benefits, Health Insurance, Waivers, Funding Medical Equipment & Eligibility For Developmental Disability Services
- Creating a Home Environment that Doesn't Look Like a Hospital

Session 3: Tying it all Together:

Building a Team for Effective Advocacy

Wednesday November 6, 2013 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

- Preparing for Hospital Visits, Building a Circle of Support, Creating a Multi-disciplinary Team
- Advocacy Steps: How to Navigate Multiple Systems to Meet a Child's Needs
- Maintaining Caregiver Wellness

An application to participate is required. To request an application, please call 585-546-1700 ext. 267 or email dolan@advocacycenter.com.

Community Awards

Do you know someone who stands out in service and commitment to people with disabilities? Or maybe a self-advocate whose work and life direction you admire? The Advocacy Center now accepts nominations for Community awards year-round. Award winners are honored at our annual fundraising event. Don't miss the opportunity to honor a special parent, teacher, community member, or self-advocate!

For more information, please contact Rick Wright by email: wright@advocacycenter.com or by phone (585) 546-1700.

Local Events

PARENT SYMPOSIUM AND LUNCHEON, FREE TO FAMILIES

Join us for this free educational opportunity for parents and professionals as we learn together how to create pathways to supports and services.

Life Stages | Early Planning for Families with Young Children

**Thursday, Oct. 10, 2013
8:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

At the Pieters Family Life Center
1025 Commons Way,
Rochester, NY 14623



Featured Speaker:

Carol Blessing

Citizenship as a Right, a Responsibility and an Expectation

Carol Blessing is a licensed master of social work with more than 25 years of professional service and has spent the last 13 years on the faculty with Cornell University's Employment and Disability Institute within the School of Industrial and Labor Relations. She is also the primary author and facilitator of the landmark Citizen-Center Leadership international community of practice and education series (www.clds.org).

Online registration: www.humanservicesed.org/symposium.

For more information, contact Wendy Quarles at wquarles@humanservicesed.org or (585) 340-2009.



The Advocacy Center's Work Incentives Benefits Advisement (WIBA) Services Are Back!



SSDI & SSI beneficiaries, family members, and providers are invited to join us for a One Day Work Incentives Conference

Thursday, October 24, 2013, 9:00 a.m - 4:00 p.m.

Rochester Psychiatric Center - Rehabilitation Center Auditorium, 1111 Elmwood Avenue Rochester, NY 14620

To view more information about the topics and agenda for the conference, please go to our website, www.advocacycenter.com

Registration is required for this FREE event.

Registration deadline is October 16th.

Register Online or by phone at (585) 546-1700 Ext. 360

Please notify Julie Marks if you need a reasonable accommodation (i.e., ASL Interpreter) by October 14th so that we can make arrangements prior to attendance. You can reach Julie by email at marks@advocacycenter.com or phone at 585-546-1700.

Please contact Karen Collier at (585) 241-1648 for special parking instructions if you use a wheelchair or other assistive devices.



~ SAVE THE DATE ~

Recognize and Heal the Trauma in Your Life **A Conference for Families, Youth, Educators, Service Providers** **and all those interested in living a whole and peaceful life.**

With Keynote Speaker Dr. Elizabeth Meeker

Saturday, November 16, 2013

Pieters Family Life Center, 1025 Commons Way, Rochester NY

Elizabeth Meeker, PsyD, is a Senior Consultant for Coordinated Care Services, Inc. where she provides technical assistance in System of Care development, particularly in the area of Trauma Informed Care. Dr. Meeker served as the first Coordinator of The Consortium on Trauma, Illness, and Grief in Schools (TIG), a program that provides training and consultation to assist the nineteen school districts in Monroe County in being prepared to respond to crisis situations. She continues to serve as the lead trauma trainer for TIG as well as a coordinator for crisis.



Available Workshops: Recovering from Blame and Shame: Becoming Strong ~ Tools for School ~ Trauma Informed Parenting ~ Where to Find Trauma Based Care/Evidence Based Practice ~ and many more

Brought to you by: The Children's Mental Health Coalition of WNY, Inc. For further information, please see website www.cmhcwny.org or phone 716-871-8997.

Thinking outside of the box:

Don't Make Friendship a Big Deal

Friendship between children is wonderful. However, it is not a big deal. If we commend and praise children without disabilities for their interactions with their peers with disabilities (either publicly or in other ways), we inadvertently make friendship a big deal and imply that all children are not created equal. We reinforce the idea that it is morally and socially admirable to "help the handicapped," and, thereby may remove the opportunity for equality and reciprocity.

- Emma Van der Klift & Norman Kunc, HELL-BENT ON HELPING: Benevolence, Friendship, and the Politics of Help

**Welcome to our new advertiser,
The Warner School, University of Rochester.**
Thank you for your support.



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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:

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- School Leadership
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Bullying of any student by another student, for any reason, cannot be tolerated in our schools.¹ Bullying is no longer dismissed as an ordinary part of growing up, and every effort should be made to structure environments and provide supports to students and staff so that bullying does not occur. Teachers and adults should respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior and send a message that bullying is not acceptable. Intervening immediately to stop bullying on the spot can help ensure a safer school environment.

See the full document at:
<http://www.ed.gov/blog/2013/08/keeping-students-with-disabilities-safe-from-bullying/>

- Excerpt from a recent Dear Colleague guidance document offered by NYS Ed Dept

Visit <http://advocacycenter.com/events> for a complete list of events and programs!



With input from individuals, families, advocates, nonprofit providers, and direct care staff, OPWDD has been reengineering how it offers services to people in order to promote the awareness and choice of service options for individuals and families, with a particular emphasis on self-direction, employment, and community integration. This is known as our **Front Door** initiative.

The Front Door strives to:

- Improve the way people learn about OPWDD and available service options
- Better connect individual needs to available services
- Give people as many opportunities as possible for self-direction

Front Door services support self-determination and the idea that people with developmental disabilities have the right to:

- Enjoy more meaningful relationships with family, friends, and others in their lives
- Experience personal growth
- Fully participate in their communities
- Live in the home of their choice

Key components include

- Initial contact for those who are new or seeking to modify existing services
- Determining eligibility for services
- Assessment of strengths
- Identifying support needs
- Plan authorization and implementation

Self-direction and Front Door services

- Self-direction allows an individual with a developmental disability to take charge of and be responsible for services.
- Self-direction is the hallmark of the Front Door. It allows people with developmental disabilities to help develop a plan for services and, ultimately, for their lives, that will meet their wants and needs and help them achieve their goals.

Front Door Toll-Free Contact Numbers

Region 1-Finger Lakes – 1-855-679-3335

Counties include: Chemung, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Schuler Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates

Region 2-Western New York – 1800-487-6310

Counties include: Allegheny, Cattaraugus, Chatauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans

To learn more about the Front Door, please visit <http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/>



Dad's Corner



Blog and book project sponsored by Gary Dietz.

Dads of Disability: Stories For, By, and About Fathers of Children That Experience Disability (and the Women Who Love Them) The Dads of Disability book project addresses the relative scarcity of stories from and about the perspective of fathers whose children experience a disability.

The book and its blog will be a supportive place for fathers, their children (disabled or not), and female and male family members that support the fathers. The goal of the project is to be inclusive to men, women, and those of all ages and races with disabilities or without. The themes and perspectives of the pieces will be either by or about fathers. You can read more about Gary and his son, Alexander; submit an essay; see poetry contest winners, and "join the journey" by visiting <http://blog.dadsfordisability.com/>

Gary is crowdfunding this project, and through Oct 5th you can receive perks (thanks for supporting the project) in the form of discounted copies of books and eBooks starting at \$9. View this project, the animation describing it, and support it at www.dadsfordisability.com/igg



Newbie Notes By Maria Schaertel

For those who are new to parenting a child with a disability



We parents want our children to be happy, which includes forming friendships. Sometimes that can be a challenge for children who have communication difficulties, a trait common to those with disabilities.

So as parents, what kinds of interaction should we encourage? Who can be our children's friends? Should we encourage our kids to interact with other children who have the same disability or children who have different disabilities? Or children who have no disabilities? Some parents will argue that children with the same disability or similar developmental stage are "truly my child's peers, not children who are the same age."

Consider this approach: From the beginning, give your child opportunities to interact with many different children and let him or her choose a friend.

- Join in support group activities and community activities as well.
- Depending on your child's age or ability, practice ahead of time what to say to other children.
- Use social stories to introduce your child to a variety of friendship scenarios.
- Have your child try activities and pursue interests where he or she may meet like-minded children.
- Practice social skills at home by modeling conversation, turn-taking, and playing together.
- Work with your child's speech therapist to create goals that encourage practice in this area.

We can't create friendships for our children any more than our parents could create friendships for us. We can't stop hurt and rejection any more than anyone could do it for us. It happens to children with and without disabilities! But it is worth the risk.

October is National Bullying Prevention Month

an effort that encourages everyone to take an active role in the bullying prevention movement. Please see all the great resources that PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center offers to encourage an end to bullying. Unfortunately, many of our children with disabilities are more vulnerable to bullying than the general population.

<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>



From the Editor

I hope you are enjoying the fall. Don't forget to buy your ticket for Celebration of Champions next Saturday! Please see page one for details.

Don't forget to contact me with your stories, news, or photos. We want to hear from you! Contact me at schaertel@advocacycenter.com or (585) 546-1700, ext. 271.

Maria Schaertel

Partners In Policymaking News

Want to Become a NYS Partner?

Go to www.nyspip.org/ and fill out the on-line application. Deadline for 2014 class is Nov. 30, 2013.

The NYS Partners in Policymaking program is an innovative leadership training opportunity for individuals with developmental disabilities and family members.

During an eight month course, participants gain knowledge, skills, and confidence to make changes in policy, perception, and treatment of individuals with disabilities.

Upon completion of the program, participants join a graduate network.

The 2014 NYS Partners program is offered as a series of interactive modules and webinars, with one state-wide and one regional meeting. The program focuses on including self-advocates and individuals from diverse backgrounds, and on developing participant's familiarity with technology and online communication tools for advocacy.



Sibling Needs Assessment Executive Summary and Recommendations

Nancy Hinkley and
Sarah von Schrader
Cornell University, Employment
and Disability Institute
June 21, 2013

<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/edi/p-NYSSiblingNeedsAssessment.cfm>



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We reach over 5,000 subscribers per quarter. Contact Maria Schaertel, Editor, Schaertel@advocacycenter.com or (585) 546-1700, ext. 271.

Be a part of The Advocacy Center's efforts to educate and inform our community about disabilities!

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