Happy One Year Anniversary, Starbridge!

Published: June 1, 2016

Just one year ago, Starbridge was launched through the merger of The Advocacy Center and LDA Life and Learning Services. Today, we celebrate the journey that we have been on together and look forward to a bright future.

Our vision is that every person leads a fulfilling life in their community. We appreciate the opportunity to work with you to make this vision a reality.

All the best,

Colin Garwood, President/CEO

A Portrait of Successful Self-Employment:

Jonathan White

Jonathan White is an award-winning photographer and digital artist. A graduate of RIT (Rochester Institute of Technology) with a degree in photography, Jon’s creative vision and technical mastery have assured his artistic success.

Jon has developed a range of contracts providing photography for sports teams and small businesses as well as working at an environmental lab. His website features a broad range of his commercial and fine art work.

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Save the Date!

Building Our Community: Principles and Practices of Inclusion and Self-Direction

Save the dates for three half-day workshops in our series!

Further information about speakers and topics will be available soon. The workshops in this series will include both a speaker and a panel presentation.

August 30
“Dignity of Risk” and Self-Directed Living
Christopher Liuzzo, formerly Associate Executive Director of the Arc of Rensselaer County, will explore concerns and issues regarding risk and vulnerability.

September 22
Living a Self-Directed Life at Any Age
Please check the website for updated information.

November 17
The Right to Work: Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency and Self-Direction
Emily Ladau, owner of Social Justice Media Services and blogger (Words I Wheel By), is the featured speaker.

To register for individual events only, please click on the dates and topics above. Investment: $59/each workshop or $149 to register for all three. To get the discounted rate, you must register for the whole series on the series event page.

Ticket information:
Discount Tickets, $10.00 when you use this link: http://ow.ly/PMbX3014foY
Ticket Questions?
Contact Kayla at (585) 271-5425.

Join the Flash in Promoting Respect for All Abilities
A summer night of soccer
Show your team spirit and community spirit too!

July 23, Game Time: 7:00pm
Sahlen’s Stadium, 460 Oak Street, Rochester NY, 14608

Join us in cheering for the Western New York Flash as the team takes on FC Kansas City. Stop by Starbridge’s information table and help us end the hurtful and disrespectful use of the r-word. Sign the pledge to Spread the Word to End the Word!

SPREAD THE WORD TO END THE WORD
www.r-word.org

Spread the Word to End the Word

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Spread the Word to End the Word

Building Our Community Series
Our kickoff conference in May featured Dr. Tom Pomeranz.

LIKE US ON facebook.
Join us for the Starbridge 2016 Education Conference and Parent Workshop!

Featuring Paula Kluth, Ph.D.
Joyful Learning: Using Active & Collaborative Structures to Differentiate Instruction

October 14, 2016 8:30 am-3:30 pm
Hyatt Regency Rochester
125 E Main St, Rochester, NY 14604

Too often a “one-size-fits-all” approach is used to design lessons, leaving some learners struggling to participate and teachers feeling they have not reached all of their students. In this interactive session, participants will apply principles of differentiation by exploring a number of collaborative, active, and brain-compatible learning techniques aimed at engaging students and making learning joyful. The session is appropriate for teachers in K-12 and is structured for participants to experience these active techniques through demonstration. Together we can create more inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities and more responsive and engaging school experiences for all learners.

**Investment: $125/person**
Registration fee includes continental breakfast, lunch, and conference materials.
Please register [here](#). Questions? Call (585) 224-7248 or email [events@starbridgeinc.org](mailto:events@starbridgeinc.org).

Parent Workshop with Dr. Paula Kluth -
Inclusion: What Every Parent Should Know

October 13, 2016 6:00-7:30 pm
Hillside Family of Agencies Training Center
1 Mustard St, Rochester, NY 14609

Come and get ideas to help you partner with your child’s teacher. In this presentation, participants will learn about recent research on inclusive classrooms, useful supports, and helpful questions to guide your next meeting.

**Registration is FREE** and open to families of students with disabilities or suspected disabilities. Please register [here](#). Questions? Call (585) 224-7248 or email [events@starbridgeinc.org](mailto:events@starbridgeinc.org).

Dr. Kluth is a consultant, author, advocate, and independent scholar who works with teachers and families to provide inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities and to create more responsive and engaging schooling experiences for all learners. Paula is a former special educator who has served as a classroom teacher and inclusion facilitator. Her professional interests include differentiating instruction and inclusive schooling.

**Self-Directed Services conference**, for those interested in self-directed options, sponsored by In the Driver’s Seat.

The Fall issue of Bridges will feature the theme of Self-Directed Services. Do you have a personal account to share about your experience? Or do you have questions and concerns about Self-Directed Services that you would like us to address in the newsletter?

Please email Maria Schaertel at [mschaertel@starbridgeinc.org](mailto:mschaertel@starbridgeinc.org) or mail to Starbridge, 1650 South Ave., Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14620.
**Customized Employment**

Customized employment is a process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the business needs of an employer.

**Types of Customized Employment:**

- **Task assignment:** Some of the job tasks of current workers are reassigned to a new employee. This reassignment allows the incumbent worker to focus on primary job responsibilities and complete more of the central work of the job.

- **Job carving:** An existing job description is modified — containing one or more, but not all, of the tasks from the original job description.

- **Job sharing:** Two or more people share the tasks and responsibilities of a job based on each other’s strengths.

- A young woman expressed an interest in working for a retail store. She could handle sorting items, organizing shelves, and cart returns. The job normally involves handling the cash register as well, but she is not ready for that task yet. She is successfully employed doing the tasks she excels at and at the same time, meeting the store’s needs.

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**Self-Employment or Entrepreneurship**

allows for an individual to receive assistance in the creation of a small business.

**Benefits of entrepreneurship**

- Independence and the ability to make own business decisions
- Ability to set own pace and schedule
- Reduced transportation problems when home-based
- Continued support from SSI and SSDI, including health care, when income and assets are within requirements

- With support from a job developer, a young man with an interest in music created a music conversion business, converting music collections from CDs and cassettes to digital files.

- A young woman designs clothing for women who have Down syndrome. As an adult with Down syndrome herself, she knows how hard it is to find a perfect fit off the rack.

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**Volunteering and Internships**

Volunteering and unpaid internships can be fulfilling experiences in and of themselves and sometimes may lead to work.

- Three friends and housemates collect donated refundable cans and bottles and use the reimbursed money for charitable projects and other activities. Currently, they are saving for an invisible fence for their dog. They want their pet to be safe and to be free of a leash which can get tangled in their wheelchairs.

- A young man expressed an interest in helping people in high school. That led to an unpaid internship as a rehab technician at a hospital. Eventually, when a paid position became available, he landed a job at the hospital.

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**Spotted Rabbit Studio Apprenticeship Program**

offers quality artistic training on a vocational level. For further information, please contact Sarah Beren, LCAT, at (585) 507-5774 or visit the website, http://spottedrabbitstudio.com/programs/apprenticeship-program/
Several years ago, in order for Jon’s business to grow and expand, he pursued some additional advice and direction. Tim McGowan, Starbridge employment specialist, helped the artist, who has autism, to further develop his creative passion and entrepreneurial spirit into a successful business. Tim provided direction in making initial contacts with resources, communication with clients, and job coaching.

The Colors of the Urban Landscape, Jon’s favorite theme and subject, was sparked by trips to New York City and Paris, in 1989 and 1990.

“...the Urban Landscape, while it appears on the surface, to be drab & colorless; if you look closely, especially at the drab, everyday sights that most people ignore, that the Urban Landscape is truly, a world of amazing color!”

Jon is now interested in extending his theme to Israel’s urban landscapes. He is discovering resources to accomplish this by researching grants and other funding sources and exploring arts and cultural exchange opportunities.

Jon’s services include Photography, Graphic Design and Web design. For further information, please visit The Jonathan White Galleries at www.jwgalleries.com.

Thinking of starting your own business?

Here are some resources from the U.S. Small Business Administration to explore:

Starting a Business

- Entrepreneur Resources for People with Disabilities
  Details important considerations for potential entrepreneurs with disabilities.

- Important Considerations for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities
  Outlines important considerations for potential entrepreneurs with disabilities.

- Online Seminar: Self-Employment for Individuals with Disabilities
  Introduces some of the critical factors in considering business feasibility, developing financial resources, basic business plan development and the identification and access to community small business resources for disabled persons.

- Small Business and Self-Employment Service
  Provides access to information such as the pros and cons of starting a business as a disabled person, counseling, and referrals regarding self-employment and small business ownership opportunities for people with disabilities.

- START-UP USA
  Contains self-employment information and resources for individuals with disabilities.

- State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies
  Lists programs that help people with disabilities become employed, including self-employment.

- Ticket to Work Program
  Connects Social Security Disability Insurance and supplemental security income beneficiaries with employment networks for training and other support services needed to achieve your employment goals, including self-employment.

A Portrait of Successful Self-Employment:

Jonathan White

A Portrait of Successful Self-Employment continued from page 1

1 World Trade Center #5, 4/2/15 USA

Chinatown Gift Center #1, 4/2/15 USA
Financing a Business

Federal and state government agencies do not provide grants to people with disabilities for starting a business. However, there are a number of low-interest loan programs that help disabled people obtain startup financing.

Visit the Loans and Grants Search Tool to get a full list of grant, loan and venture capital programs for which you might qualify. The following loan programs are specifically for business owners with disabilities:

Abilities Fund
Provides access to financial assistance and resources, and customized training to entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Alternative Financing Technical Assistance Project
Offers information on state loan programs for entrepreneurs with disabilities and success stories.

Tax Information

Accessible IRS Tax Products
Provides popular tax forms from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and publications in accessible formats, including Braille and talking formats.

Contains facts on the IRS’ disability-related provisions that are of particular interest to businesses as well as people with disabilities.

Tax Incentives Packet on the Americans with Disabilities Act
Explains how to take advantage of the tax credit and deduction available for complying with the ADA.

Trade and Professional Resources

Business Leadership Network
Details the only national disability organization led by business for business, and how it promotes best practices in hiring, retaining and marketing to people with disabilities.

Chamber of Commerce for Individuals with Disabilities
Provides information about the national consumer volunteer organization that uses business principles to improve the economic status of individuals with disabilities.

Disabled Businesspersons Association
Explores the association that assists enterprising individuals with disabilities to succeed in the business world.

National AgrAbility Project
Gives resources to assist people with disabilities who are employed in agriculture.

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
Provides access to technical assistance, consulting and mentoring services for disabled entrepreneurs.

Disability Entrepreneurs: What Can You Do Campaign
Explores information and resources for disabled entrepreneurs.

- Small Business Administration. www.sba.gov

I Want to Work. The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices. Download a free workbook and partner guide – a great tool for beginners to identify job interests, describe supports, and prepare a resume. Work side by side with a partner!


Road to Self-Sufficiency: A Guide to Entrepreneurship for Youth with Disabilities, National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability. Download the entire guide or select chapters. Free.
http://www.ncwd-youth.info/road-to-self-sufficiency

Customized Employment information from the U.S. Dept of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy, Customized Employment

National Disability Employment Awareness Month 2016 - #Inclusion Works
This year’s National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) theme is “#InclusionWorks.” Observed each October, NDEAM celebrates the contributions of workers with disabilities and educates about the value of a diverse workforce inclusive of their skills and talents. The annual theme is announced early to facilitate advance planning of events. The official 2016 NDEAM poster is now available.
A Parting Word to Advocates

After 27 years of teaching, encouraging, and empowering parents and professionals as an advocate, presenter, and trainer, Parent Training and Information Center Statewide Coordinator Kathy McCarthy-Proulx has announced her retirement for this coming December. Kathy has an important mission to fulfill before she retires:

When asked what my goal is for the next year I did not hesitate for a second to express my wishes. I have one mission before I retire and that is I want my co-workers, PTIC statewide co-workers and every parent of a child with a disability to know that: You are good at what you do! You are amazing people! You are creative, hard-working, resilient, dedicated, passionate, caring, smart, diplomatic, assertive and a million more positive adjectives. You deserve to know how great you are, but I just don't want you to know it, I want you to celebrate it!! I then want you to take that knowledge and pass it on to other parents. There will never be a more powerful statement then to tell a parent that they are a good mother, father, grandparent or caretaker. Whenever I say that to a parent on the phone or in an email I truly feel as if they sit up taller in their seats and a smile crosses their face. The words are so powerful that they cut across everything that is going on in their life.

It’s been a privilege to be a part of your journeys, and as my journey now takes me down a different path I carry a piece of each one of you in my heart.

With admiration and love, Kathy McP

New Partners Join Graduate Network

Fall 2016 Session Registration Now Open

The Spring 2016 class of NYS Partners in Policymaking® is celebrating. After starting the program in March of 2016, and presenting a testimony to their peers and project staff, 27 members of the class have become NYS Partners graduates.

During the course, participants gained the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make changes in policy, perception, and treatment of individuals with disabilities. The class participated in a series of interactive modules and webinars, with one statewide meeting. Participants develop skills with technology and on-line communication tools for advocacy. Every class includes self-advocates and individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The course ended with an introduction to the opportunities that exist within the larger state-wide NYS Partners network. New and exciting changes involving the sharing of information, resources, and collaboration will be unveiled with the opening of the latest version of the Graduate website.

New York State Partners in Policymaking®

Learn/Advocate/Lead

Want to become a NYS Partner?

The next course runs from September to December 2016.

Fill out an online application. To apply, please visit http://nyspip.org/apply

For more information, please visit: www.nyspip.org.
Congratulations to my fellow classmates in the NYS Partners in Policymaking® program! Members of this class have expressed a great range of concerns in disability policymaking. The final project was a short testimony speech delivered in person, via webinar, or by video. Here is a sampling of testimony quotes delivered by graduates of the 2016 Class.

Deepa spoke about airline accessibility for people with significant needs: People with significant disabilities, like my sister, have no alternative way to travel long distances. They are trapped in a location and cannot travel, even if they want to.

Jodi discusses the need for a “one stop shop” for services that families may access through a new website she proposes. It is my personal experience that although there are multiple agencies in my county and multiple families served by these agencies, they often do not know of each other.

Stephanie describes the daily struggle for people who have disabilities to navigate the world around them. The Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted to provide equal access to people in public systems. Yet more than 25 years after ADA was enacted, so many building and transportation systems and other public places, do not provide access for people with disabilities.

Ericka highlights the need for public parks to be safe for children with elopement (wandering) issues. My son loves to be outdoors to play. At this time, we cannot play at our town park because it is not fenced in. The town pond is just yards away, which makes it a greater danger.

Robert advocates for reforms for the Family Medical Leave Act, citing his family’s experience. In a 21st century society, a parent should not have to miss out on a paycheck when their disabled child does not have support. I personally have seen my mother struggle to keep a good paycheck. Whenever I run into a lack of staffing, she has to miss work.

To view the complete testimonies which include proposals to solve the highlighted problems, please visit www.youtube.com/user/NYSPartners. You will find many other interesting and important topics offered by 2016 Partners graduates as well as many from previous years.

Maria Schaertel