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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

* Don't forget!
AccessCNY will be closed on February 19th, 2018 for President's Day.

We are one!

Paul Joslyn

On January 1, 2018, AccessCNY and Spaulding officially joined forces.

Our focus today and always will be on providing the best person-centered services to the community.

In the years ahead, the state will dramatically change how services are funded. By becoming a larger agency we will be prepared for the future. As one, our programs will be broader, our staff more experienced and our resources richer.

Mergers are difficult on everyone and we are committed to keeping you informed on upcoming changes.



One key step is the combining of services for those with a developmental disability. Brittany Halligan will lead the department with the assistance of Kim Shedd and Merrilee Gorton. They have been meeting regularly to ensure a smooth transition for those we serve and for staff.

Another big decision is where staff will be located. As promised, we'll share information on what departments are moving by February 1, 2018.

Here are a few things that have changed:

- Spaulding and AccessCNY now have the same orientation processes.
- All new hires will be employees of AccessCNY.
- We have one health plan.

- Department meetings are being combined.
- Spaulding job postings will be placed on the AccessCNY website.
- A new organizational chart has been distributed to define departmental roles.

Our Executive Team is excited by what we can accomplish together. Our doors are always open for any thoughts and ideas you might have.

There will certainly be bumps in the road in the months ahead, but we'll overcome them together as we help create better lives for those we serve.

AccessCNY Board President Michael Wirtheim, with CNY Community Foundation President Peter Dunn and Spaulding Board President Julie Frawley. The group worked together to make the merger possible.

Berkana Crisis Respite House

After a year or more of planning and preparation, AccessCNY's Berkana Respite House in Eastwood opened this month!

Berkana offers a warm and safe environment to support individuals in getting through and/or avoiding a mental health crisis. The house has

six bedrooms and living space to accommodate up to six guests at a time. A peer-run crisis house in the Syracuse area is greatly needed, and AccessCNY is excited to be able to provide this support.

Carole Hayes Collier, AccessCNY's Director of Community Based Peer

Initiative, has provided valuable information about how the house will be run:

Potential guests may call any time. The staff person answering the phone will arrange a brief interview and then will follow up if a room is available and **(cont'd on page 2)**

Nurse's Corner by Arlene Jones



Flu shots are now available at the Nurse's office!

The Flu season is upon us at this time. Hopefully many of you received your flu shot. The CDC recommends that we still get vaccinated until the end of January. Flu shots can decrease flu illnesses, doctor visits and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations. The more people who get vaccinated, the more people will be protected from the flu, including older people, young children, pregnant

women and people with certain long-term health problems who are more vulnerable to serious flu complications.

What are the differences between a cold and the flu?

The common cold and flu are both respiratory illnesses but are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to differentiate between the two based on your symptoms alone. The flu is usually worse than having a cold;

generally colds do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections or hospitalizations. Symptoms of the flu include fever or feeling feverish/chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and extreme tiredness. Cold symptoms are usually milder and do not result in serious health conditions.

Let's make this a safe and healthy New Year!

Berkana (Continued...)

the respite house is appropriate for the individual calling. Only the guest can apply to utilize the respite.

Each guest is responsible for his/her own self-care and health and medication needs. Each person will have a locked space to hold their medications, and will be expected to deal with their health care professionals for their healthcare needs.

To further the effectiveness of the services provided, all staff are people in recovery and are trained to assist the individual guests in their own recovery journeys in a peer-to-peer way, rather than a professional/client mode. Staff are in the house 24/7.

Guests must be at least 18 years old and need to be interested in working on his or her recovery from either a mental health issue or substance use disorder. There are a few other restrictions as well.

These guidelines help to ensure that the Berkana house can provide the best possible care to its residents, and hopes are high that it will be a great resource for the Syracuse community.

If you'd like more information about the house, you can contact Carole Hayes Collier at (315) 218-0883.



The new Berkana Respite House in Eastwood.

For all...

◇ **Fire Safety Reminder!**
Please be aware of your food and cooking appliances. Be sure not to leave food unattended in microwaves, stove tops, toasters, etc., and double check that your appliances have been turned off when you're finished using them.

Employee Enrichment

Don't miss out on the February training opportunities! Call or e-mail Crystal Baker to sign up!
*Prior to signing up for any of these trainings, please obtain approval from your supervisor.

◇ **Person Centered Thinking**
Wednesday, 2/7/18, 9:00 am-3:30 pm
Training Room, 1603 Court Street
(For staff supporting individuals with Developmental Disabilities)

◇ **Building Effective Relations in a Diverse Community**
Wednesday, 2/21/18, 8:45 am-4:00 pm
6666 Manlius Center Road
(For ALL employees)

Are Bigger Agencies Better?

Mike Wolfson

In this day of mergers and shared services, we often ask, are bigger agencies better? Historically, agencies were started by families that saw a need in their community that was not being met. This is how Enable, TLS and Spaulding were founded. A lot has changed since our legacy agencies were started. Funding has improved. That may be a surprise, but back in the 1940's and 50's, almost no government funding existed for the people we serve. Most agencies provided services with volunteer staff, funded by fundraising. With increased government funding there came increased rules and requirements. We all know how burdensome these rules are. We deal with

them every day. Hopefully, we don't let this get us down, or stop us from carrying out the good work we do. We can debate whether many of these rules are good, but they are certainly a "fact of life" for us. We get the funding we need to carry out our mission and for that, we commit to following the rules that the funders require of us.

Larger agencies are more efficient due to economies of scale. This means our administrative cost percentage is lower when compared to the administrative cost percentage of smaller agencies. This leaves more money for existing programs, new programs and staff salaries and benefits.

We constantly strive to balance these needs when developing each year's agency budget. We are fortunate that we are growing program-wise and financially each year. Many agencies in New York State are not. Smaller may be better in some ways, but it is hard for small agencies to survive in the current political, regulatory and fiscal environment. Our job is to act like a small agency when we can and to be efficient like a large agency, all at the same time.

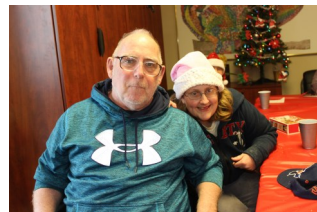
"A lot has changed since our legacy agencies were started."

Holiday Fun!

All across AccessCNY, participants and staff hosted a variety of holiday parties all through December. This includes Community Support Services, Community Habilitation, Clinic and many more!

A very special party on Christmas day was hosted by the David Clark Learning Center. That party allowed residential participants with no plans to visit family to stop by and enjoy treats and good company.

You can see even more photos online at Facebook.com/AccessCNY and looking the AccessCNY Holiday album!



Employee says...

Welcome to the 'Employee Says' section!

This being our first issue of the newsletter, we decided to take this opportunity to explain what this section of *Inside Access* is for.

Most of the content that our newsletter will include will be information about the agency: new updates, events, etc. But this section is a more informal space

where we get to hear directly from you.

Do you have a personal story to tell about a participant? Or a department that you'd like to thank for their hard work? Or maybe you'd just like to share your own experiences working at AccessCNY?

Send in your idea to the Newsletter Committee via the committee e-

mail address (shared in the box to the right). The Newsletter Committee will review it, and if it's appropriate for publication we'll put it here in this section! Maybe we'll even include a picture!

This newsletter is not only for you, but by you. Whatever it is you'd like to say, we'd like to include it!

Have something to say? Share your stories, photos or news with *Inside Access* by contacting the Newsletter Committee at newsletter@accesscny.org.

Employee Spotlight!

Nominations for the Employee Spotlight can be sent to the Newsletter Committee at newsletter@accesscny.org.



In October of last year at the annual CP of New York State conference, four AccessCNY employees were honored as CP State award winners, chosen by their agency for outstanding job performance. The 2017 winners are: Lettie Holliman (farthest left), Candi Ledger (third from right), Jess Evans (farthest right) and Brittany Halligan (not pictured). Each of these employees demonstrates commitment to those they serve each day. All of AccessCNY's award winners were personally congratulated by Executive Director Paul Joslyn (second from right), Chief Operations Officer Sue Schultz (third from left) and Associate Executive Director of Human Resources, Doreen Nelipowitz (second from left).

Welcome to AccessCNY!

We're excited to welcome the following new employees, who joined our agency in December:

- Tashaya Amin – Direct Support Professional - Certified Relief
- Kennedy Barnes – Children's Support Specialist
- Elizabeth Brown – Residence Counselor
- Shaunika Bullock – Direct Support Professional - Networks
- Savannah Borza – Peer Specialist Crisis Respite
- Mitayah Donerlson – Quality Enhancement Specialist
- Edwin Duran – Direct Support Professional - Certified
- Felicia Graham – Children's Support Specialist
- Steven Kent – Peer Specialist Crisis Respite
- Diana LaPine – Children's support Specialist
- Timothy Minnick – Peer Specialist Crisis Respite
- Jason Naradzay – Peer Specialist Crisis Respite
- Joseph O'Brien – Residence Counselor Relief
- Mary Potter – Administrative Assistant
- Tovashia Riley – Residence Counselor Relief
- Tiffany Scott – Residence Counselor Relief
- Maria Swedowski – Residence Counselor Relief
- Jane Tennant – Bakery-Café Associate

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"When 'I' is replaced with 'We,' even 'Illness' becomes 'Wellness.'"

- Malcolm X