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2019 Morale Calendar

The Second Friday of Every
Month

**February 8th:
Favorite Decade Day**

Take a picture & send it to
Nikki Bomasuto:

(nikki.bomasuto@accesscny.org)
She will post on AccessCNY's Face-
book page!

HAVE AN IDEA FOR THE NEWSLETTER?

Contact us via e-mail at
newsletter@accesscny.org,
or drop an idea in one of the
suggestion boxes located at
each of our administrative
buildings.

**FOLLOW
ACCESSCNY ON
FACEBOOK AND
TWITTER!**



State of The Agency

By: Paul Joslyn, Executive Director

2018 was a busy year for AccessCNY. In January we opened Berkana, Onondaga County's first peer respite program for people with a mental health diagnosis. We also began our Crisis Intervention Team initiative which will allow us to partner with law enforcement and first responders to implement recovery-focused solutions to interactions with someone in a mental health crisis. Spaulding Support Services became part of the AccessCNY family, allowing us to better support people with developmental disabilities through a broader array of services. Also, Onondaga CASA became part of our organization as of January 1st. This well-respected, important program supports children who have been victims of neglect or abuse and who are involved in the foster care system. Many of these children, as well as their parents, can be further supported by services offered by our organization.

In addition to these initiatives, a tremendous amount of work was done by our program and support departments to serve the 3,000+ people we serve.

2019 will likely be another busy year. Our top priority will be internally focused – to be the preferred human service employer in Central New York. I realize that this is a fairly wide-ranging goal, as what attracts one person to work at a particular human service agency may be different from what attracts another person. However, we fully intend to attack this goal with an equally broad plan, addressing a variety of variables including, but certainly not limited to, ensuring our wages and benefits are competitive, improving the comfort and appearance of our buildings, streamlining Human Resource procedures, refining the skills of our supervisors, and

making sure we
have plenty of
fun activities for you all to participate in.

We are in a period of considerable change within our field with things like managed care and value based payments arriving within the next couple of years. These changes will require us to do things differently, including using data to demonstrate the effectiveness of our programs. However, the core of what we do, and what makes our programs effective, remains our employees and your ability to build meaningful relationships with the people we serve. Thank you!



"Never doubt that
a small group of thoughtful, committed
citizens can change the world. Indeed, it
is the only thing that ever has."
— Margaret Mead

For all...

Basic Communication & Expression

Thursday, 1/31/2019
9:00 am—12:30 pm
6666 Manlius Center Road

Building Effective Relations in a Diverse Community

Wednesday 1/6/2019
8:45 am—4:00 pm
6666 Manlius Center Road
Willie Elliott & Jalcia Benson with Oncare

Diversity/Controversial Issues

Thursday 2/14/2019
9:00 am—11:30 am
1603 Court Street
Room 2027
1/2 day review for MH Residential ONLY
This is a review for people who have previously completed the one day Diversity training session.

For questions regarding these or any other trainings, please contact:
Crystal Baker, Employee Development Specialist
315-410-3372
crystal.baker@accesscny.org

Nurse's Corner

The Flu season is upon us and so far in our area the* CDC has reported activity to be minimal as of last week. Seasonal flu disease usually peaks between December and March most years, but disease can occur as late as of May. The CDC recommends getting vaccinated as long as the flu viruses are still circulating.

With that being said, for those of you who still want to get vaccinated, you still can. I will be running the flu clinics until the shots are completed. Please continue to call or email for appointments.

arlene.jones@accesscny.org

Bill's Story

By: Mary Beth Johnson, Executive Assistant

I noticed something was different about Bill when he was about 2 years old. We took him to my parents' house for a birthday party. When we arrived Bill started to cry and plug his ears. My intuitive mother said to me, "You have GOT to get some help for this child! This is not normal behavior for a child going to a birthday party!" My mom told me she thought Bill had autism. That was 1992. So began the journey...

My first stop was the pediatrician. He said, "He might have a little Asperger's." He told me it was behavioral. The pediatrician suggested we place Bill in a preschool program for his "behavior issues" and socialization.

Bill began attending EYW when he was four years old. By this time, Bill was barely speaking to anyone except me and his father. Bill was placed in an integrated classroom. His teacher sent home a notebook every day, noting how his day went. Within the first week, she wrote a note saying, "Billy participated in circle time this morning when we were going around saying, 'Good morning Mr. Yellow Bird, what is your name?'" He said, 'Billy'." I cried so hard when I read this because I knew Bill was where he needed to be. I kept the notebook and read it from time to time to remind me of Bill's progress.

At Bill's first fire drill, he found a girl without a hand, and held onto her elbow and assisted her. There also was a little girl who had CP and was in a wheelchair. Bill would ask to go out and meet her at the bus to wheel her in. Here was my son with special needs of his own but he was drawn to the kids who needed help.

Bill will be 29 in February. Bill is thriving at life! He is in a self-direction program which allows him to direct how he spends his day. This includes volunteering weekly at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, therapeutic horseback riding, bowling, and a paid, part-time job.

EYW holds a special place in my heart for putting Bill on the path to success. I am eternally grateful for the tireless efforts of the teachers, therapists, and staff who worked with Bill. Thank you EYW, for all you do, and all you have done!



The Technology Lending Library

Have you or someone you know ever needed to use a cane, bath chair, walker or other piece of durable medical equipment? Were you wondering where you could go to borrow something like this? Did you know there is such a program at AccessCNY?

TRAID-Project Adapt a program in the Outreach Department - DD/ABI is an assistive technology lending library. Families and individuals throughout the community and many counties benefit from this program. Families can borrow items, use them and then return the items so others can benefit from them. The library features a variety of items such as walkers, canes, toilet risers, bath chairs, small portable ramps, wheelchairs and many other items.

Many of your co-workers have taken advantage of this program, if not for themselves, for a family member or friend.

If you have items you would like to donate to the loan closet just let us know.

If you have any questions or would like to access this program you can contact:

William Hnatko

Adaptive Technician Assistant
(315) 795-6435 or (315) 410-3336

David Selover

Program Specialist
(315) 218-0845

Diane Weiermann

Outreach Director
(315) 218-0844

From The Desk Of.....

By: Colleen Tedeschi, Associate Executive Director, Exploring Your World Preschool

Did you know ... at birth, the average baby's brain is about a quarter of the size of the average adult brain. Incredibly, it doubles in size in the first year. It keeps growing to about 80% of adult size by age 3 and 90% – nearly full grown – by age 5 (NAEYC). The quality of a child's experiences in the first few years of life – positive or negative – helps shape how their brain develops. What does that mean ... that Exploring Your World Preschool and the experiences provided within the program are extremely **IMPORTANT**.

Laughter, exploration and curiosity are abounding at Exploring Your World Preschool. At EYW we are building a foundation for life-long learning. Our program serves three and four year old children in an inclusive environment.

Within our five classrooms we have twelve students in each room; six with IEPs and six typically developing students. Our students come from a wide range of local school districts with SCSD being the primary district we serve.

The curriculum that drives our instruction focuses on social emotional, literacy and math. This curriculum guides planning for a center based exploratory approach to learning. During morning circle children greet each other and are presented with the choices for their daily learning experiences. From there they move about the classrooms exploring the learning centers/stations. At any given time when you walk into a classroom, the weekly theme will be evident in the

activities you see and the creative work that the students produce.

At EYW we have our own therapy staff including occupational, physical and speech therapists that provide services to our children within the classroom, the sensory room, the gym and we even find them working up and down the hallways. The teachers, therapists and support staff use a team approach when planning for the children. This approach allows the therapists to suggest ideas that will allow for skill carryover into the classroom and everyday educational environment.

If you are ever having a stressful moment within your day and you need a break, head down to EYW it will definitely brighten your day.

Holiday Spirit!

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love." – **Hamilton Wright Mabie**

AccessCNY is fortunate to have the most caring, giving employees and this truth is especially evident during the Holiday Season. This year, there were a variety of opportunities and activities that allowed people to give back to our participants and to the community at large. Just a few of these included:

Exploring Your World's Tree of Hope

Preschool staff identified families in need of a little help to allow them to have a memorable holiday. People throughout the agency picked a tag off the tree of hope representing a child, which showed their age, gender, clothing size and interests. Staff purchased gifts for the preschoolers and their siblings, which were distributed along with a turkey and

other food that EYW collected for each family. The recipients are always so appreciative.

Holiday Sing Along

EYW and David Clark Learning Center also worked together to present a holiday sing along for the preschoolers. Both the band and the children love the opportunity to play and sing. People from other departments have been known to sneak in for the show as well! DCLC gave back to the community in numerous other ways as well this year.

Family Adoption

Instead of exchanging gifts with each other, Community Habilitation decided to adopt a family whose details were provided by the Department of Social Services. Employees bought gifts for each of three children and their aunt and uncle who care for the children since their parent passed.

A Holiday Dinner

Several employees came together to serve a Holiday Dinner for participants who did not have other holiday plans on December 25th. While some prepared and served food at our Manlius Center Road location, others transported individuals to ensure anyone who wanted to attend, could. And some employees who couldn't participate that day, still contributed with donations of food. In all, 25 participants from several departments enjoyed a meal and fellowship. The celebration included not just dinner, but Holiday music and movies.

Thank you to all those who gave of themselves this holiday season! We are inspired, but not surprised, by your generosity!

Employee Match Game

How well do you know your fellow employees? It's time once again to get to know your co-workers with some fun and games. Below is a list of 5 Agency employees and their answers to the question ***"If you could be any Superhero, who would you be?"*** Try to match the correct staff member with their Superhero Alter Ego. Email your guesses to the Newsletter@AccessCNY.org. The first person to guess all 5 correctly will win 2 Regal Cinema Movie Passes. Correct answers will be found in next month's issue.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Barbara Rauscher
Program Director of MH Housing Prog. & Svc. | A. Iron Man |
| 2. MarieAnne Stockton
Senior Behavior Intervention Specialist | B. Snoopy as the WWI Flying Ace |
| 3. Sharlene Hillenbrand
Assistant to Associate HR Director | C. Dr. Strange |
| 4. Kristin Gentile
Assistant Program Director, Community Hab. | D. Wonder Woman |
| 5. Jess Evans
Quality Enhancement Specialist, QE | E. Captain America |

Also, congratulations to last issue's winner, **Monica Cappa**, who was the first to correctly guess the answers to our pet match game: 1-B; 2-C; 3-A; 4-E, 5-D

Wardrobe Alert!



The Quality Enhancement & Finance departments sure did show their sports pride!



The first Morale Friday was a big success! Just ask the CDPS department on all the fun they had!

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity – not a threat"

- Steve Jobs