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CHANGES

*The world's spinning madly, it drifts in the dark
Swings through a hollow of haze,
A race around the stars, a journey through
The universe ablaze with changes. — Phil Ochs*

By Melvyn R. Tanzman, Executive Director

As advocates, we here at WDOMI are not satisfied until people with disabilities enjoy the same opportunities as those who are temporarily able-bodied. However, it is useful to reflect on the changes of the past 50 years and see how far we've come. This doesn't mean we should rest on our laurels and say, "We are satisfied," rather it should motivate us, when change seems hard, to keep on struggling, because change is incremental but is in fact occurring. We certainly have a long way to go; however, we have also come a long way.

The focus of this issue of "On the Move" is to look at the status of our community as compared to where we were 50 years ago and where we want to be tomorrow, hopefully not 50 years from today. We must never forget that many of us would have spent our lives in an institution 50 years ago. Facilities like Goldwater Hospital and Willowbrook were places where people with disabilities were expected to live and die. Little was done to educate children with disabilities and potential employment was a pipedream. Today we criticize the fact that 65% of our people are unemployed or underemployed, but compare that to almost 100% fifty years ago. Beth White's personal experience as a working person who just happens to be blind is an example of how things have changed for the better. Jerry Farrell's interview with Frank Del Campo not only reflects past shortcomings of our educational system, but also makes important points about the current status of "special education." I have been privileged to meet, work with, and befriend folks like Scott Smith who overcame what seemed to be insurmountable barriers to become established, respected professionals. Scott never had the opportunity to engage in the sports and recreational activities enjoyed by children; today we have the Miracle League that offers children the opportunity to play baseball.

Can we even imagine what new prospects the next generation of people with disabilities will have? Probably not, but one thing is clear, without struggle today there can be no progress tomorrow. Expectations must continue to expand and we must continue to challenge the limits imposed on us. We continue to be the architects of the future. Join us as we march forward!

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ON THE MOVE - PAGE 2

HELP AMERICA VOTE ACT

By Meghan Schoeffling, Systems Advocate and Housing Specialist

As long as the Constitution of the United States has existed, it has stated that every American has the right to vote privately and independently. However, for many Americans with disabilities who cannot operate the voting machines independently, this has not been so. People with disabilities have for too long been encouraged to vote using an absentee ballot. For those of us who have refused, wanting our votes to be counted along with everyone else's, we have had to bring a friend or family member to the polls to assist us. Our only other option was to have two poll workers, a Democrat and a Republican, assist us to maneuver the machines. Hardly private or independent. No, Americans with disabilities have not enjoyed equal voting rights throughout our history, but all of that is changing.

In 2001, President Bush passed the Help America Vote Act, or HAVA, after the controversy in the presidential election in Florida. All states were charged with the task of choosing new voting machines. In part, HAVA states that all the machines need to be accessible to people with disabilities. This is very big for a community which has never enjoyed the rights that other Americans have to vote privately and independently.

Progress has been slow for New Yorkers. New York is the last state to choose a new machine. This is due, in part, to New York's strict state laws. It has also been tough to reconcile concerns over security with concerns over accessibility to all voters.

In 2006, New York was forced to purchase "ballot marking devices." These were not voting machines per se, but rather, devices that were accessible to all voters. These devices marked and printed a paper ballot, which was then put into an envelope to be counted later. This was always meant to be a temporary measure; however, there were several issues with Plan B. Arguably the big-

gest problem was that many counties only had one accessible ballot marking device for the entire county. Especially, it seemed, in counties that were more rural, where transportation, or lack thereof, is always a problem. Westchester had ballot marking devices at twelve different locations, making it one of the better counties in this respect.

While this was an acceptable temporary measure, voters with disabilities in New York are eagerly looking forward to the upcoming election in November, when we will be able to vote at our designated local polling place and use a voting machine both privately and independently. At the time of this writing, it is not clear which machine we will adopt. What is clear, however, is that there will be an accessible voting machine at every polling site in time for the primaries in September and therefore, the election in November. No more having to vote absentee. No more having to travel to a site farther away to use the accessible "ballot marking device" that we have had since 2006 while waiting for the state to choose a new machine. This coming election, all voters will be able to vote privately and independently. And it is about time!

The Westchester County Board of Elections is recruiting 880 poll workers to work during the September Primaries and the November Elections. They are paying \$225 a day for a 17-hour day. If you have the endurance for this marathon, WDOMI encourages you to contact the Board of Elections at 995-5700 and apply for a position. Not only will you be making extra money but you will also be bringing your personal expertise with disability to the polling places. In many cases this income will have little or no impact on your continued eligibility for disability benefits. If you have any questions about how work impacts your benefits, contact Scott Barber at WDOMI, 968-4717 ext 24.

SPECIAL EDUCATION: ADVOCACY, LEGISLATION AND EXPERIENCE

By Jerry Farrell, LMSW, Transition Specialist

The subject of special education is a complex matter involving many areas. This article will explore some of the positive changes that have occurred over the last 40 years for students with disabilities due to legislative efforts and initiatives. It will also explore through interview format, the experience and knowledge gained by Mr. Frank Del Campo, a former special education teacher who became a school administrator and worked in special education for 32 years.

Before major legislation impacted special education, there were few options available for the average person with a disability. Of those used in recent history, some options were not only insufficient, but resulted in extreme neglect and abuse, evidenced in part by the Willowbrook State School scandal of the early 1970s. This type of “warehousing” was far too often the fact for many individuals with disabilities.

According to “A History of Special Education,” by Sherman Dorn of South Florida, “both research and advocacy have played an important role in program development within the public school systems.”¹ Although Mr. Dorn does admit that larger and more complex school systems tend to be less responsive to change, the good news is that over time, through research and advocacy, laws have been implemented to help make possible the opportunity for students to gain necessary learning tools. Furthermore, advocacy groups consisting of educators, students, families and concerned participants have been instrumental in bringing about important legislation like section 504 and IDEA.

Briefly stated, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law that prohibits dis-

¹ Dorn Sherman, *A History of Special Education*, US Department of Education 1999

crimination against individuals with disabilities. It ensures that the child with a disability has equal access to an education. The introduction of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), passed in 1997, further requires the school to provide an individualized educational program (IEP), designed to meet the child’s unique needs and provide the child with educational benefit. The passage in 1990 of the Americans with Disabilities Act is a still more wide-ranging civil rights law that under certain circumstances prohibits discrimination based on disability.

Toward an effort to further understand important practices and methods in relation to special education, here is an interview with Mr. Frank Del Campo.

Interviewer: What were the contributing factors that brought you into the field of special education?

Mr. Del Campo: Initially I earned a degree in Liberal Arts and worked as a teacher for 5 years. I soon thereafter became a principal at a public school in Orange County, New York. As a principal I had the opportunity to observe all the classrooms. What inspired me most was when I observed a teacher of a special needs classroom; she was able to effectively gauge different rates of learning and through intuitive methods reached many students who were considered difficult to teach.

Interviewer: Tell me more about this teacher and the skills you observed.

Mr. Del Campo: This woman was reaching students by understanding where their strengths lay.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

She utilized learning methods that were enjoyable and effective. She would carefully consider her intonation, pause when necessary and utilize active listening toward an effort to be in sync with the students and not overload them with too much material. “Educate,” from the Latin derivative, means to “bring forth,” and this teacher was indeed bringing forth learning skills that were ready to be tapped.

Interviewer: Was this considered an acceptable curriculum?

Mr. Del Campo: Because she was working with those who were basically considered “unreachable,” she was less restricted by formalized curriculum.

Interviewer: What did this experience teach you?

Mr. Del Campo: This experience initially confounded me, but also inspired me to earn my Masters in Special Education. It was years later, after much experience and knowledge gained from administrative positions, I came to realize a primary problem in special education lies within the curriculum itself.

Interviewer: What do you mean?

Mr. Del Campo: Over time, it became more apparent that teachers were spending most of their time preparing students to pass a test due to the constrictions resulting from the need for outcomes.

Interviewer: This is very interesting. On one hand, it appears important for schools to produce positive outcomes; yet, on the other hand, it seems you are saying the effort to teach students to do better on a test can inhibit the learning process because it tends to limit the unexpressed potential inside the student.

Mr. Del Campo: Yes, this is a problem. I am aware that many of the young people in college learning to become educators are not themselves learning an essential aspect of education.

Interviewer: And this essential aspect is what?

Mr. Del Campo: The aspect of learning how to recognize the unique talents and abilities of individual students and thereby learning the skills necessary to “bring forth” these talents. Most teacher/education students are exposed to certain methodology that is somewhat restrictive. It appears that these students are learning various methods that do not take into consideration the individual strengths endemic in all people, but which are especially necessary when one is in a position to educate students with disabilities.

Interviewer: Are you saying that the effort to universalize teaching by following a strict given standard, if taught to the extreme neglect of the essential art of teaching, will cause teachers to neglect the unique needs and talents of their potential students?

Mr. Del Campo: Yes: simply put, teaching to a test or standard has negatively influenced post-graduate training programs not only to the detriment of the prospective teachers but of their potential students. Standards are not in themselves harmful or bad; however, the overemphasis on standards narrows and limits the opportunity for creative teaching and learning. As I previously addressed, this is not an opportune or ideal way to educate any student.

Interviewer: Does this mean that students with disabilities should not be expected to reach universal standards?

Mr. Del Campo: No. In order to achieve standards and hopefully beyond, a method of teach-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

ing that focuses primarily on narrow standards is not the opportune way to achieve the most positive results for any student including those with disabilities.

Interviewer: Would you consider various forms of adaptive technology an enriching aspect that can enhance the art of teaching?

Mr. Del Campo: Yes I would; however, the commercializing of various products is troubling because the product itself is often produced without the input of the teacher or the consideration of the specific needs of the student it is marketed to assist, such considerations as: diverse learning rates, visual and auditory requirements and other essential educational needs of the student.

Interviewer: Are you implying that to deny the essence of a disadvantage or disability within the teaching process by not seriously considering alternatives in a very real sense denies a just and appropriate education for students in special education?

Mr. Del Campo: Yes, it is not only patronizing and indifferent to students with disabilities who are hungry to learn, but also actively discriminatory.

Interviewer: What do you see as possible solutions to this very real problem?

Mr. Del Campo: Well, professional development is essential, but only if it is consistent and pervasive throughout the educational system to ensure that teachers and administrators are on the same page. This way the chances for better teaching methods are maximized.

Interviewer: In closing, is there anything you wish to add?

Mr. Del Campo: I think it is important to acknowledge that there is more than one way to bring about positive results, however, the “cookie-cutter” method of one size fits all is not effective because many times it is a waste of money as poor results occur. It thereby becomes educationally ineffective and as a result not cost effective.

Interviewer: This discussion has brought to mind the story of Helen Keller. If her teacher Annie Sullivan was constricted and restricted by always having to meet quarterly standards to continue her work, the world may never have been given the opportunity to know such genius.

Mr. Del Campo: I could not have said it better.

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On The Move editions are published in Spring and Fall.

A PROFILE FOR CHANGE!

INTERVIEW WITH AN ADVOCATE

How one man defied the odds, refused to give up, and attained his personal and professional goals.

By Ann Chiappetta, Youth Leadership Coordinator

Scott Smith is the Program Director at our office, and is the one person I believe we should all meet. Why? Well, he's got something many folks would like to emulate: self-determination. But it's more than that: it's how he's developed it and how he uses it that is important to anyone struggling with a disability. Plainly said, Scott is an inspirational individual, someone who doesn't like the word "no."

Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy at age two, Scott remembers crawling around on the floor until his father bought him a wheelchair when he was four years old.

"It was an oversized wheelchair that my father bought for me. It didn't really fit me, but it was brand new."

Doctors labeled Scott as mentally retarded and told his mother to institutionalize him. She refused, and Scott lived at home with his family until the age of 24. He says that he was treated just like his other siblings, and that living with his family taught him to be self-sufficient.

After moving out, Scott went to the only other place at the time that could accommodate his disability: a nursing home. It was not a good place for a young person to live. It didn't really suit his

lifestyle, but he put up with it until he graduated college and got out on his own.

When I asked him about the limitations forced upon the disabled 30 years ago, he states: "There was no support back then [the 1950s and '60s]. A family had to apply to the state themselves."

Scott didn't remain complacent, and in fact was the first disabled student enrolled in his college. He's also been at the front of the line in terms of advocacy, and continues to help other folks attain equal access and support services, earning him respect in his work at our center.

When I asked Scott to comment on one of the most important changes he's witnessed or been part of for people with disabilities, he talks about improved access for students.

"I've seen a lot of changes, kids that are able to go to regular school and college without a problem."

Scott goes on to say that in order for young people to find out about their rights, parents also need to be part of the process.

"We all have a responsibility to each other, no matter what. It goes beyond disability."

Are you interested in volunteering at WDOMI?

Please contact Claudia Slater

at 914-968-4717 ext. 21

HISTORY OF VESID

CONSUMER AND COUNSELOR ROLES

By Phyllis Greenberg, *Peer Mentoring Coordinator*

In Q&A format, this article provides information about the history of VESID, how it works, and includes input from its staff, past and present. The following issues will also be discussed: 1) eligibility for services; 2) functional limitations; 3) VESID counselor roles and how they have changed, particularly since the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and 4) what a consumer can do to make his VESID experience a positive one.

Editor's note: These questions are being answered from the point of view of a VESID Counselor. WDOMI does not necessarily agree or disagree with this perspective. In addition, if you have a serious disagreement with VESID, you should be aware of your rights. Your local Client Assistance Program can assist you with these issues. To locate the CAP in your area contact this or any other ILC.

Q. What is VESID?

A. VESID is a state agency whose acronym stands for Vocational Services for Individuals with Disabilities. Its purpose is to assist people with all phases of the job seeking process. The agency's ultimate goal is for consumers to be successfully employed. This agency sponsors education for a consumer who meets the appropriate academic and functional requirements. It is important to note, though, that if VESID funds a person's education in a particular field, it is toward a vocational goal that involves employment in the same area. VESID is not, however, a treatment program, and it is not a place where people with disabilities can only obtain funds to attend college, vocational training or continuing education.

Q. What makes someone eligible for VESID services?

A. 1) A person must have a permanent disability. It may be a physical, developmental, sensory, mental health, alcohol/substance abuse or learning disability. 2) The disability creates a significant and permanent barrier to employment – that is, something that interferes with someone getting a job.

Q. What is meant by “functional limitations,” and what does it mean when talking about the type of work a person with a disability wants to do?

A. Functional limitations are the restrictions on activity that a person's disability imposes upon him or her. It is very important that one be aware of one's disabilities and functional limitations. These limitations are written on the medical consent forms that a doctor/counselor/psychologist/teacher is required to submit as part of the VESID application. For example, if a doctor sees that his patient has weak legs due to Cerebral Palsy, he might indicate that this consumer cannot stand on his feet for any amount of time. Therefore, being a salesperson in an environment where the consumer would be required to constantly go from one end of the store to the other and be on his feet all day would not be a suitable job for him. (This is assuming that a reasonable accommodation cannot be made so that this person was able to perform the job.)

Q. How can the VESID counselor assist in the job-seeking process?

A. The VESID consumer often does not know or denies his disability. He also either has not ac-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 9)

cepted his functional limitations, or has neglected to consider them when deciding the type of job he wants. Therefore, the VESID counselor ends up having to tell the consumer that the work he is interested in is not vocationally appropriate and cannot be agreed to as part of his vocational plan. When confronted with a response such as the one described here, the consumer may not always accept what his VESID counselor recommends. If this is the case, he should be empowered, advocate for himself and make every effort to maintain positive lines of communication with his counselor. If the consumer feels justified in disagreeing with the recommendation, he has recourse to go to the counselor's superior(s) to voice a complaint.

Q. How have the VESID counselor's responsibilities changed over the years?

A. In the past, VESID was a place that people came for vocational counseling. Some think that the passage of the ADA has taken rehabilitation out of the vocational process. They feel that when a person comes to the agency for services, he is 1) coming to confirm rather than seek counseling regarding his vocational goals, or 2) feels entitled to receive certain services, whether or not he qualifies for them. In addition, counselors do not get to spend as much time doing actual counseling because they are busy entering consumer information into the computer that only they, and not a counselor assistant, can input. The number of cases has also increased and have become more complicated in terms of consumers' vocational and non-vocational needs.

Q. How can the consumer make going through the vocational rehabilitation process as smooth as possible?

A. Navigating the VESID system can cause frustration and anxiety. To try to avoid those feel-

ings, it is important that the consumer do the following:

1. Be an active participant and self-advocate during the vocational rehabilitation process. If the person with the disability needs assistance from a family member, caseworker, counselor or friend, he should not be ashamed to ask for it.
2. Communicate with his VESID counselor and take responsibility. If he has an appointment with his VESID counselor, he needs to show up for it. If he cannot come to the appointment, he needs to call the counselor as soon as possible to cancel and reschedule it.
3. Follow through on the steps that he and the counselor agree will be part of the employment plan that they develop together. If the consumer agrees to get a certain medical, vocational or psychological evaluation, then he needs to complete that step. The more information that he and the VESID counselor can gather about his skills and abilities, the better they can make a decision about what the best vocational path is for him.
4. Show motivation and interest. If he has not heard from his VESID counselor in a while, he should get on the phone to follow up with what is going on with his case.

VESID can be a very valuable resource which consumers can utilize as part of their job-readiness process. This agency provides a myriad of services to assist consumers who have disabilities explore career options, receive appropriate education and training, and learn how to be their own best advocate when seeking and retaining employment.

THE MIRACLE LEAGUE OF WESTCHESTER

By Scott Barber, CWIC

The Miracle League of Westchester was founded in 2005 by Steve Madey, Executive Director. What makes The Miracle League of Westchester unique is the totally handicapped-accessible baseball field that both children and adults with disabilities can play on. The mission of The Miracle League is to create modified baseball programs for children and adults with disabilities in Westchester County. The objective of the organization is to provide an opportunity for those children and adults to experience the joy that comes from playing our nation's pastime. Each player is given a buddy who will assist the player on the field. Thanks to the generosity of the

County of Westchester and the Westchester County Parks Department, the Miracle League plays its games on a brand-new rubberized field at Ridge Road Park in Hartsdale, New York.

For more information on The Miracle League of Westchester, please visit www.mlwny.org. For further information, or to register, contact Patti Barnes at Patti13@aol.com, or at 914.937.2447; Evan Latainer at ehl2@westchestergov.com, or at 914.995.2958; Steve Madey at JSM-adey@verizon.net, or at 914.960.6319. You can also find the registration information online at <http://eteamz.active.com/mlwny>.

WHAT I BECAME WHEN I GREW UP: MY EXPERIENCES BEFORE AND AFTER ADA AND ITS IMPACT ON JOB INTERVIEWS

By Elizabeth White, Disability Program Navigator

In early 1984, I was a nineteen-year-old sophomore at a small college in Westchester County, about to embark on what would prove to be a challenging pursuit of my first legitimate paying job. Unlike my peers in high school, I had no prior work experience, due to the fact that most employment for teenagers was not open to a blind youth—at least, no employer in my neighborhood even entertained the idea of hiring me. So this first sojourn into the workforce was a completely new and unfamiliar arena to me, demanding finesse and negotiation, a veritable proving ground to demonstrate my skills and aptitude.

I applied for a position as an alumni telemarketer—you know the type—those aggressive people who call you during your delicious dinner to ask whether you, a highly valued gradu-

ate, would like to contribute your hard-earned cash to your college's coffers, and, please, please, help us out! My proposal? Convince someone in charge of hiring these competitive young adults to hire me right along with them, make sure I had all the necessary information in a format I could access, then dive right in and make that quota—or exceed it, should I be so fortunate.

I arrived for the interview promptly, dressed appropriately and neatly in slacks and a nice blouse—no jeans and sneakers here. When the interviewer saw me, she did a double-take as if to say, “Uh-oh, Houston, we have a problem!” I just smiled, shook her hand, and sat down. I prepared to be grilled, and I was.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

During the interview, questions ranged from “How long have you been blind?” to “How do you take notes?” to “What makes you think you can do this job?” to “Don’t you need Braille in order to dial a phone?” I answered these and other enquiries as succinctly as possible, explaining that I took notes in Braille and on tape, including the names, locations and phone numbers required to perform this job; that I had effective communication skills which I could demonstrate; and that I knew how to use both a dial and push-button phone without any special markings. I also explained that I’d be willing to work for a week without pay, (amounting to about six hours and twelve dollars.) Let me, I offered, show you that I can do this job without risk to you for an acceptable trial period; then, if I work out satisfactorily, pay me what you’d pay anyone else doing the job. The interviewer, who would become my supervisor, agreed. She was sufficiently impressed with my flexibility and confidence to obtain an alumni list in advance to help me prepare my notes for the first evening’s performance.

I was employed in that position for over a semester, until my course schedule became too heavy for me to manage it all. I demonstrated ability equal to (and surpassing some) other students’ call quotas and alumni pledges, and was able to keep up with the volume of information to successfully perform the job. All in all, it was a positive first experience which led to full-time summer employment at the end of my senior year as one of the switchboard operators. When I left for graduate school, this same supervisor said that she was sad to see me go.

Fast-forward eight years. A newly minted graduate of a Masters program, I was in the process of landing my first job as a rehabilitation teacher, interviewing for various positions in different states. The ADA had just been passed a few months earlier, and I was competing for a job for which I knew other, non-disabled, individuals were also applying.

The interviewer asked me questions regarding my education and employment background, what skills and strengths I believed I could offer the agency, and what I saw myself doing within five years. No mention was made of my job performance as it related to my blindness, and discussion regarding adaptive equipment served to inform me that I would be supplied with a driver and in-office assistance. When inquiring about a laptop computer for use while on the road, the interviewer told me that something would have to be worked out. (In the end, I supplied my own computer.)

The main difference between this and prior job interviews concerned the employer’s compliance to ADA guidelines. There were certain questions which potential bosses could no longer ask: i.e., how long have you had your disability?; how can you perform that particular skill, considering your disability?; and why should I hire you, a disabled person, when I could hire someone who is non-disabled to do the same job and not cause me any undue anxiety? As with any other applicant, I had only to demonstrate what I could bring to a company, and that I had the necessary requisite skills to perform that job successfully. I could not be discriminated against based on my disability as a measure of my level of performance. Only after being hired for said position could we discuss reasonable accommodation more candidly to enumerate what my employer would provide, as opposed to what I might desire. This meant that I might get the equipment I needed, but not what I preferred.

The ADA introduced many helpful legal guidelines by which both employers and employees could navigate the sometimes-murky waters of this potentially complicated relationship. It helped concentrate employers’ focus on their applicants’ abilities, and endeavored to begin to break down negative attitudinal barriers concerning disability. It strengthened confidence in

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

persons who happened to have disabilities to seek positions in areas of the job market hitherto untried. Consequently, in the years since its inception, the ADA has opened up possibilities in the medical, military, technological and scientific fields and beyond. As employers examine the present

and future trends of the changing job market, the ADA can only serve to identify and utilize a more diverse population of qualified candidates, including those persons with disabilities, who need or desire to work as productive members of the society in which we all live.

BACK TO THE FUTURE: THE ADA AND JOB MARKET TRENDS

By **Siva Kessler**, *Assistant Disability Program Navigator*

Within the next ten years thirty percent of the American workforce will retire. This will result in a shortage of experienced skilled workers. Because employers will need to tap into a more diverse population, greater opportunity exists for persons with disabilities to become a more integral part of the workforce. Following are brief explanations and definitions of some of the issues addressed in the Americans with Disabilities Act, legislation which specifies legal guidelines for employers and employees with disabilities to establish successful relationships.

Title 1 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 took effect July 26, 1992. It prohibits private employers, state and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

A qualified employee or applicant with a disability is an individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the job in question. Following are some examples of reasonable accommodation:

- Provision of accessible worksite

- Job restructuring, modifying work schedules, reassignment to an available position
- Acquiring or modifying equipment or devices (speech and screen enlargement, text magnification, voice activation), adjusting modifying examinations, training materials, or policies, and providing qualified readers or interpreters

Please note: an employer may provide an alternate accommodation to the one suggested by the employee as long as it is effective. One must disclose they have a disability before they can request an accommodation.

Although the ADA guidelines for disclosure can be complicated, generally the only reason an individual would disclose they have a disability is if they were in need of an accommodation; it is, however, a personal choice. I encourage any individual reading this article, who has a disability and is thinking about employment, to read Title 1 of the ADA.

As employers continue to understand the value of individuals with disabilities, their businesses will be positively impacted by the presence of this previously untapped, often overlooked workforce.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Ability Beyond Disability
(914) 242-0600

AL-Anon
(212) 941-0094

Alcoholics Anonymous
(212) 647-1680

A Ride for All
(718) 706-7433

Beeline Bus System
(914) 813-7777

Boys and Girls Club
(914) 423-9736

Budget and Credit Counseling Services
(212) 675-5070

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(914) 597-2500

Camp Pride
(914) 377-6438

Catholic Charities
(914) 476-2700

Commission For the Blind and Visually Handicapped
(914) 993-5370

Disability Program Navigator
(914) 968-4717

Dept. of Senior Program and Services (HEAP)
(914) 813-6300

Family Services of Westchester
(914) 937-2320

Family Service Society of Yonkers
(914) 963-5118

Food Patch
(914) 923-1100

Golden Crown Driving School
(914) 949-0419

Music Conservatory of Westchester
(914) 761-3900

Northern Westchester Center for the Arts
(914) 241-6922

Office for the Aging
(914) 813-6400
(800) 342-9871

Office for the Disabled Westchester County
(914) 995-2957

Salvation Army Community Center
(914) 963-0183

Section 8 Program – Yonkers
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SPARC Program and Resource Connection
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Special Program and Resource Connections
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(888) 209-8124

VESID
(914) 946-1313

Victims Assistance Services
(914) 965-0217

Volunteers of America
(914) 741-2200

Westchester ARC
(914) 428-8330

Westchester ARC-Recreation Dept.
(914) 949-9300

Westchester Art Workshop
(914) 606-7500

Westchester Jewish Community Services
(914) 761-0600

Westchester Coalition for the Hungry and Homeless
(914) 682-2737

Yonkers Dept. Parks and Recreation
(914) 377-6428

Detach and Save



HELPFUL RESOURCES — ACCESSIBILITY LINKS

BENEFITS:

Social Security: The work Site

<http://www.ssa.gov/work/>

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Cooperative Agreement Awards

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/ServiceProviders/WIPADirectory.html>

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES:

Westchester Institute for Human Development

(call 914-493-7899 for more information)

www.wihd.org

EMPLOYMENT: ADVOCACY AND INFORMATION:

Job Accommodation Network

www.jan.wvu.edu

New York State Department of Labor -Workforce NY Partners

www.labor.state.ny.us/workforcenypartners/perkinsrecip.htm

NYS - OMRDD: Employment Opportunities

www.omr.state.ny.us/rr/index.jsp

Office for the Disabled

<http://www.westchestergov.com/disabled/>

HOUSING LINKS:

National Low Income Housing Coalition

<http://www.nlihc.org/template/index.cfm>

New York Connects, A Guide To Senior Housing In New York State:

<http://www.seniorhousing.state.ny.us/>

New York State Accessible Housing Registry:

www.nysaccessiblehousing.org

Opening Doors

http://www.c-c-d.org/task_forces/housing/doors.html

Westchester County Handicapped Accessible Housing Survey:

(This survey rates the accessibility of the buildings but does not address how affordable they are or

whether or not they are available.)

<http://www.westchestergov.com/planning/housing/AccessibilityReport/HCHousing.htm>

MEDICAID PROVIDERS BY SPECIALTY:

[http://www.righthealth.com/Health/](http://www.righthealth.com/Health/medicaid%20providers-s?lid=msn-ads-sb-3767256496)

[medicaid%20providers-s?lid=msn-ads-sb-3767256496](http://www.righthealth.com/Health/medicaid%20providers-s?lid=msn-ads-sb-3767256496)

OLMSTEAD V. L. C.

(98-536) 527 U.S. 581 (1999) 138 F.3d 893, affirmed in part, vacated in part, and remanded.

<http://straylight.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/98-536.ZO.html>

SOCIAL SECURITY WEB SITES:

How to Apply, The Disability Planner

<http://www.ssa.gov/dibplan/>

Social Security Benefit Publications

<http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/englist.html>

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2008?

<http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/newfor2008.htm>

RECREATION:

Miracle League of Westchester

<http://eteamz.active.com/mlwny/index.cfm>

SPINAL CORD INJURY:

The Mount Sinai Hospital - Spinal Cord Injury Services

<http://www.mountsinai.org/Patient%20Care/Service%20Areas/Rehabilitation%20Medicine/Procedures%20and%20Health%20Care%20Services/Spinal%20Cord%20Injury%20Rehabilitation%20Program>

VESID:

<http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/>

Are you in need of a Wheel Chair Lift? Call Dennis Galle at 914-965-6995 who would like to donate it to you if you can use it!

Detach and Save



MAUREEN KEATING TSUCHIYA

A successful advocate is an individual who has successfully raised awareness that has resulted in inspiring change to the status quo. — Claudia Slater, Director of Public Affairs

The story you are about to read tells the story about a woman who left her legacy as an advocate which has and will continue to inspire people with or without disabilities. Mary Rose Schaaf, Maureen's sister, submitted this to *Westchester Guardian* late in 2007.

My sister, Maureen Keating Tsuchiya, was honored by Westchester Disabled on the Move posthumously as the advocate of the year, at their annual Spirit of Independence Awards Dinner at the Crowne Plaza in White Plains, NY.

Maureen was the second of 8 children, my baby sister. She contracted polio as a child when she was three years old after receiving the polio vaccine. She was one in five million for this to occur. As a child she walked with braces but they never slowed her down. As an adult she walked with crutches and also rode a scooter or a wheelchair for her mobility, though many people would say she had too much energy to let that hold her back. As my sister I never thought of her as disabled, she was just Maureen, my little Mo.

Maureen was involved in politics throughout her life. She found you had to learn about the political system to get changes made, and she found the Democrats were her party favorites. She lived in Minnesota in her 20's and had to cross a major busy street in downtown Minneapolis. The light would turn red before she could get to the other side. That was when she learned she had to be the one to contact the local street department or the department of roads to get changes made. As a young woman, one of Maureen's most exciting days was to attend the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act at the south lawn of the White House in the 1990's. She fought for those rights in the Chappaqua area too.

Her deepest desire as she lived in Chappaqua was to make all places accessible to those with disabilities. One of the places she wanted this access to occur was at the front doors of the Chappaqua Train Station. It was her desire to

see it accessible for wheelchairs and people with disabilities. As she always said, "Let my people through the front door!" As the plans were being made for the sidewalks along Quaker Road, she was adamant about having the sidewalks accessible to the disabled as well as accessible for strollers for those who were walking their children. She was a great supporter of campaigning for local Democrats as well as making polling places accessible for the disabled.

Maureen was 51 when she died a year ago of a pulmonary embolism following knee surgery. She was a great advocate for the disabled. She is deeply missed. The award was given to her daughter Hannah, at the awards ceremony that was attended by over 100 people. And it was apparent that this awards ceremony strives to "recognize and celebrate those with disabilities to attain independence both individually and as well as collectively." Maureen would have been proud to have been honored. She and I challenge all of you to help others to be independent.

Last year at WDOMI's Annual Spirit of Independence Awards Ceremony, the agency officially renamed their Advocate of the Year Award in memory and in honor of Maureen. In addition, the family along with WDOMI has established The Maureen Keating Tsuchiya Memorial Fund, which is intended to promote her work in educating us all that people with disabilities are vital, vibrant human beings with much to bring to society. Each year the fund will sponsor a relevant activity to promote advocacy. The essence of variety in the programming will further continue Maureen's legacy around advocacy.

On Thursday, October 23, 2008, at The White Plains Crowne Plaza, from 6:00 to 9:00pm, the 2008 Maureen Keating Tsuchiya Advocate of the Year Award is being presented to Elizabeth Mark, because she has demonstrated the ideals of advocacy and grassroots activism throughout her professional career. For more information on the agency and the upcoming event please visit the website at www.wdom.org

ON THE MOVE
Spring 2008

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(914) 968-4717 (phone)
(914) 968-6137 (fax)
info@wdom.org

Save the Date

Thursday, October 23, 2008

Westchester Disabled On the Move, Inc.
Celebrating over 20 years of People Empowering People

Honors

Debby Bennett
National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Southern New York Chapter
Spirit of Independence Award

The Journal News
Corporate Citizenship Award

Elizabeth Mark
Advocate for Youth and People with Disabilities
Maureen Keating Tsuchiya Advocate of the Year Award

The Crowne Plaza, White Plains, New York, 6:00 – 9:00 pm
For more information and to purchase tickets visit www.wdom.org