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AWARENESS

Bill Will Create Disability Advisory Group



Advocate Gina Barbara joins Nassau County Legislators as they announce formation of a Disability Awareness Advisory Group.

Members of the Nassau County Legislature joined disability advocates, residents with disabilities and others to announce the formation of a Disabilities Awareness Advisory Group.

According to a press release this bi-partisan group will meet quarterly, to discuss different ways Nassau County can work

better for those with disabilities.

“By creating this advisory group, we will make sure Nassau County lives up to its promise to include all of our citizens in the legislative process, and give them a voice,” Leg. Steve Rhoads (R-Bellmore) said.

The bill will be before legislative committees Sept. 13 and before the full legislature Sept. 24.

The public will have an opportunity to be heard at both sessions.

“To strengthen the tapestry of Nassau County’s diverse communities we must ensure that every resident has a seat at the table and an opportunity to flourish,” said Leg. Arnold Drucker (D-Plainview). “I support the concept

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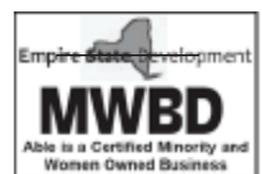
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OBITUARY

LICIL Dir. Joan Lynch Dies

Joan Lynch, executive director of the Long Island Center for Independent Living (LICIL) died after more than 35 years of service to the organization.

Her long career at the agency found her “interacting with consumers and learning something new every day,” according to a statement from LICIL. It went on to say she “has been serving people with disabilities since her first day at this agency. She has a strong belief in helping people with disabilities and seniors, thus her long tenure with LICIL.”

Lynch moved up to executive director when Patricia Moore retired in 2015.

In addition to her work at

LICIL, Lynch was civic minded and served with many organizations including as President of the Levittown Chamber of Commerce. She was also on the Board of Directors of the Gerben Foundation which provides support for research and treatment of canine lymphoma and a member of the Levittown Lions Club.

She was a past honoree at the Levittown School District’s annual dinner for her commitment and service to the community and was honored at the Nassau County Legislature 2019 Women of Distinction Program-Trailblazers the New Millennium 21st Annual Awards Ceremony for District 15.

She is survived by her chil-



dren, grandchildren and her dogs.

A memorial service will be held Thursday Sept. 9 at the Levittown VFW from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

McCormack Is New Director



Susan McCormack has taken the reigns of the Long Island Center for Independent Living (LICIL) after the death of Exec. Dir. Joan Lynch.

McCormack served as Director of CDPAP and Corporate Compliance Officer at LICIL for many years. In her new position, she plans to maintain and expand the successful

programs while getting into a regular cycle of fundraising.

She is working on reinstating the transportation program that LICIL provided for people with disabilities and those who are elderly. Other aspects she is concentrating on are Hispanic outreach, benefits advisement, home modifications and the CDPAP program.

LICIL also has a nursing home transition program that

serves both Nassau and Suffolk Counties. McCormack is in the process of conducting a search for a development employee for grants and fundraising. Challenged by the pandemic she said LICIL always maintained a small staff in its offices but most are back working in person now.

McCormack had a long friendship with LICIL’s first Exec. Dir. Patricia Moore and credits her as a mentor.

REV UP To Register Voters

Every year the REV UP campaign leads National Disability Voter Registration Week (NDVRW) to grow the political power of people with disabilities. The group builds its political power by getting communities registered and ready to vote

and engaged on issues important to people with disabilities.

This year NDVRW is Sept. 13 through Sept. 20. Community organizations can join REV UP in getting out the disability vote in 2021.

Interested parties can sign up as a partner, hold an event, share voting resources on personal social media, send a letter to the editor or op-ed to a local newspaper or even ask local officials to issue a proclamation declaring NDVRW.

More information is available at www.aapd.com, www.weall.vote/revup or by emailing matlaluri@aapd.com.



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The Deadline For The Oct. Issue of Able Newspaper Will Be Sept. 13

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AAPD RAILS at SCOTUS' Voting Rights Ruling

According to the American Association of People with Disabilities the U.S. Supreme Court has dealt a significant blow to democracy.

In a statement AAPD wrote, "In its decision on *Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee*, the Supreme Court has undermined Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, a provision meant to protect voters from discriminatory and racist voting restrictions. This destructive decision comes on the heels of nationwide attacks on voting rights in states like Texas where disability advocates prepare for a special legislative session in which legislators will consider more

anti-voting legislation to add seemingly arbitrary barriers for disabled voters, voters of color, and disabled voters of color.

"In Arizona, the Supreme Court decision upholds two incredibly harmful voting bills that have disparate impacts on some voters — a law prohibiting election officials from counting ballots from eligible voters cast in the wrong precinct and a law criminalizing the collection of voted ballots for delivery by anyone but family members, caregivers, and election officials.

"The discarding of ballots cast out of precinct and restrictions on vote-by-mail further disenfranchise disabled and voters of

color, who may not have access to reliable accessible transportation, have limited time to vote, lack access information on precincts that may change last minute or face other voting barriers.

"For tribal communities in Arizona, who experience some of the highest rates of disability, these laws that restrict voting access have especially harsh impacts. Tribal voters often already face barriers of limited access to mail service used for vote-by-mail and long distances to polling sites and post offices and collecting and delivering ballots in groups has helped in the past to address these barriers.

"Stalwarts of Civil Rights, including the late Representative John Lewis, set up the Voting Rights Act of 1965 as a tool to prevent and eliminate racist and other discriminatory practices that exclude certain people from participating in our democracy. We urge Congress to move quickly to introduce and pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act to protect our voting rights from malicious attacks. Disabled people and communities of color have long fought for our right to vote, and we will continue to push for a democracy that is accessible to all."

Report Shows Voter Turnout Up Among PWD

People with disabilities (PWD) made large gains in the historic voter turnout surge of 2020, according to a new report by the Program for Disability Research at Rutgers University and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC). Expanded access to mail-in ballots pushed disability turnout to 17.7 million, up from 16 million in 2016.

"Turnout increases when people with disabilities have more voting options. It's not 'one size fits all,'" said Professor Lisa Schur, co-director of the Program for Disability Research at Rutgers University. "Many states made it easier to vote during the pandemic, which particularly

helped voters with disabilities."

The researchers analyzed data from the federal government's Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement for November 2020 to calculate disability turnout. They found that 62 percent of PWD voted early in 2020, up from 56 percent in 2016. The higher turnout was reported across all disability types and demographic groups. The turnout gap between people with and without disabilities was relatively unchanged. Compared to 42 percent of people without disabilities, more than 53 percent of PWD voted by mail, with only 26 percent of people with dis-

abilities and 31 percent of people without disabilities voted at a polling place on Election Day.

The 23 states that made it easier to vote by mail appeared to have a higher increase in disability turnout, though the difference is within the margin of error.

An estimated 1.95 million PWD had trouble voting in 2020, but accessibility was significantly improved compared

to previous elections. An earlier study, commissioned by the EAC, found that 11 percent of PWD had trouble voting in 2020, down from 26 percent in 2012. Only 5 percent of PWD experienced difficulties voting by mail, compared to 18 percent of those who voted at a polling place. Voters with disabilities were still almost twice as likely as voters without disabilities to report difficulties.

Disabled Passenger's Suit Against Airline Moves Forward

A federal judge in Utah has granted a motion to allow an Idaho man the chance to continue litigating a case that his now-deceased wife filed last year against American Airlines.

Attorneys for Tammy Sue Spears filed a lawsuit against American Airlines in June of 2020 for events that occurred during a 2019 flight from Salt Lake City, Utah, to Charlotte, N.C. The lawsuit alleged that American Airlines cabin crew members forced Mrs. Spears, a disabled amputee, to crawl from her seat to the lavatory because the airline did not

have an aisle wheelchair on the flight. Mrs. Spears sustained injuries and was humiliated.

Unfortunately, she died on Jan. 4, 2021 for reasons unrelated to events alleged in her complaint.

As the representative of Mrs. Spears' estate, Robert G. "Greg" Spears asked the court to amend the complaint and substitute him for his deceased wife so that he may continue to litigate her claims against American Airlines. American Airlines opposed the motion and moved to dismiss the case,

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Glenn Campbell Honored



Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine presents Glenn Campbell's wife Mary Ellen with a proclamation honoring her husband for the advocacy work he did for people with disabilities as Town Board members look on. Campbell, who used a wheelchair because of a spinal cord injury, was an attorney and served as co-director of the Suffolk Independent Living Organization (SILO).

The ceremony which took place before a town board meeting in July commemorated the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Campbell's wife was joined by family, members of the Brookhaven Task Force for People with Disabilities, as well as Kathleen Madigan who partnered with Campbell as co-director at SILO.

CMS to Improve Services for PWD and Seniors

CMS issued a proposed rule that accelerates the shift from paying for home health services based on volume, to a system that incentivizes value and quality. The rule also seeks feedback on ways to attain health equity for all patients through policy solutions, including enhancing reports on Medicare/Medicaid dual eligible, disability status, people who are LGBTQ+; religious minorities; people who live in rural areas; and people otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

The CY 2022 Home Health Prospective Payment System (HH PPS) proposed rule addresses challenges facing Americans with Medicare who receive health care at home.

The proposed rule also outlines nationwide expansion of the Home Health Value-Based Purchasing (HHVBP) Model to incentivize quality of care improvements without denying or limiting coverage or provision of Medicare benefits for all Medicare consumers, and updates to payment rates and policies under the HH PPS.

“Homebound Medicare patients face a unique set of challenges and barriers to getting the care they need,” said CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure. “Today’s announcement is a reaffirmation of our commitment to these older adults and people with disabilities who are counting on Medicare for the health care they need. This proposed

rule would streamline service delivery and value quality over quantity – at a time when Americans need it most.”

The CMS Innovation Center (CMMI) developed the HHVBP Model, which began Jan. 1, 2016, to determine whether payment incentives for providing better quality of care with greater efficiency would improve the quality and delivery of home health care services to people with Medicare.

The HHVBP Model’s current participants comprise all Medicare-certified home health agencies (HHAs), providing services across nine randomly selected states. The Third Annual Evaluation Report of the participants’ performance from 2016 to 2018 showed an

average 4.6 percent improvement in HHAs’ quality scores and an average annual savings of \$141 million to Medicare.

This year, CMS announced on Jan. 8 that the HHVBP model met the statutory requirements for expansion. CMS is proposing to expand the HHVBP Model nationwide effective Jan.1, 2022. By expanding the HHVBP Model, CMS seeks to improve the beneficiary experience by providing incentives for HHAs to provide better quality of care with greater efficiency.

Additionally, the proposed rule would improve the Home Health Quality Reporting Program by removing or replacing certain quality measures to

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Sterilization Reparations Approved

Gov. Gavin Newsom (D,-Calif.) has approved a \$7.5 million budget request, to provide reparations to survivors of state-sponsored forced or involuntary sterilization in California institutions, between 1909 and

1979, and survivors of involuntary sterilizations in women’s state prisons after 1979.

This makes California the third state in the nation to provide monetary compensation to survivors who were

sterilized under state eugenics laws and the first state to provide reparations to survivors who were sterilized while incarcerated in California’s women’s prisons.

Between 1909 and 1979, California sterilized at least 20,000 people under state law - accounting for one third of eugenics sterilizations nationwide. People with disabilities, Latinas, women and poor people were disproportionately targeted for sterilization. Although the state repealed its eugenics law in 1979, its reproductive violence continued in state prisons into the 2010s.

Most recently, sterilization, a legacy of ongoing eugenics practices in the United States was being used against immigrant women in detention centers in Georgia, making it clear that forced and involuntary sterilizations have never stopped in the U.S., nor in California.

Between 2006 and 2010, a California state audit revealed at least 144 women were illegally sterilized while in California’s custody. In the audit 65 percent described themselves as Black, Hispanic, Mexican or other. Additionally, according to state documents

and interviews, there are at least 100 more women who were forcibly sterilized dating back to the late 1990s. To this day, many survivors still do not even know that their reproductive capacity was stolen from them.

“After 4 years of advocating for reparations, the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund is heartened that California has taken a necessary first step towards ending its legacy of eugenics,” said Carly Myers, DREDF staff attorney. “While no amount of money can bring justice to survivors, we are thankful California has taken responsibility for past abuses, and hopeful this marks a turning point in its treatment of people with disabilities and others who have been targeted for reproductive oppression.”

“The Sterilization and Social Justice Lab is gratified that this bill will provide long-awaited compensation to survivors of involuntary sterilization in California and will continue to inform this process and to highlight links between past and present experiences of reproductive injustice,” Alexandra Minna Stern and Nicole Novak agreed.



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More Training, Higher Wages For Quality DSPs

Direct Service Providers (DSPs) provide around-the-clock care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs), supporting them as they accomplish daily tasks, develop life skills and achieve other personal goals.

Of those that continue to support people with IDD, many lack the training necessary to ensure they take a person-centered approach to support. This puts individuals with IDD at increased risk for physical, mental, and emotional difficulties as their personal needs are left unfulfilled.

A major hurdle for finding quality DSPs is that they are in short supply. Before COVID-19, almost 46 percent of DSPs quit their jobs every two years.

Factors contributing to DSPs leaving the profession include an average hourly wage of about \$11 an hour; lack of affordable health insurance for themselves and their families; little to no public recognition for the importance of their role; persistent staff shortages that increase workload.

The need for DSPs is expected to rise by a full 50 percent by the year 2026.

Most DSPs receive little to

no training in person-centered support. This training could improve working conditions and retention, as it helps DSPs better understand the patients in their care.

“It is not uncommon that when an agency or system enters the picture to help a person with IDD, they take over that person’s life instead of supporting it. We need to train more people who provide support to empower people with IDD and help them retain control over their lives,” said Craig Escudé, president of IntellectAbility, a leading provider of tools and training for person-centered support.

It can be difficult to know what a person with IDD considers important, especially if they communicate non-verbally. Discovery skills help DSPs find out what a person with IDD values,

“We need to empower people with IDD with the ability to fully integrate into society. This is the only situation where we tolerate segregation of an entire group of people. Getting better DSPs into support roles for people with IDD can help bring these people back into the world and dramatically improve their lives,” Escudé said.

504 Dems Endorse Holobnyczyj For County Legislature

The 504 Democratic Club has unanimously endorsed Nadia Holobnyczyj who is running for the Nassau County Legislature District 8 seat which includes Floral Park and surrounding areas.

The club heard from and questioned Holobnyczyj at their August meeting. A vote was then taken and the endorsement was voted on.

“As the nation’s first and largest Democratic Club advocating for the Civil Rights of People with Disabilities, we consider it part of our mission to support qualified candidates who will support our fight particularly when they are members of our community,” said 504 Pres. Michael Schweinsburg

“Nadia’s qualifications are most impressive. Not only has she achieved advancements for people with disabilities, her con-



siderable civic engagement and leadership have produced tangible results that benefit all her neighbors and families throughout Nassau County.

“The 504 Dems are proud to have unanimously endorsed her and strongly encourage all voters in Legislative District 8 to sup-

port her and work hard to ensure she is elected so she can continue to advocate for all as an elected official.”

“I am truly honored to have the endorsement of the 504 Democratic Club,” said Holobnyczyj. “This organization has a strong presence in all five boroughs of New York City. However, the fact that they “crossed the border” into Nassau County

to support my campaign for Nassau County Legislator truly is a testament to their mission of inclusivity for all individuals with disabilities. I promise to work hard for the disabled community in Nassau County and their families. I will strive for inclusion in every aspect of life in Nassau County and be the direct representation in the Nassau County Legislature that we all deserve.”

College Students with Disabilities Unhappy With Educational Changes

According to recent research, about two thirds of college students with learning disabilities or mental health issues are unhappy with the education they are currently receiving.

Learning technology experts Glean carried out the research on how students with disabilities, learning difficulties and mental health issues feel about the sudden switch to blended learning, and if a lack of face-to-face support was negatively impacting their education.

The study, of 250 college students, found that fewer than 30 percent of those with autism are happy with their education, despite 72 percent admitting that their college offers good assistive accommodations. In comparison, only 32 percent of students with ADHD felt their colleges offered good accommodations, and 42 percent claimed to be happy with the education they are receiving.

In addition to accommoda-

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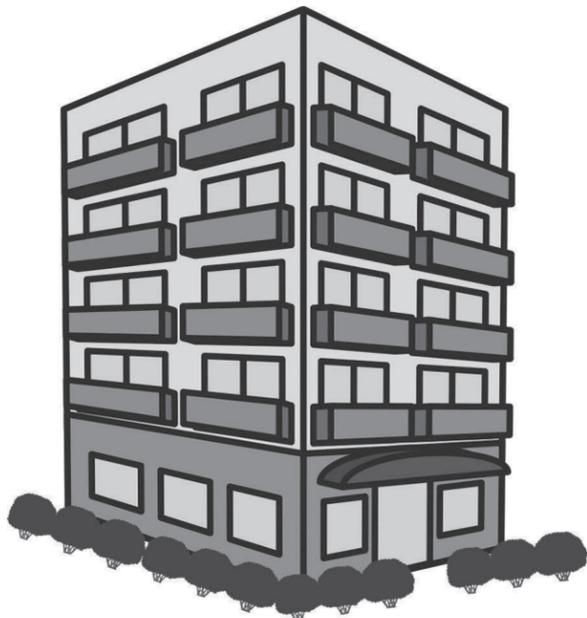
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Are Masks "Reasonable?"

BY JAMES WEISMAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



To those who live in the Northeast, prohibiting public school districts from mandating masks at the height of the Delta variant surge, defying the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Center for Disease Control (CDC), in the name of local control and then denying control to the locality seems completely bonkers.

However, Florida, or at least its governor, has done just that. Push-back is coming from left, right and center, but the ultimate arbiter could turn out to be the courts and their interpretation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and, of course, the Florida courts' examination of the actual powers of the governor.

Fox and other more extreme right-wing cable news channels and social media spread misinformation about vaccines and politicized the wearing of masks. So did politicians. Gov. Ron DeSantis, a graduate of Harvard Law School, has outlawed mandatory masking in public schools, even if the school district wants to do it. He has threatened to withhold financial assistance and salaries of those who defy him and protect children.

At least one lawsuit has already been filed in federal court challenging DeSantis, saying he is violating several laws, including the ADA and IDEA. The suit alleges that children diagnosed with conditions that compromise their immune systems, such as severe asthma, were being exposed to risk unnecessarily and/or discriminated against because they cannot attend school with their peers, unless their peers are masked.

Many children with disabilities have been stranded at home longer than children without disabilities because of the difficulty of accommodating each child during an emergency. Parents are anxious for their children to receive the services to which they are entitled in the most integrated setting appropriate to their child's needs, i.e. IDEA compliance.

The ADA requires reasonable accommodation. The child that needs masking in order to attend public school safely cannot be accommodated, even by a board of education that wants to make the accommodation.

Gov. DeSantis is the discriminator-in-chief in this case, and is ultimately responsible for the IDEA and ADA violations, but that's if, and only if, a mask mandate is a reasonable accommodation. Three years ago, asking the whole school to wear a mask to accommodate one child or several children, or faculty members, too, for that matter, might have seemed unreasonable. Today, we know just how reasonable and important it is.

Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas, a wheelchair-using paraplegic, issued an executive order in May that banned masking in public schools. Several big cities in the state have announced plans to defy this reckless ban, as the governor has ordered hospitals to halt non-urgent procedures to make room for more COVID patients and seeks out-of-state help for overflowing Texas hospitals.

Political attitudes about healthcare have always evolved. During the 1960s, Ronald Reagan believed Medicare would lead to the socialist takeover of the United States. By the time he was eligible to receive Medicare benefits, he and just about every other American, believed it was a fundamental right. But until now, no one has just denied science, living in an alternate universe, void of facts but filled with opinion and politics.

Mobility Challenged Least Accommodated

Despite a steady year of diversity, equality and inclusion conversations, the 2021 BraunAbility Drive for Inclusion Report Card uncovered that of all marginalized groups, those with mobility challenges have the fewest accommodations to be fully included in society.

Compared with 2020 results, the report also found a disappointing 14 percent decline in the public's willingness to understand and accommodate those with mobility challenges, indicating a seemingly "back to normal" attitude as the nation's restrictions begin to lift.

"[After COVID,] it seems many people are already quickly forgetting to accommodate the needs of those in wheelchairs," stated a wheelchair user who responded to the survey.

BraunAbility, the leading manufacturer of wheelchair-accessible vehicles and lifts, conducted its second-annual Drive for Inclusion Report Card study to assess the nation's state of inclusion. BraunAbility surveyed both the general public and The Driving Force, an online community of nearly 1,900 individuals with mobility challenges and their caregivers. The objective is

to identify obstacles to inclusion based on perceptions – or misperceptions – between the general public and those with mobility challenges. The Report Card gives voice to those with mobility challenges, with the ultimate goal of furthering diversity and inclusion for everyone.

This year, BraunAbility found a gap in how the general public and The Driving Force believe people with mobility disabilities are accommodated, highlighting two different views of the world. Only 23 percent of The Driving Force think people with mobility challenges are fairly accommodated, while 61 per-

cent of the general public see it that way.

A total of 79 percent of The Driving Force believe society is most lacking in design and development of accommodations within businesses they frequent, versus 37 percent of the general public, a disconnect of 42 points.

Those with a mobility disability are two times more likely than the general population to see a lack of inclusion of people with mobility challenges when accommodations for that very audience are being designed.

When it comes to accommodations in the workplace

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Back-to-School Tips From Lighthouse Guild

COVID-19 continues to pose challenges for many parents and students. But whether children are going back to school in a physical classroom or remotely at home, it is important to make sure they get their vision checked. Lighthouse Guild points out that vision is one of the keys to success in school and encourages parents to make sure their children get regular vision screenings.

The guild offers five healthy vision tips to help safeguard children's eye health.

Eating Carrots: The old saying still applies. Encourage children to eat a well-balanced diet loaded with differ-

ent types of fruits and vegetables as well as fish.

Speaking Up: Children should let parents know if they notice any vision changes. Examples would be blurry vision, frequent squinting, or general eye discomfort.

Wearing Glasses: Parents should help children understand the importance of wearing their eyeglasses. If they are resistant because they believe glasses are unattractive, try pointing out sports figures and other well-known people who wear glasses.

Resting the Eyes: Looking continuously, at a computer, phone or TV screen can

tire the eyes and so, children should be encouraged to take a break from staring at the screen. Parents should teach them the 20/20/20 rule for computer use. After 20 minutes on the computer, they should take a break for 20 seconds and look 20 feet away to relax the eyes.

Wearing Safety Gear: Children should be told to wear goggles or other types of protective eyewear while playing sports, using chemicals or tools for school projects, or engaging in other activities. Many eye injuries can be prevented with better safety habits.

UK Train Travelers Should Expect Accessibility Issues

Those planning to travel to the UK should be aware of a new rail plan. Although the plan seeks to modernize the current system, its digitally led parts could have an impact on those who may struggle with or even rely on technology.

"It is imperative for the government to make the relevant adjustments to all their new services, such as making sure it involves provisions for those who are visually or physically impaired so that they can benefit from new systems," said Amy Czu-

ba, senior account manager at UX design agency, Nexer Digital.

The new single ticketing platform should consider users of all abilities and digital literacies, as well as those that don't have access to smartphones or the internet.

More than 7 percent of stations across the UK still do not have wheelchair access and 800 trains did not make the Jan. 1, 2020 deadline for audio-visual information systems, easy to use handrails and handholds and an accessible toilet.

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 Donna Lent, Town Clerk
 Louis Marcoccia, Receiver of Taxes
 Daniel P. Losquadro, Highway Superintendent



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance



AMVETS Donates to USA Patriots



In July, AMVETS Post 48 Members attended a USA Patriots (formerly known as the Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team) slow pitch softball game in Bayport. AMVETS Post 48 donated to the team.

The USA Patriots has been a registered non-profit since 2011 after the need for continued rehabilitation options for wounded warriors had begun to rise.

Pictured with USA Patriots Softball Team (L-R) are Patrick Mitchell, Past Sons commander AMVETS Post 48; Wayne Andersen, trustee chairperson AMVETS Post 48; and Ed Teller, treasurer AMVETS Post 48 presenting check to Ellison.

Those interested in learning more about the USA Patriots may contact Exec. Dir. Desiree Ellison at 607 227-4480.

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John Kemp Resigns from Viscardi Center

John Kemp, president and CEO of The Viscardi Center, the Henry Viscardi School and Abilities, Inc., will resign those positions effective Oct. 31 to become president and CEO of The Lakeshore Foundation in Birmingham, Ala.



An outside firm will conduct a nationwide search for a replacement. In the meantime, executive vice president and CFO Sheryl Buchel will step in as interim president and CEO on Nov. 1 if the search process has not been completed.

“John Kemp’s leadership and advocacy in the disabilities com-

munity is unparalleled and we are eternally grateful for his ten years with our organizations,”

said Russ Cusick, chair of the Viscardi Center board.”

“My love and respect for the mission of all Viscardi operations, our engaged and dedicated board members, and our extraordinary staff has grown each and every day and working together we have brought Viscardi to new heights locally, nationally and internationally,” Kemp said. “To move to the city which is my wife’s hometown and where our two grown children and five grandchildren live, is a serendipitous opportunity at this stage in our lives — one too great to pass up.”

Based in Birmingham, The

Lakeshore Foundation’s mission is to encourage and provide opportunities for people with a physical disability to live a healthy lifestyle through activity, research, advocacy and health promotion.

Kemp joined The Viscardi Center in 2011 as the fourth president and CEO of the nonprofit organization.

As a person with a disability who uses four prostheses, he is a renowned and sought-after global speaker and inspires others through knowledge, experience, vision, persistence and personal-ity.

MOBILITY CHALLENGED LEAST ACCOMMODATED Continued from page 7

and businesses, the majority of The Driving Force agree that organizations are not doing enough to create equal employment opportunities for those with mobility disabilities. Both groups rated their employers with a C grade for accommodations for those with mobility challenges, with only 7 percent of The Driving Force assigning their employers an A grade. When

reflecting on all aspects of society, those with a mobility disability overwhelmingly reported that businesses’ design and development of accommodations is what is lacking the most.

Despite living in a dollar-driven society, only a handful of companies garnered recognition as leading the way in disability inclusion. BraunAbility sees

this as a huge miss for both employers and product and service providers given the disposable income for working-age people with disabilities is about \$490 billion. That disposable income is comparable to other significant market segments, such as African Americans (\$501 billion) and Hispanics (\$582 billion), according to the same study. The survey

showed Target, Walmart and Marriott International to be most inclusive. Amazon, The Home Depot, Costco Wholesale, Homewood Suites by Hilton, Kroger and Toyota received an honorable mention.

To review the full 2021 Drive for Inclusion Report Card and to learn more about Drive for Inclusion, one can visit their site, www.DriveforInclusion.com.



TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN HOME DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FIRST TIME HOMEBUYERS NOTICE OF APPLICATION AVAILABILITY AND INTAKE



As part of an ongoing commitment to help make the "American Dream" of home ownership a reality for first time homebuyers who wish to reside in Town of Brookhaven, Supervisor, Ed Romaine announced that the Long Island Housing Partnership (LIHP), as agent for Town of Brookhaven, will be making applications available for first-time homebuyers for down payment assistance towards the purchase of a principal residence **starting August 16, 2021 at 9 A.M.** The Town of Brookhaven will provide eligible first-time homebuyers with up to **\$39,000** towards down payment/closing costs towards the purchase of an eligible new or existing single-family home, provided that the applicant puts a minimum down payment of at least \$3,000. The applicant must also be able to satisfy the mortgage lender’s minimum down payment requirements and be able to secure a mortgage. Homeowners are required to reside in the home for a minimum of 10 years or HUD will require a full repayment of the grant.

Eligibility Criteria: An Applicant **MUST** be a:

- I. First Time Homeowner - defined as a household that has not owned a home during the three-year period immediately prior to the date of application for down payment assistance.
- II. Household occupying the property as a Principal Residence.
- III. Income Eligible Household - meaning a household must have a gross annual income not exceeding the income limits for the area as listed below with overtime and assets also taken into consideration.
- IV. Household must attend a mortgage counseling session at LIHP and must be able to secure a mortgage.
- V. Household must have adequate resources and credit to qualify for a mortgage.

INCOME GUIDELINES*	Household	Maximum Total	Household	Maximum Total
	Size	Annual Income	Size	Annual Income
*Income limits subject to change pursuant to HUD requirements.	1	\$ 72,750	5	\$ 112,250
	2	\$ 83,150	6	\$ 120,550
	3	\$ 93,550	7	\$ 128,850
	4	\$103,900	8	\$ 137,150

Type of Housing Available: Homes purchased must be eligible pre-existing or newly constructed residences located within the boundaries of **Town of Brookhaven**. They must be single-family dwellings (includes townhouses, condominiums, co-operative apartments and manufactured homes) occupied as a principal residence.

Property Value Limit: The limit on the maximum purchase price of a single-family unit is \$428,000. The property being purchased must appraise at the purchase price or higher. If the property appraises lower than the purchase price, down payment funds will not be available to purchase the home. **No Foreclosures, Short Sales, Bank Owned or Real Estate Owned Properties are permitted in the program.**

Applications: **Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.** Applications and program guidelines are available online at the Long Island Housing Partnership, Inc. website: www.lihp.org/downpayment.html or by calling the Long Island Housing Partnership, Inc. at (631) 435-4710, or by visiting the LIHP’s office at 180 Oser Avenue, Hauppauge, NY Monday to Friday between the hours of 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. Online and hand-delivered applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on November 16, 2021. Applications submitted by mail must be postmarked by November 16, 2021.

Fair Housing Laws will be followed.

The LIHP staff is available to assist with the application, and answer questions about eligibility requirements. We also provide free mortgage counseling. **If you have any questions regarding the guidelines or need language assistance including translation and/or oral interpretation services,** please call the Long Island Housing Partnership at (631) 435-4710 before applying.

EDWARD P. ROMAINE, TOWN SUPERVISOR
Brookhaven Town Hall | One Independence Hill | Farmingville NY 11738

App Helps Visually Impaired Manage Wardrobe

Two industrial design students from Carleton University have won an Innovative Designs for Accessibility (IDeA) student competition award from Universities Canada.

Liana Meere and Mandy Hui took top honors in the competition's Attitudinal/Systemic barriers category for their concept Closet, a label system that enables people with visual disabilities to independently manage their clothes.

"The Carleton community is incredibly proud of Liana and Mandy in being recognized by Universities Canada for their innovation and dedication toward enhancing accessibility standards," said Larry Kostuk, dean of the faculty of engineering and design.

The IDEA student competition challenges university students across Canada to use their creativity to develop innovative, cost-effective and practical solutions to accessibility barriers for people with disabilities.

The team of Meere and Hui identified three key challenges the visually disabled face when managing their wardrobe: identifying colors, matching clothes and reading wash label instructions.

The team's market research revealed that several products exist to help address these issues but are seldom adopted by the people they were in-

tended to help. Further research showed that the existing products are not reliable, troublesome to use and rarely address all three challenges.

Meere and Hui developed their label and app system called Closet to better tackle the challenges their research identified.

The resulting concept is a two-part system involving both a clothing label and a compatible app. The labels

will be created during manufacturing and will include both braille and a QR code to provide access to clothing information using a mobile device.

The award submission also notes that Closet encourages clothing manufacturers to practice accessible design and places assistive tools at the fingertips of users. The simple label design allows people who can see and read

Braille to quickly identify their clothes. The Closet app also enables people with visual impairments to distinguish garment colors and pair items up, saving combinations in scans.

With characteristics and care information all in one place, people of all visual abilities can access accurate information about their clothing to carry out this everyday task independently.

PUBLIC NOTICE



TOWN OF BABYLON
200 E. Sunrise Highway, Lindenhurst

AMENDMENT TO THE 2020 and 2021 ANNUAL ACTION PLANS, AND THE 2020-2024 CON PLAN TO INCLUDE A BUDGET MODIFICATION TO HOME IMPROVEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC FACILITIES PROGRAM LINES

In accordance with HUD guidelines, the proposed amendment for the Town of Babylon funding must be published for no less than 30 calendar days for public comment before it is submitted to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The 30-day comment period will begin on Wednesday, September 1, 2021 and extended through close of business Thursday, September 30, 2021. On September 14, 2021, a virtual Public Hearing will be held at 10:00 am. The link to the Public Hearing will be on the home page of the Town of Babylon website at: www.townofbabylon.com. The Town of Babylon encourages public participation. To provide an opportunity for that participation, the Town invites interested parties to review and comment on the proposed amendments to the following CDBG activities.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Budget Modification</u>
Home Improvement Program 2020/2021	-\$215,660.45
Infrastructure/Public Facilities Improvements	+\$215,660.45

Written comments should be e-mailed to cdpinfo@townofbabylon.com or mailed to Town of Babylon Department of Community Development at 200 E. Sunrise Highway, Lindenhurst, NY 11757, Attention: Victoria Marotta, Director. Comments must be received by close of business Thursday, September 30, 2021.

'Love You Forever' Video For Deaf Children Online

The Association for Deaf Children is presenting a new video, which is a retelling of the book "Love You Forever" by Robert Munsch, courtesy of the Texas School for the Deaf's Statewide Outreach Center.

This story is about the relationship between a mother and a son, which shows how unconditional love remains constant

The book, published in 1986 sold millions of copies. By 2001 it was listed as number four on Publishers Weekly's list of best-selling children's books.

The video can be seen by visiting www.deafchildren.org.

INFORMATION FORUM

UNITED WAY OFFERS ACCESS TO VACCINATION SITES

United Way of Long Island has launched Ride United to help residents access transportation to receive the COVID-19 vaccine through the rideshare service Lyft. The program is part of United Way Worldwide's Ride United Vaccine Access Campaign, which addresses unmet transportation needs for individuals and families.

Long Island residents participating receive two free Lyft rides (up to \$25 each way) to and from vaccination appointments located in Nassau or Suffolk Counties. Riders must download the Lyft app on a supported device and have an active Lyft account.

If someone needs transportation to and from a COVID-19 vaccination appointment, they can visit either www.unitedway-li.org/rideunited or 211longisland.org, or contact 211 Long Island by dialing 2-1-1, or outside of Nassau and Suffolk Counties dial 1-888-774-7633, 7 days a week.

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR UNIVERSAL DESIGN SUMMIT

The Universal Design (UD) Summit, Sept. 29 through Oct. 1, is the leading conference in North America exclusively dedicated to universal housing and communities.

The summit is a unique educational program and conference that aims to promote UD principles in public places, housing and digital spaces with exceptional content and experiences. It will include keynote speeches by top industry leaders, as well as 18 breakout sessions, salon chat networking time, office hours with sponsors and vendors and a thought-leaders round table with Q & A session. The roundtable will feature all five speakers and will give attendees the opportunity to pose questions to the group. The virtual content library will also include all the presentations, a vendor gallery and ADA code certification courses.

One can register by visiting their website www.udsummit.com/registration/.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS STREAMLINED FOR ACT

Under a new policy, any student who currently receives testing accommodations under the IDEA and Section 504 will automatically qualify for testing accommodations when they register for the ACT.

Students who do not qualify under the new policy will still have the opportunity to apply for accommodations.

AMPUTEE COALITION VIRTUAL CONFERENCE OPENS THIS MONTH

Amputee Coalition will host the 2021 National Conference virtually, Sept. 29 through Oct. 2.

The coalition is committed to the community's health and safety and partnering to develop and execute an innovative, inclusive experience that will include a virtual exhibit hall, expansive peer support and educational sessions and fun.

For information and to register, one can visit www.amputee-coalition.org.

FCC ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR ACCESSIBILITY AWARDS

Nominations are being accepted for the 10th FCC Chair's Awards for Advancement in Accessibility (Chair's AAA). The nomination period runs through Sept. 17.

The FCC is soliciting nominations for innovative practices, technologies and organizations that have creatively leveraged communications and broadband technology to break down accessibility barriers and ensure that people with disabilities have been able to participate equally in our increasingly connected world.

The commission is interested in nominations that have addressed the needs of people with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic in education, work and civic life.

For information about what to include in the nomination, one can visit <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-374661A1.docx>.

Award winners will be recognized at a ceremony to be held later this year.

DRA TO HOLD VIRTUAL GALA IN OCTOBER

Disability Rights Advocates will hold its annual gala at 7 p.m., Thursday Oct. 7. The event is virtual and free to all. Registration is recommended for exclusive event updates. All audio will be captioned and have ASL interpretation.

The program will include a conversation with Pres. and CEO Kathy Martinez, about DRA's future, a performance by musician Raul Midón, remarks from former Attorney General Eric Holder and reflections by the founder of The Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy & Innovation Tony Coelho.

Accessibility questions can be answered by contacting gala@dralegal.org. The website for registration is <https://app.mobile-cause.com/e/w72R2Q?vid=koto2>.

THE FACES OF DOWN SYNDROME TO BE FEATURED IN TIMES SQUARE

From 9:30 TO 10:30 a.m., Sept. 18, the jumbotron in Times Square will feature photos of individuals with Down syndrome from across the country.

MUSICIANS WITH DISABILITIES MAY APPLY FOR AWARD

Daniel's Music Foundation has announced a call for entries in the second annual Danny Awards, sponsored by René Plessner. The entry submission deadline is Sept. 12. The award showcases and recognizes the musical talents of individuals with disabilities. The top ten award recipients chosen from video submissions will receive a personalized award, an honorarium of \$500 and up to \$500 in travel reimbursement. They will have the opportunity to share their musical talents Sunday, Oct. 17 via the internet.

To learn more about submitting an entry or how to tune in to the live event, one can visit danielmusic.org/TheDannys2021.

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR NAD VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The NAD Leadership Training Conference (NLTC) will be free for anyone to join. Anyone interested in joining the National Association of the Deaf can easily do so or renew their membership online.

A certificate of attendance for those who want one for employment or other purposes will be available with payment of a \$10 processing fee.

The virtual NLTC event will take place on Zoom during September 19 through 25 and includes three plenaries and 10 workshops. The plenary sessions will explore opportunities for dismantling racism in the deaf community. Workshops will include Self-Care; Befriending Legislators; Recruiting Young Leaders; Working Together - Not Against Each Other; Managing Organization Funds; Fundraising; Communication Strategies; and Advocacy Training. Registration is available by visiting www.nad.org/2021-nltc-registration/.

HERSTORY - DISABILITY MEMOIRS TO CREATE A MOVEMENT

In this cross-disability memoir-writing workshop, participants write stories about their experiences with the goal of changing hearts, minds, and policies. Whether they have never shared their story before or have been sharing it for years, and whether the story they want to tell is one page or a hundred, they will develop their memoir in a supportive community environment.

No writing experience is required. They will be guided through the process of crafting a memoir.

This is a free Herstory Writers Workshop and is open to anyone with a disability or chronic condition. One can visit herstorywriters.org/shaping-spaces or email jgagnon@herstorywriters.org for information. Meetings are Saturdays from 3 to 5 p.m. via Zoom.

Olympics and Undersea Adventures at BOCES

Eastern Suffolk BOCES Special Education Summer Programs incorporated themed activities into the educational experiences.

Students at the Tecumseh Elementary, Premm Learning Center, and Sayville Elementary summer school programs didn't

have to leave home to experience the 2021 Tokyo Olympics, as the staff brought the games right to them, including opening and closing ceremonies. At Westhampton Beach Learning Center, teachers made a splash with students by transporting the beach into the classroom with Under the Sea



Tecumseh Elementary students learn about the sport of fencing.

Running Club Welcomes Achilles Athletes



The Greater Long Island Running Club (GLIRC) members of the newly formed Long Island Chapter of Achilles International have been invited to participate in all future GLIRC races free of charge. "It is a privilege for our club to help Achilles International fulfill its mission here on Long Island to transform the lives of people with disabilities through athletics," said GLIRC executive director Sue Fitzpatrick.

GLIRC welcomed Achilles athlete Mary Johnson as its guest at the recent David Lerner Police Appreciation 5K Run, and she covered the 5 kilometer course along with Achilles Long Island Chapter Leader James Barile, in a creditable time of 33 minutes, 35 seconds.

Above, Achilles Long Island athlete Mary Johnson strides through the David Lerner Associates Long Island Police Appreciation Run.

art projects, games and activities.

According to Premm Learning Center teacher Faith Altomose, summer learning builds on the foundation created in the preceding school year, while preparing students for the year to come, and theme weeks make the summer program exciting for all of the classes. "Each class did their own special thing for Olympic Week by picking a sport to learn more about," she said. "We did a lot of worksheets and

activities based on the theme, learned about the Olympic torch and what the rings stood for, and concluded the week with water play and games in gym."

ESBOCES special education programs took at Bellport Academic Center, Brookhaven Learning Center, Islip Academic Center, Jefferson Academic Center, Premm Learning Center, Sayville Elementary School, Sequoyia High School, Tecumseh Elementary School and Westhampton Beach Learning Center.

NDSS Plans In-Person Races

The National Down Syndrome Society Charity Racing Team Program returning to in-person races. After the cancellation of most of those events in 2020 and early 2021, many are eager to get back to racing. NDSS is back as a charity partner for several fall and early 2022 races.

They include the Disney Wine and Dine Half Marathon Weekend, Nov. 4 through 7; the TCS New York City Marathon, Nov. 7; the Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend, Jan. 5 through 9; and the Disney Princess Half Marathon Weekend, Feb. 24 through 27.

There will also be a virtual event Labor Day weekend with The Speed Project. Participants run as many miles as

they want over the course of 29 hours and 51 minutes with a team of people across the country on Sept. 4.

The NDSS Athlete Ambassador team is another way to get involved without committing to a specific race or required fundraising. Connect with athletes across the country who participate in local events and advocate for individuals with Down syndrome. All ambassadors receive a team swag box and exclusive team-only discounts to many products.

All funds raised are allocated to programming and resources in Down syndrome programs.

To register or for more information, one can visit www.ndss.org or email teamndss@ndss.org.

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WWF 81 wants friendship, male or female, age unimportant, being kind, caring and thoughtful with car is **A402**

Race, color, religion, I'm not prejudice, looking for romantic female in her late 60's or 50's, who wants romantic 73 year old male in her life **A400**

SWM 71, looking for a phone friend. Male or Female. **A398**

SWM, 56, wheelchair user, seeks single female 40-55 for friendship and more. Into baseball, fishing, comedy clubs. I live in Sayville, NY. I do not drive. Send photo and phone number. **A396**

Professional man seeks nice lady for long term serious relationship. Please include phone number. Serious replies only.. **A399**

Senior Female, Nassau, looking for senior male to enjoy simple things in life, family, hugs, walking WHLI, Platters. **A395**

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AIRLINE SUIT MOVES FORWARD

Continued from page 3

asserting that when Mrs. Spears died, all of the claims were extinguished.

U.S. District Court Judge Tena Williams for the District of Utah ruled in favor of Mr. Spears.

The lawsuit against American Airlines asserts two claims for negligence, a claim for negligent infliction of emotional distress, and a claim for intentional infliction

of emotional distress. Mr. Spears also filed a claim for loss of consortium.

According to the complaint, the Speares consulted with American Airlines about Mrs. Spears' disability well before her scheduled travel and specifically requested an onboard aisle wheelchair for the flight. When she arrived at the Salt Lake City International

Airport on the day of her flight, TSA employees used a wheelchair to transport her to her gate, and airlines employees used an aisle chair to help her board the plane.

After she took her seat, the airline removed the aisle chair from the plane. When she told a flight attendant she needed to use the restroom the attendant told her to either "hold it" or

make her way to the lavatory without using the aisle chair. Unable to wait, Mrs. Spears asked for help getting to the lavatory. American Airlines employees tried to help but instead "lifted, dropped, pushed, dragged and injured" Mrs. Spears, the complaint alleges. She needed supplemental oxygen until the flight landed in North Carolina.



NEW ONLINE COMMUNITY



Dating4Disabled.com is a dating service and online community for people with disabilities. Our user-friendly features will help you meet new friends, date, chat, blog and more. Open a **FREE** card at www.Dating4Disabled.com and join our community today!!!

BILL WILL CREATE ADVISORY GROUP

Continued from page 1

of launching this committee and will analyze the proposed legislation closely to ensure that its structure and approach maximizes the benefits and opportunities delivered to the disabled residents of Nassau County."

"I have been advocating for this for many years," said Disability Advocate Gina Barbara. "It will establish a connection between the county and people with disabilities and give them a voice."

"I applaud the authoring of the

legislation," said Nadia Holubny-czyj-Ortiz, Democratic candidate for Nassau County Legislator in District 8. "However, we need more aggressive execution than just quarterly meetings. Also, if the Majority truly wanted to help us, the legislation would include equal representation from both sides of the aisle. We need a more concerted, meaningful and committed effort to improve the quality of life for every disabled person in Nassau County."



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DEADLINE:

The 10th day of the month prior to
publication

COLLEGE STUDENTS UNHAPPY WITH EDUCATION

Continued from page 5

tion offerings, students were also concerned about the assistance provided by their colleges, with more than 80 percent of

disabled students disagreeing that their university provides students with lots of support.

Looking at mental health, just one in 10 suffering from depression think their college provides the necessary support, and only 14 percent felt they were prepared for college.

Looking at other mental health concerns, 35 percent of students with anxiety issues are happy with their college, and 80 percent felt unprepared for the transition into higher education.

When it comes to online learning, 48 percent of students who suffer from mental health issues agreed their studying had gotten worse since learning from home. However, 36 percent of students with autism said their learning has improved since being at home, this was the only group to have declared more improvement at home than in class. This indicates that colleges will need to consider how to accommodate students who prefer home learning and students who prefer in-person classes.

CMS TO IMPROVE HOME HEALTH SERVICES

Continued from page 4

reduce burden and increase focus on patient outcomes. CMS would also begin collecting data on two measures promoting coordination of care in the Home Health Quality Reporting Program effective January 1, 2023 as well as measures under Long Term Care Hospital and Inpatient Rehabilitation Quality Reporting Programs effective October 1, 2022.

This would position the agency with data to monitor outcomes across diverse populations and support the recent Executive Order 13985 of Jan. 20, 2021, entitled "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government."

THE ACCESS INDEX

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