

AWARD WINNING New York **Able**



THE NEWSPAPER *POSITIVELY* FOR BY & ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

VISCARDI ACQUIRES Two Iconic Brands Come Together



The Viscardi Center's (TVC) President and CEO, Dr. Chris Rosa, middle, looks on as *Able Newspaper's* founding publisher Angela Miele Melledy, left, and EVP/CFO of the Center Sheryl Buchel sign the agreement transferring ownership of the publication to TVC.

The Viscardi Center, a network of non-profit organizations that educate, employ and empower children, adults and veterans with disabilities based on Long Island, announced the mission-based strategic acquisition on October 10, 2023.

Aligning with The Viscardi Center's "3Es" (educate, employ, empower), the acquisition of *Able* offers an opportunity to enhance

and expand upon the Center's programs, services and advocacy. From an education standpoint, it presents experiential learning opportunities for students and program participants. Career exploration, internships, work-readiness activities, as well as paid employment and a platform for employers to post job openings are among the ways in which *Able* positions Viscardi to deliver on its

commitment to increase pre- and tangible employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

A means for broadening the organization's advocacy efforts and impact and a medium to amplify disability lifestyle, culture and resources, ties to the Center's empowerment pillar. Founded in 1991, *Able* will be rebranded under The Viscardi Center umbrella and relaunch in early 2024.

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From The Founder

It's hard to believe that 33 years have passed since we published the first issue of *Able Newspaper*. As I sit at my computer gathering my thoughts for this final message to *Able's* readers, I wipe away some nostalgic tears as I think back on all the incredible experiences I have had; all the amazing people I've met; and so many things I've learned.

I've had the honor of meeting U.S. Presidents, sports figures, actors and all type of celebrities, but not a single one as impressive as the many people with disabilities I've known through the years – many I now call friends. You are people who fight, every day, for your rights, while working so hard to overcome challenges of daily life. You have taught me so much.

There is also a class of people

who frequent the world of the disabled who are neither disabled nor celebrities. They are the able-bodied, who work with and for people with disabilities, who have been role models for me - Jim Weisman, Marvin Wasserman and Kleo King come to mind. They happened into the world of the disabled and somehow, like me, they knew they belonged there.

As I've grown to know Chris Rosa during the last year, I realize I'm leaving *Able's* readers in good hands with him and The Viscardi Center. I find him to be a man of great intelligence, knowledge and integrity. I see he is leading the Center down a great path and it is a pleasure to know him.

I'm also happy to leave my life's work in the hands of Kim Brussell who will be overseeing its future. She is a bright, hard-working



woman, who I know will do a good job.

So, I thank my amazing staff for their hard work and loyalty and the disability community for this wonderful time in my life, as I move on to my next adventure.

Angela Melledey
Angela Melledey



The Viscardi View

folded at worksites, public spaces, and privately-owned places of “public accommodation” in neighborhoods in New York City and on Long Island.

In the early 1990's, these historic developments were typically not covered by mainstream media. It would be a few years before the creation of the worldwide web. There was a revolution underway, but for the most part, “the revolution would not be televised!”

Instead, we all looked to the pages of an emerging periodical, *Able Newspaper*, for information about how the ADA was playing out in our communities. In its pages, we also read about disability history, lifestyle, and culture. The paper was unique. It featured photos of people we knew; people just like us; and it spoke to our experiences in an unflinching, authentic voice. It was news by, for and about us!

This remarkable, first-of-its-kind publication was created and sustained by one visionary and intrepid journalist and leader –

Angela Miele Melledey. Not only did she craft and cultivate this remarkable news source with a small but mighty team, she was out there, on the streets, among us, in the places where we gathered, communicated, debated, laughed, cried and shouted – sometimes angrily, sometimes triumphantly. When it comes to New York's disability community, Angela is one of our true heroes.

We're grateful to Angela for this great gift to our community; humbled that she considered The Viscardi Center a worthy home for this historic publication; and over-the-moon excited for the opportunity that this presents to Viscardi. We look forward to being strong stewards of this cherished news source and leveraging Viscardi's strengths to take *Able* to new and exciting places!

While we're thrilled that *Able* has found a new home at Viscardi, we know that *Able* actually “belongs” to all of us in New York's disability community. We're excited to work together with our readers and advertisers to ensure that *Able* remains a vibrant and dynamic news source.

Christopher J. Rosa

Dr. Chris Rosa, Pres.& CEO,
The Viscardi Center

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It has been said that “Timing is everything.” When I reflect on the development of my identity as a disability rights advocate and my career as a Disability Studies scholar, my timing couldn't have been better!

With an interest in studying a distinctive, emerging American disability culture, I entered grad school in 1989, and honed my scholarship while the grassroots movement of people with disabilities to enact the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, and then to implement the ADA, was unfolding in real-time. While the ADA was certainly a national civil rights law, its implementation and impact were local, un-

Watch for Our New Look!

The next issue of *Able*, in print & online, is coming February 2024

Updates will be posted to AbleNews.com along the way.

Submit news items to AbleNews@viscardicenter.org.

Interested in placing an ad?

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The deadline for the February 2024 issue is Jan. 9.

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Access Board & Rehabilitation Act Are 50

The U.S. Access Board is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by federal agencies, programs receiving federal financial assistance, federal employment and the employment practices of federal contractors.

It was a milestone for individuals with disabilities across the nation, and it serves as the foundation for many other disability-related legislation. Section 502 of the law also created the U.S. Access Board (originally named the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board) to ensure access to federal buildings and facilities under the Architec-

tural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968.

“Our first duty as an agency was to ensure that the federal government is a model of accessibility, and we continue to carry out this important work,” said Sachin Pavithran, the board’s executive director. “But the Rehabilitation Act and the Architectural Barriers Act also blazed the trail for accessibili-

ty beyond the federal sector, as well as expand our mission and further establish us as a leading source of information on accessible design. We continue to work hard to achieve our vision of a nation that is fully accessible to and inclusive of all people with disabilities, and we look forward to dedicating the next fifty years and more to serving the American public.”

Ballot Marking Devices – Making Voting Accessible

By Jeremy Morak

As Election Day approaches, millions of New Yorkers have already cast their ballot or are planning to vote on Nov. 7. If you’ve ever felt frustrated or discouraged trying to vote on a paper ballot that is too difficult to read, you are not alone.

However, you can ease this stressful situation by using a device that has been at your polling center for years. Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs) are accessible machines that can enlarge your ballot’s font size or audibly read out every word you can listen to through headphones.

These machines are touch screens with optional buttons on the side, helping users vote for their candidates in every race on a particular ballot. The machines are easy to use and offer a secure and independent voting experience for anyone who is blind, visually impaired or unable to read and mark a paper ballot on their own.

Dorothy Delayo, a poll worker for the New York City Board of Elections with more than thirty years of experience, has been working diligently to inform NYC voters about many resources available to ensure their right to vote is never infringed.

This past September, Delayo helped coordinate a special hands-on demonstration of BMDs at Lighthouse Guild, a nonprofit organization that offers services, programs and a safe community for people who are blind and visually impaired.

This unique opportunity allowed participants to learn about ballot marking devices and try them out with mock ballots, simulating the experience on Election Day.

Delayo, a volunteer with Lighthouse Guild for the past two years, worked closely with Lighthouse Guild staff and Ariel Merkel, a coordinator in the Americans with Disabilities Act Executive Office at the NYC Board of Elections, to provide information about accessible resources and answer questions from NYC voters living with vision loss.

Delayo is a staunch advocate

for voters with disabilities and has essential tips to help individuals who need assistance when they vote.

Delayo suggests voters with disabilities ask to use a BMD as soon as they arrive. There is at least one functioning BMD at every NYC polling site, and everyone has the right to ask to use it for any reason. As soon as the voter signs in, they should let the poll worker know that they would like vote using a BMD. Each voter has the right to get assistance and must be aided by two poll workers – one from each party – one Democrat and one Republican.

If a voter is told that the BMDs are not working, they should ask to speak with the Poll Site Coordinator.

Every poll center should have two BMDs available and one must always be functional.

The voter should be sure
Continued on page 17

Air Travelers Must Know Rights

In preparation for the busy holiday travel season, and in celebration of the 37th anniversary of the Air Carrier Access Act the U.S. Department of Transportation has launched a campaign, #AccessibleAirTravel, to raise awareness about the right of air travelers with disabilities to safe, dignified and accessible air travel.

An estimated 5.5 million Americans use a wheelchair, and many encounter barriers when it comes to air travel.

“Airline passengers with disabilities deserve to travel safely and with dignity,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. “DOT is proud to partner with the aviation industry and members of the disability community to ensure that all travelers with disabilities know their rights.”

The #AccessibleAirTravel campaign will promote DOT’s Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights through a quick and informative video that empowers individuals with disabilities to understand and assert their right

to safe, dignified, and accessible air travel. DOT is partnering with airlines, airports, ticket agents, and disability organizations in this campaign and these partners are sharing the video on their respective websites and social media channels.

The Bill of Rights was developed using feedback from the Air Carrier Access Act Advisory Committee, which includes representatives of passengers with disabilities, national disability organizations, U.S. and foreign air carriers, airport operators, contractor service providers, aircraft manufacturers, wheelchair manufacturers, and national organizations representing veterans with disabilities. It was developed to empower air travelers with disabilities to understand their rights, and to help ensure airline personnel and their contractors uphold those rights.

The ACAA, which was enacted on Oct. 2, 1986, prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in commercial air trans-

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Buddy Walk Big Success



Nearly 2,000 joined the 2023 New York City Buddy Walk in Central Park, raising a record-setting \$350,000 for the Down syndrome community.

PHOTO BY REBECCA KOUVAS

Care For Elderly & PWD More Affordable

In its continued efforts to improve access to healthcare and lower costs for millions of Americans, the Department of Health and Human Services, through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, has finalized a rule to streamline enrollment in the Medicare Savings Programs, making coverage more affordable for an estimated 860,000 people.

CMS estimates these improvements will save older adults and people with disabilities nearly 19 million hours in paperwork each year and reduce state administrative burden by more than 2 million hours annually.

This action, together with the historic progress made under the president's prescription drug law will help an estimated 1.2 million older adults and people with disabilities with limited income afford their Medicare coverage and health care costs.

The MSPs, run by state Medicaid programs, currently cover Medicare premiums and, in most cases, cost-sharing for more than 10 million older adults and people with disabilities who have limited incomes. The final rule makes it easier for millions of people to enroll in, retain and afford health cov-

erage and care through Medicare.

"Throughout my career, I have dedicated myself to ensuring that Americans have access to health insurance, so that they can survive and thrive," said HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra.

"Building on Pres. Biden's executive orders to expand affordable, quality health coverage, CMS' new rule will further protect and strengthen health care coverage for older adults and people with disabilities," said CMS administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure.

Only about half of eligible people are enrolled in the MSPs, in part due to cumbersome application and verification processes now

simplified by this rule. For example, all Medicare-eligible individuals who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are financially eligible for MSPs, but many are not enrolled because of burdensome and duplicative paperwork.

Under the new final rule, many SSI recipients will now be enrolled automatically into the most comprehensive form of MSP coverage - the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary eligibility group, which covers Medicare premiums and cost-sharing. Under the rule, states will also make better use of data from the Medicare Part D Low Income Subsidy or Extra Help program, which helps many older

adults and people with disabilities pay for prescription drugs and prescription drug coverage when they live on a limited income.

An estimated 300,000 people will have lower drug costs starting Jan. 1. Overall, these and other changes will improve access to health care and limit the need for people to apply separately for largely similar programs, like MSPs and LIS.

This marks the latest of ongoing updates from the Biden-Harris Administration to streamline eligibility and enrollment in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Basic Health Program.

Hochul Signs Respectful Language Law

Two pieces of legislation that mandate respectful language be used to refer to members of the disabled community, both in government statutes and on a prominent state planning council have been signed into law by Gov. Kathy Hochul.

The planning council is now called the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (rather than Developmental Disabilities Planning Council) to comply with

"person-first" federal disabilities law. People with disabilities will now also have increased representation on the council, which has 31 seats that are appointed by the governor. The council is an important waypoint for advocacy and peer training for the disabled community.

"It is important to myself and the State of New York that we remain up to date and respectful of individuals at all times. This legislative package will allow changes to outdated language in our state laws and continues our efforts to help strengthen the rights of all New Yorkers," Hochul said.

District 76 NYS Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, who represents a swath of the Upper East Side, was the lead sponsor for the bills. She chairs the People with Disabilities Committee.

The bills are heavily inspired by Rosa's Law, a federal law signed by then-President Barack Obama in 2010 that replaced the term "mental retardation" with "intellectual disability" in federal policy. That law was named after Rosa Marcellino, a nine-year-old girl with Down syndrome who advocated for language changes in her home state of Maryland.

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White House Celebrates ADA And 504



Last month the White House commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act and the 33rd Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and recognized leading disability advocates and champions, including the late Judy Heumann and Sen. Tom Harkin (Retired).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act opened many doors for the disabled community when it was signed into law in 1973. It laid the rights groundwork for the Americans with Disabilities Act. Now, the proposed changes on the table could expand Section 504's liberatory impact into the current era.

Pictured here are United Spinal board members Charisma Sydnor and David Capozzi, joined by their partners and United Spinal Vice President of Government Relations, Alexandra Bennewith.

Immigrating With Disabilities

By Christopher Alvarez

New York City Mayor, Eric Adams announced last month that disabled migrants will be able to skirt new policies meant to stop the overflow of immigrants.

The Adams' administration said they will be providing 60 days notice to families with children seeking asylum to find alternative housing. The announcement came after the city topped 64,000 asylum seekers in its care.

But during an off-topic press conference, Adams told *Able Newspaper*, "You have my commitment, to the people of this city, there will be a waiver for anyone that's disabled. We're not going to put a person that's disabled in a condition that would further impact them. And so no one that is disabled would be part of the notice process."

During his "decompression strategy tour" through Latin America last month, Adams visited Colombia's Darien Gap, the "world's most dangerous migrant route," according to CNN. Because of its danger, the Adams' administration was not counting on any disabled migrants making the trek due to mobility issues.

Little did they know, they were wrong.

In an email to *Able Newspaper*, a spokesperson for the mayor's office said the city has "more than 300 asylum seekers at New York City's Health and Hospitals Corporation run humanitarian centers, who have indicated that they have an accessibility need that has been accommodated."

Josh Goldfein, staff attorney for Legal Aid Society of New York City, who has been helping migrants get situated, said that number was too low. "The city should take seriously its obligation to identify and accommodate new arrivals with disabilities."

Johana Prada and her family are one of the families who left it all behind to take the risky and uncertain long haul to the United States. Three

months ago, Prada sold all of her belongings including her house because "I wanted a better quality of life for my daughter."

The family's one month mission from Venezuela was spurred by their quadriplegic daughter who had two tonic

clonic seizures on the same day, a week before coming. "It was horrible," Prada said. "She shook, she bit her lip."

Prada, 32, also has a breast tumor herself. For the first six years of her daughter's life, Prada used to take her to therapy but as she got bigger and heavier, and Prada's tumor and arm started to hurt, she could no longer lift her child.

Her husband had to carry their daughter all the way through. "Carrying her across his back like a sack of potatoes, my husband fell twice," Prada said in Spanish, remembering the dangers of the jungle. "He never let her go but she had bruises all over her arms and legs."

Prada looks to continue her daughter's therapy in New York City, but a paperwork snafu and backlogs at doctor's offices, have made the vital and tedious process even more difficult.

This has been the case for all families, especially for Colombian, Johanna Jimenez and her three-year-old daughter. At six months, Jimenez's daughter developed esotropia, a condition causing one eye to deviate inward toward the nose. The cause is unknown but Colombian doctors said she needs immediate surgery. Already in New York City for half a year, Jimenez is still waiting for her daughter's full evaluation from a doctor to see if the insurance will cover the surgery. Her appointment is in February.

City Hall also said "all asylum seekers who come through the arrival center receive a series of standard disability screening questions that identify any immediate disability-related needs and allow staff to determine which type of housing place-

and lead organizer of Black and Arab Migrant Solidarity Alliance who also has anecdotal experience with disabled migrants said "if there weren't alternative smaller nonprofits helping them fill out forms to get access to state benefits including NY state insurance which is available for anyone regardless of immigration status, it wouldn't happen."

"Asylum seekers deserve access to essential support and services – especially asylum seekers with disabilities," said Assembly member Jo Anne Simon.(N.Y.-Dist. 52).

"I am concerned about reports from organizations assisting asylum seekers that they are not getting adequate help or the reasonable accommodations to which they are entitled. I urge the Mayor's office to monitor the situation closely, to increase communication with advocates, and to promptly provide accommodations to those who seek assistance."

"You have my commitment, to the people of this city, there will be a waiver for anyone that's disabled."

– N.Y.C. MAYOR ERIC ADAMS

ment would be most appropriate." This is in addition to their reasonable accommodation requests form for any "alternative accommodations needed to meet the requesting guest's needs."

However according to Goldfein, disabled migrants are also not being told about the Reasonable Accommodation Requests form.

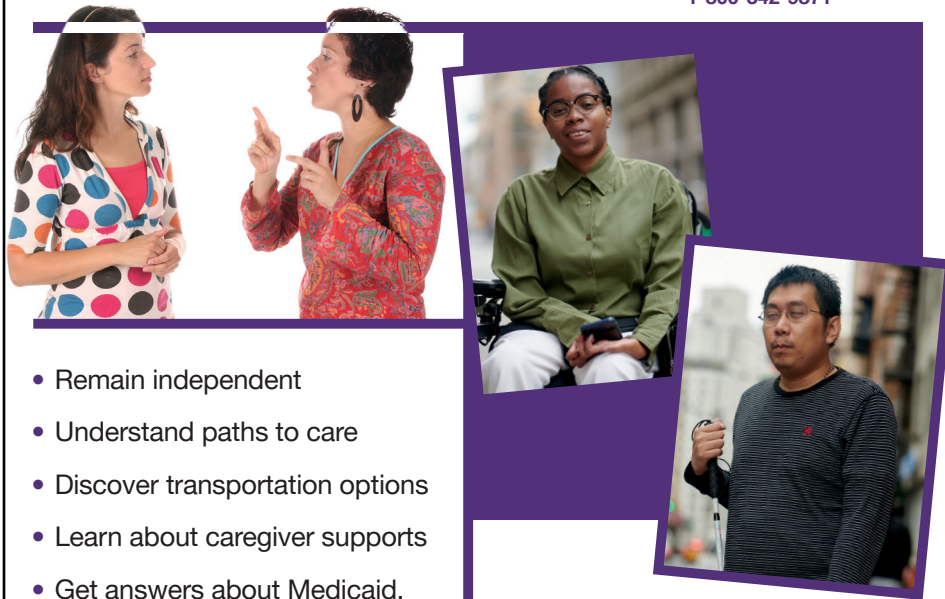
Diane Enobabor, founder

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UNITED SPINAL^{NOW}

Able, Viscardi And Me

BY JAMES WEISMAN
GENERAL COUNSEL



The news did not surprise me because it seemed so appropriate – *Able's* publisher, Angela Melledy, was retiring, and The Viscardi Center, led by Dr. Christopher Rosa, would take over the paper.

I've been writing for *Able* since just about when it began, 33 years ago. United Spinal Association (formerly Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association) and I have used *Able* to speak to the New York metro disability community for decades. *Able* has been both the conscience of, and a window into, the community. It's primarily the voice of the community, but I have used it as an assessment tool, as well. What are the issues of the day, and have we made any progress? If you read *Able*, you know.

In the beginning – at least, my beginning – was The Viscardi Center. 56 years after I first biked over to what was called Abilities and the Human Resources Center/School as a counselor/lifeguard/volunteer in the day camp, Viscardi and *Able* are one.

When I was 16, I spent the summer hanging out after the last camp bus was loaded with my fellow counselors who had disabilities (I didn't), knew how to have fun (I did too), and had driver's licenses (I didn't).

Paul Hearne (President of the first Human Resources graduating class, homebound until he was 13 due to osteogenesis imperfecta and the amateur radio counselor at the camp) and I became lifelong friends, although tragically, he passed away at age 48. Paul and I both went to law school, opened a Legal Services Corporation poverty law office in Manhattan for people with disabilities and were welcomed by the New York metro disability rights community.

I developed my rights consciousness at Viscardi. It wasn't intentional. We would enter a bar or restaurant and the host would say to me, "Don't put him there," about Paul or someone else in a wheelchair. I never thought there "ought to be a law." I just thought, "What a jerk," and I'd say, "He speaks; talk to him," in as condescending a manner as I could.

However, right after law school, ten years after I walked into Viscardi, I had a heart-to-heart with Paul about the state of the disability community in America and what could be done about it. We dreamed of using the law to change architecture and attitudes. Once we got our grant, Paul said, "You do transportation – I'll do employment." We really thought we could do something, and we did. I'm proud of that.

Henry Viscardi and I were very close. For many years, he was my father-in-law. His story is legend, but here's what I remember most. After my first summer, I was putting away equipment, and "Hank" said, "Jimmy, come here, I want to talk to you." I didn't think he knew my name.

He asked, "What did we do right this summer, and what did we do wrong?" This man, who had an amazing poverty-to-success-to-helping others story, born without the lower half of his legs, advisor to many presidential administrations, friend of Eleanor Roosevelt and courageous solo sailor, wanted the opinion of a 16-year-old volunteer.

And now Chris Rosa leads Viscardi. I have known him since he was slightly older than the students at Viscardi High. He has always been a leader and a visionary. I am confident in *Able's* future.

I began my career and found my passion at Viscardi. I've been able to express my passion for years in *Able*. Thank you, Angela Melledy and Chris Rosa, for your passion.

Able - Through The Years

The first issue of *Able Newspaper* was published in June 1991. The newspaper that is distributed throughout the New York Metro area is the product of Angela Miele Melledy.

"I really didn't have a plan to be a publisher but for some reason circumstances led me on an amazing journey that has lasted 33 years," said Melledy. "I also had no long-term connection to the disability community at the time, but there I was putting out my first issue."

"In fact, I had only heard of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) in passing and was completely unaware that the bill that had been signed by Pres. George H.W. Bush a year earlier was about to become such a large part of my life."

At the time, she had been working as a production manager for the Weekly Newspaper Group in Rockville Centre, N.Y., a company headed up by Barry Manning that published 10 local weekly newspapers. While typesetting one evening, a press release came across her desk announcing that Nassau County would be hosting the International Games for the Disabled (Paralympics).

Finding The Paralympics

"I had never heard of the Paralympics but realized that volunteering for this event would allow me to meet people from all over the world. I volunteered and became a host for the Dutch team for the duration of the Games," said Melledy. "What an exciting time it turned out to be. World class athletes, Olympic-style competition, President Reagan at opening ceremonies, celebrations every night, new friendships and an instant introduction to disabilities that I couldn't have

gotten anywhere else."

After the two and one half week event ended, Melledy, like many others who had worked at the Games, continued to volunteer with local disabled sports organizations. She worked at public relations and fundraising with

with disabilities started, and when it went out of print, Melledy decided to give it a try. She brought together her new-found knowledge of the disability community and her limited publishing experience to become a publisher.

A Family Affair

Melledy's Mom, Fannie Miele, who had a background in mailed distribution applied the labels to those first editions and prepared the paperwork for the post office along with Melledy's sons James and Louis. She also took on the office manager role. Louis, who was studying photography at the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan, became the photographer and is still listed as photo and technical consultant. This volunteer help (as in no pay) was exactly what she needed to get it off the ground.

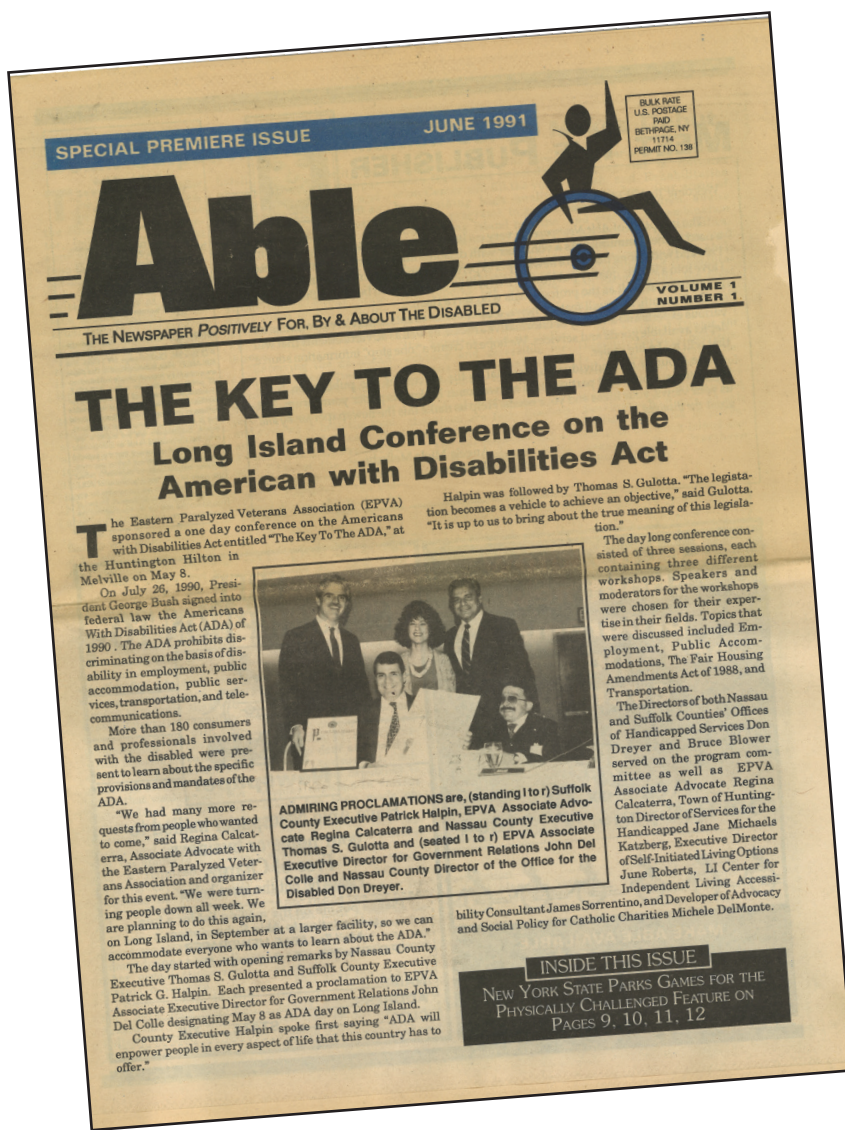
Another helper was friend John Dunn who set up distribution routes throughout Long Island and New York City. Dunn shortly became an employee of *Able* and took over the distribution each month.

Employees were soon hired and the core group is still in place. Peg Wenzel has been a loyal and efficient employee of *Able* for 30 years. Deb Simko has been a devoted and creative production director for more than 22 years and Ann Imbrogno, for 20 years, has headed up the office and proofreading tasks with dedication and dependability. Among those who edited *Able* over the years, Allison Howe, Karin Falcone and Susanne Cristy stand out as most memorable. Howe came to *Able* with first-hand experience as the mother of twin daughters with autism.

"I am very proud of this team that has been part of the family at *Able* for so long," said Melledy. *Able* wouldn't be here without them."

Columnists

Able was also fortunate
Continued on page 8



the Eastern Amputee Athletic Association and in 1985, then New York Gov. Mario Cuomo recruited Susan Gordon Ryan to start the New York State Games for the Physically Challenged for children with disabilities. Now there was an annual event on Long Island for her to continue with her new passion.

During that time there was a newspaper for people

"It was like a path was put in front of me and I followed it one step at a time – one foot in front of the other, and it seemed the help I needed was all around me."

The first to offer a hand was, the man she refers to as her mentor, Barry Manning. Production of the paper was done at his facility at reasonable cost, while he encouraged and advised.

WE ARE ABLE • WE ARE ABLE • WE ARE ABLE • WE ARE ABLE • WE ARE ABLE • WE ARE ABLE • WE ARE ABLE



Anthony Trocchia Chris Rosa Allison Howe Justin Dart Jr. Bruce Blower Chris Noel Andy Imparato Ann Imbrogno Anne Emerman David Maxwell Clinton Brown Fannie Miele Christina Curry

Able - Through The Years

Continued from page 7

to have a fine array of columnists join the team. The very distinguished Jim Weisman, Terry Moakley and Mel Tanzman were among the monthly writers for the "EPVA Today" column (currently "United Spinal Now"); County Disability Leaders Don Dreyer and Bruce Blower wrote "County Comments; a rotating list of notables reported in "DIA Speaks" including Ann Emerman, Frieda Zames and Nadina LaSpina; Donald Hecht reported on "Legal Matters;" Director of the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities Mark Leeds and Commissioner Victor Calise provided columns; the sadly missed Peter Zarba penned a column called Auto Report and *Able's* very first columnist Robert Mauro wrote under the title "Computer Talk."

Melledy soon learned that disability touched every aspect of life and there was no shortage of news and infor-



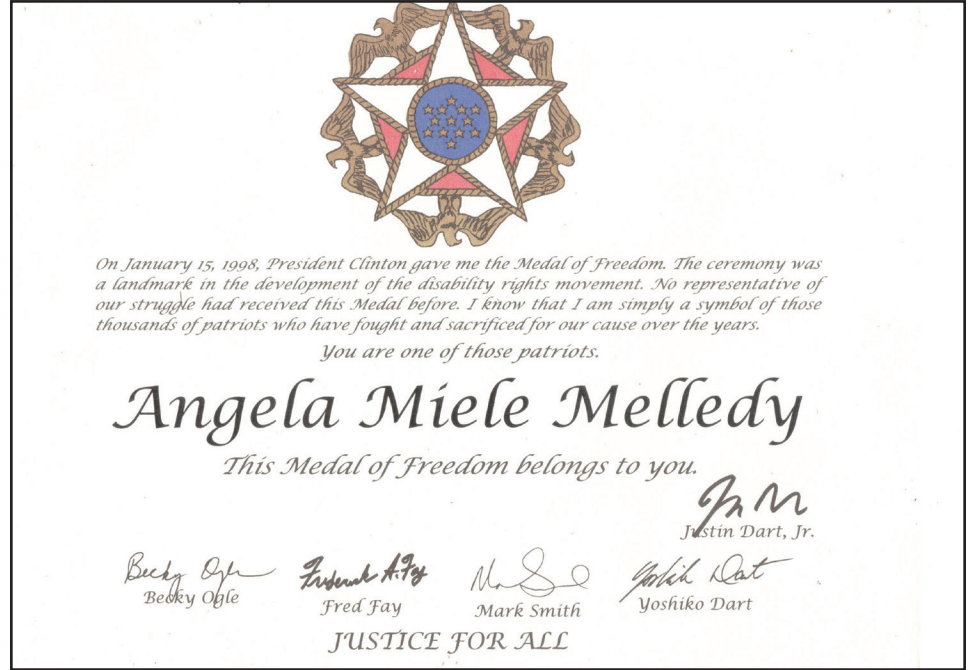
When Pres. Bill Clinton presented the Medal of Freedom to Justin Dart in 1998, Clinton said at the ceremony that Dart had "opened the doors of opportunities to millions of our citizens by securing

laws." [the ADA]. Dart in turn honored "patriots" in the disability rights movement with certificates sharing the honor with them. *Able's* publisher Angela Miele Melledy was "humbled" to receive one of these certificates.

mation that would be of interest to people with disabilities.

Covering The News

The newspaper grew over the years and became a fixture in many homes and offices across the New York metro and Long Island areas. *Able*



was designed to be a full-service newspaper including world, national, state and local news. Its columns are written by experts in their fields and the paper incorporates news about legislation, candidates running for office,

people, events, programs, arts, recreation and sports all geared to people with disabilities. It provides advertisements of product and services, classified ads and even a personals page that boasts at least two marriages.



Within the first year of publication *Able* won a national 1992 E.D.I award presented by the March of Dimes for a series of articles written by Valerie Kellogg about the new ADA law. Accepting their awards from, left to right, a March of Dimes representative and television news anchor Ernie Anastos are Angela Melledy and Kellogg.



Angela Melledy was invited to attend the 4th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1994, hosted by Pres. Bill Clinton at the White House. On the dais using wheelchairs are, left to right, Justin Dart Jr., Judith Heumann, Becky Ogle and Marca Bristo. "What an honor to be in the presence of these heroes," said Melledy.

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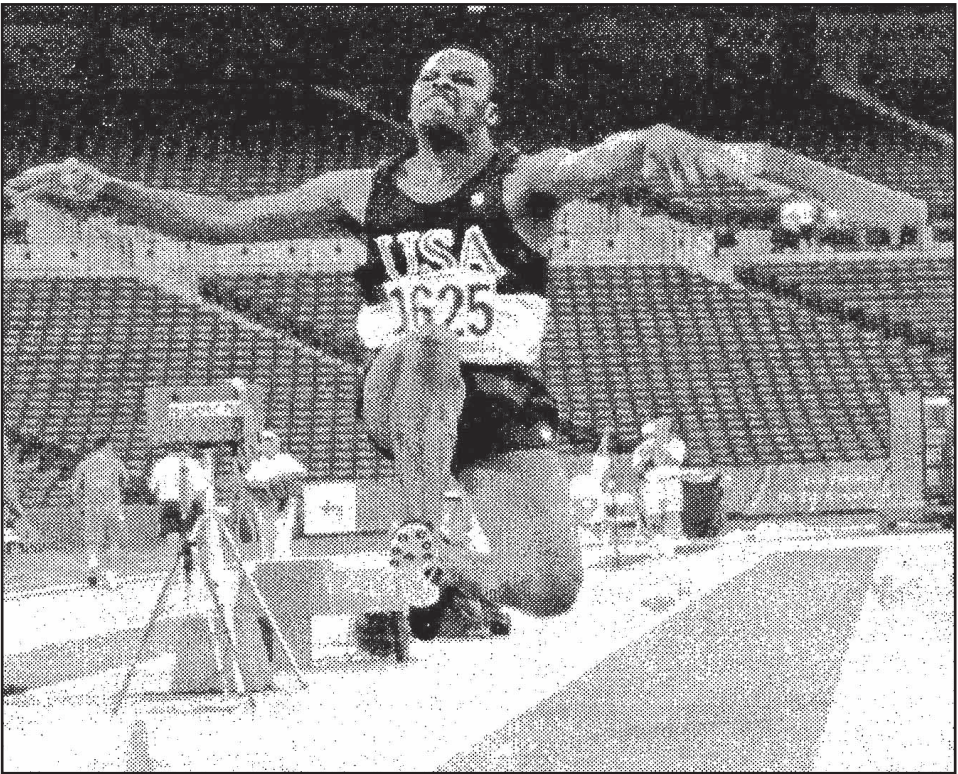


Frank Bowe Danny Robert Frank Krotchinsky Debbie Simko Frieda Zames Don Dreyer James Melledy Donald Hecht Jennifer Johnson Ed Roberts Jim Weisman Gary Marcus Joe Delgado

Able - Through The Years



The 'Taxi For All Campaign' was a frequent topic covered in *Able's* pages.



Reporter Christine Blake accompanied Angela Melledy to Atlanta to cover the 1996 Paralympic Games. Finishing up their work in the press room at Centennial Olympic Stadium (Turner Field) after working diligently to identify N.Y. metro area athletes to cover and photograph in the next week, Blake and Melledy realized they were the only ones left in the building and were locked in. After searching for an exit they squeezed between a space of a locked gate and then reluctantly accepted a ride back to their hotel from a stranger who offered help, since they had no other option. Unlike New York, all public transport had shut down.



Able covered marches and protests everywhere from N.Y.C. to D.C.

"We've covered the news for people with disabilities and made many friends along the way," said Melledy. "I've had so many interesting and memorable times during these years and met so many notable people." In keeping with family tradition, Melledy's granddaughter Sofie Melledy, a sophomore at the University of Buffalo, has in recent years written for the newspaper, facilitated social media posts and compiled copies of *Able* for the Library of Congress.

Always Learning
 "I've learned from the best. Bruce Blower and Terry Moakley taught me that the three most important issues of people with disabilities are transportation, housing and employment. Jim Weisman and many other advocates taught me about transportation issues. DIA members made their needs known and taught me about life in the disability community.

I have been honored to cover this incredible and diverse
Continued on page 10



Honored by the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) and the New York Yankees *Able* was honored at home plate in Angela Melledy's home town of The Bronx. At home plate, left to right are Commissioner of MOPD Victor Calise, General Counsel of MOPD Kleo King, Angela Melledy, Yankee Manager Joe Gerardi, United Spinal's Jim Weisman, and *Able* staff members Debbie Simko and Ann Imbrogno.

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John Kemp Harry Wieder Judith Goldberg Henry Viscardi June Roberts Jim Peters Kleo King John Dunn Louis Melledy Judy Heumann Marilyn Saviola Kipp Watson Mel Tanzman

Able - Through The Years

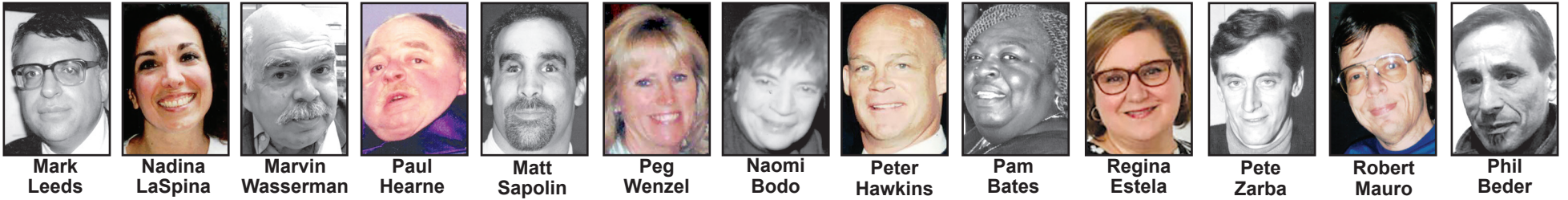


Able attended many ADA events during the years including the 2022 Awards Ceremony hosted by Mayor Eric Adams.

Continued from page 9
community and have learned so much, not only about disability but about life in general.”

“I’ve been very lucky. And, now that I am beyond retirement age it’s time for *Able* to move to a place where it can continue to grow and continue to bring vital information to the community of people with disabilities. And, as my path has developed throughout the *Able* journey, The Viscardi Center presented itself as the next step in my journey and showed me the best possible place for *Able* to be.”

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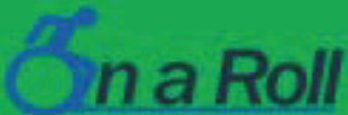
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City Installs New Elevators At Three Stations

New York City now has six elevators at three newly accessible train stations in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Staten Island.

Grand St (L) in Williamsburg, Brooklyn received two new street-to-platform elevators. The addition of this accessible station provides much-needed improved access along the L in north Brooklyn.

E 149 St (6) in the South Bronx also received two new street-to-platform elevators serving both directions of travel, making the South Bronx more accessible to (6) train customers.

There are two new elevators serving the New Dorp station on Staten Island, the sixth fully accessible Staten Island Railway station. The opening makes New Dorp the first SIR station to feature elevators.

The other currently accessible stations in Staten Island are accessible via ramps to the platforms. The commitment to address accessibility across all five boroughs continues, with Clifton and Huguenot stations also slated to be made accessible under the current capital plan. Read more about the New Dorp project.

All six new elevators include emergency two-way communication system which gives riders the ability to communicate with dispatchers via standard voice communications or visually by answering on-screen questions, which improves communication for deaf or hard-of-hearing riders.

As part of the MTA's commitment to reaching at least 95 percent subway accessibility by 2055, an average of ten stations will be made accessible every year.

The city is testing a new wheelchair self-securement device on ten buses along the M7 route in downtown Manhattan. The automated securement system is designed to allow those using manual or power wheelchairs to quickly and independently secure themselves on a bus with just the push of a button. Customers will know if their bus has Quantum by a decal near the front-boarding door. Passengers will still have the option to use the traditional four-point securement with the assistance of a bus operator, if preferred, and M7 operators are trained on both securement options.

Improving the system means not just new elevator and ramp projects but also the behind-the-scenes work of upgrading infrastructure like signals and tracks.

Work began recently to replace

track and make other necessary upgrades to the 63rd Street line, which is used by the F train traveling between Manhattan and Queens.

This work and associated service changes will last approximately six months and will ultimately benefit more than 149,000 daily riders who rely on the F train. This work requires service changes along the F and M lines between Manhattan and Queens.

The city has launched one fare-free bus route in each borough. During this six-month pilot, buses on routes included in the pilot program will be clearly marked Fare Free with green and black destination signage, digital signage onboard buses, decals inside the bus and covers on fare boxes and OMNY readers. The pilot will not include free transfers to other buses or subway lines.

NYC Jail Inmates Will Be Screened For Dyslexia

New Yorkers in city jails will now be screened for dyslexia and provide appropriate interventions. The bill was passed by City Council and recently signed by Mayor Eric Adams.

Expanded dyslexia screenings build on the city's investment in the country's largest, most comprehensive approach to supporting public school students with

dyslexia, announced in May 2022.

"If we don't educate, we incarcerate. Too many young people are part of the pipeline to jail because of a lack of literacy and dyslexia screenings – and once they are in the prison system, they continue to fall behind," Adams said. "We are changing that today."

"This important new law

will help change the lives of justice-involved individuals through screening and connection to critical educational services," said New York City Department of Correction (DOC) commissioner

Louis Molina. "By offering them the support they need for a better path forward, we will not only improve their future, we will also improve public safety across our city."

Honors Presented At Barn Dance



PHOTOS BY EQ MEDIA

Christine Quinn, president and chief executive officer of Win, the largest provider of shelter, social services and supportive housing for homeless families in New York City, was honored by GallopNYC at its eighth annual Barn Dance gala.

GallopNYC is New York City's only PATH International-certified therapeutic riding organization serving children and adults with disabilities and a community of veterans and seniors at three locations. The organization serves hundreds of New Yorkers each week with life-changing equine-assisted therapy.

"When you're with a horse, the first thing you realize is that you are loved. And then, when you look into a horse's eye, you see a well of possibility, a well of strength and you see a list of all the things that are good about you," Quinn said.

Minsk, a gray mare and favorite of many GallopNYC riders, greeted attendees as they entered the event.



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Rideshare Available For Eligible Students

NYCPS works with Limosys to provide rideshare in certain circumstances for certain groups of students.

Specifically, for students with IEP-mandated busing, students in temporary housing and students in foster care who qualify for busing, rideshare may be available in the event of driver/paraprofessional/nurse coverage issues, or if there is a delay in route assignment.

Schools will contact eligi-

ble parents as needed to inform them of their eligibility and guide them through the process.

For questions on rideshare availability and process, parents or guardians should contact the transportation coordinator at their child's school.

Transportation coordinators and school/shelter-based staff should contact their transportation liaison for support.

To book a ride, families

can book directly through the Tripslink website or contact 212 426-8000.

Families will be able to book two trips totaling four rides a day with the single voucher code. Families will be able to book a ride to school in the morning as well as from the school to their next step; and to the school for pickup in the morning, as well as the ride from school to home.

Families must use the school address as both the

destination of the ride to pick up their child and as the starting point for their ride home. The ride can only be booked from the school address as the start or end point of the ride.

Alternate afternoon bus drop-off arrangements can be requested online. All may visit the transportation support hub for information about alternate afternoon drop-off service and to submit a request.

Tips For Applying To NYC Public Schools

Navigating middle and high school enrollment can be complicated, especially for families of students with disabilities. This webinar will cover the application process; share tips for researching and selecting schools based on your family's needs; and take your questions

about applying to high school.

Registration for the Nov. 7 webinar is available by visiting <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/empowering-high-schoolers-iep-transition-planning-preparing-for-success-registration-737132552307?aff=erelexpmlt>.

The middle school application (for current fifth graders) deadline to apply is Dec. 8. Information is available by visiting www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/middle-school.

The kindergarten application (for children who were born in 2019) will open December 5th. The deadline to apply is January 19. Information is available by visiting www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/3k and www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/pre-k.

schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/kindergarten.

3-K & Pre-K applications (for children born in 2020 and 2021) will open January 10th. The deadline to apply is March 1. Information is available by visiting www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/3k and www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/pre-k.

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MTA Adds W/C Securement System



The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has added a Ford E-450 van equipped with the "Q-Strait One All-in-One Wheelchair Securement Station" to its Access-A-Ride fleet.

The system being tested will allow drivers to safely strap in wheelchairs and prevent them from moving. The MTA plans to add 15 equipped vans by the end of the year.

"We are constantly looking for ways to improve the Access-A-Ride experience while prioritizing safety," said MTA Chief Accessibility Officer and senior advisor Quemuel Arroyo. "I'm excited for customers to experience the convenience of the wheelchair securement system as more vans join our fleet later this year."

The vans feature seven seats with three wheelchair positions and four stationary seats and one flip seat.

CIDNY SAYS

Thanks To Our Heros

BY SHARON McLENNON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On November 11, we celebrate the heroic sacrifice that veterans made to allow for a free and prosperous society. Veterans have allowed us to engage in a free democratic society where we can vote, work, enjoy our liberties as reflected in our Bill of Rights, and gave us the chance to live in society that allows for beliefs of meritocracy.

Veterans gave us their lives, dreams, hopes, bodies, senses and mental health to allow for a free and democratic society. This is why, every November 11, we thank them for their extraordinary sacrifice.

We recognize the sacrifices that were made and CIDNY wants to say thank you. CIDNY serves all people with disabilities and through knowledge, self-advocacy skills and disability-related resources, we work to help all people with disabilities. Disabled Veterans is a population that we are eager to serve.

In November 2023, CIDNY is happy to launch a Directed Care Program for disabled veterans receiving home care and medical services from the Veteran Administration.

CIDNY's staff has participated in rigorous training and has been certified to provide this program to disabled veterans. The referrals for this program will come directly from the Veterans Administration.

CIDNY will be providing home-care-financial-management services, in-person independent living case management services and other benefit counseling assistance typically offered by an independent living center. Disabled veterans can provide an important perspective regarding the diversity, equity and inclusive advocacy needs for disabled people.

CIDNY wants to provide a supportive environment for all disabled veterans living throughout New York City. We want them to feel part of the disability community and learn about the advocacy and supportive services which an independent living center can provide.

If you are a disabled veteran, CIDNY thanks you for your military service. We welcome you to join our disability community and organization which focuses on the needs of all people with disabilities. Additionally, if you are not a veteran and a disabled person, CIDNY welcomes you to join our community and organization.

Please contact us at info@cidny.org or call us at 212 674-2300 to schedule an appointment. Thank you in advance for considering your participation in all that CIDNY's expertise can afford our Veterans.

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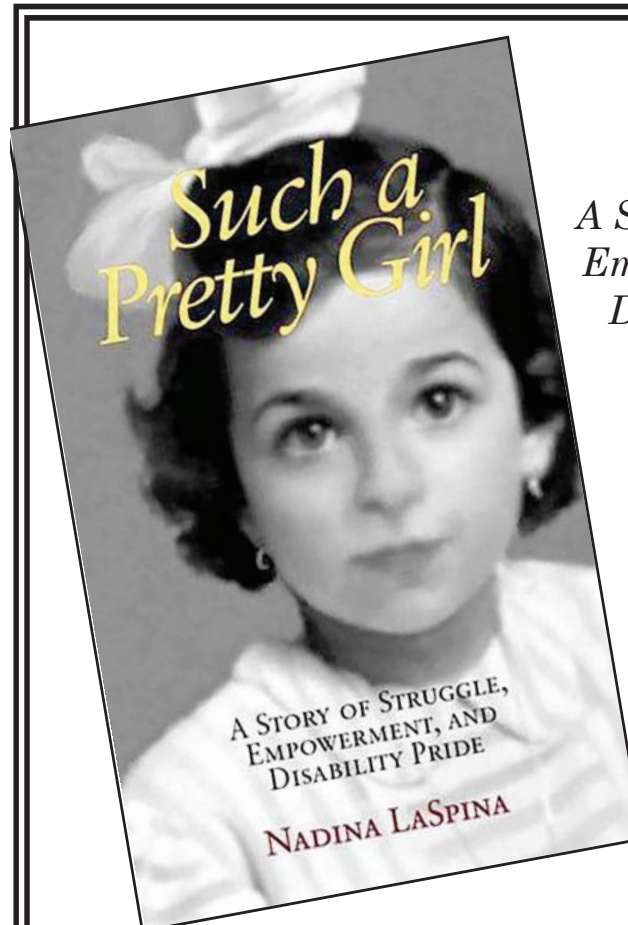


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Guggenheim Presents Multi-Sensory Program



As part of its Late Shift series, the Guggenheim will present a program from 6 to 8 p.m., Nov. 9, highlighting LAX, a site-responsive, interactive performance and score choreographed by inter-disciplinary artist and dancer Jerron Herman.

Designed to be experienced from anywhere within Frank Lloyd Wright's rotunda, Herman's score will guide visitors' energy throughout the building, creating moments that honor a body's need for comfort, play, and rest.

This immersive program, presented in collaboration with

the Center for Disability Studies at New York University, will also feature a host of additional activations throughout the museum. Herman's score will ebb and flow, providing opportunities for visitors to engage with performance textiles created by artist Sugandha Gupta and attend gallery talks with vibrant verbal descriptions of artworks and lively conversation led by educators Georgina Kleege and Bojana Coklyat.

Tickets are \$15, but are free for members and students with ID.

The evening is planned with a multisensory approach and

centers audiences and artists with disabilities, in a supportive and welcoming environment including American Sign Language interpretation; CART (real-time captioning); assistive listening devices; social narrative (visual instructions and overview of the program); dedicated chill-out areas (relaxed spaces with less sensory input); and noise-reducing headphones and earplugs.

Registered participants will receive a confirmation email and detailed program information,

including a social narrative.

Those interested may visit the accessibility webpage for information on access at the museum.

Anyone needing additional accommodations for this program, should email access@guggenheim.org or call 212 360-4355.

Tickets are available by visiting https://secure.guggenheim.org/events/e85bbec7-7444-a65f-86c4-37132cd6d310?utm_medium=Email&utm_source=S-FMC&utm_campaign=PP-LateShift_Nov_101823.

RollOut Jam At Rockefeller Center



PHOTO BY SASHA BIANCA

Skaters of all backgrounds and abilities came together recently for the Roll Out Jam at Rockefeller Center, proving that the love for rolling knows no bounds.

Whether a seasoned pro or a newbie taking their first steps on wheels, whether they rolled on their feet, on adaptive devices, or in a wheelchair, they were part of something truly special.

The event was sponsored by the Axis Project, whose mission is to ignite inspiration and extend that spark to the world at large.

The RollOut Jam was a day to remember the power of inclusion and acceptance, where everyone, regardless of their physical abilities, could participate fully in the heart of New York City. In a world that sometimes feels divided, the event was a shining example of how coming together in the name of fun can bring people closer.

Everyone who attended made the RollOut Jam a celebration of unity and a reminder that when folks roll together, they roll stronger.

The Axis Project curates experiences designed to cater to people with or without disabilities. We blend inclusivity and groundbreaking concepts, fostering a stronger sense of social connection and personal empowerment that resonates long after the event.

Information is available by emailing info@axisproject.org.

Broadway Musical Centers On Autistic Young Adults

A musical centering on a group of young adults with autism is heading to Broadway this fall.

"How to Dance in Ohio" is based on the 2015 documentary by the same name, which followed a group of individuals on the spectrum in Columbus, Ohio as they worked with a psychologist to prepare for a spring formal.

In the movie, which aired on HBO, the group learns about the layout of the venue, practices how to accept an invitation to dance, how to touch people and other social skills.

The musical premiered at Syracuse Stage in Syracuse, N.Y. in 2022. It features seven

actors with autism, who will all be making their Broadway debuts, portraying the real-life young adults with autism from the documentary.

"How to Dance in Ohio" is a story about people on the cusp of the next phase of their lives, facing down hopes and fears, ready to take a momentous first step ... and dance," according to those behind the musical.

The cast will be rounded out by Broadway veterans from shows like "Les Miserables," "Young Frankenstein," "Shrek the Musical" and others.

"How to Dance in Ohio" will start previews on Nov. 15 and open on Dec. 10 at the Belasco Theatre in New York City.

ICS SUPPORT GROUP MEETS WEDNESDAYS ON ZOOM

Independent Care System members, led by Stephanie Wallace, started gathering weekly more than two years ago at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is a safe space for members to talk about how they are feeling, and how they have found new and creative ways of coping with what they are going through while listening to the experiences of friends. Sometimes we debate over serious topics; other times, we just play games. The essence of the group is the support that is provided by one another.

The group meets virtually at noon every Wednesday via Zoom.

Those interested can join the meeting by going to <https://bit.ly/3xr4yDX>; meeting ID: 814 7065 4683; passcode: 991871.

Anyone may email constanza.chiappe@icsny.org with any questions.

COCKTAIL PARTY FUNDRAISER TO KICK OFF TD 5 BORO BIKE TOUR

The Foreseeable Future Foundation and Lighthouse Guild are holding a fundraising cocktail party to kick off the 2024 TD 5 Boro Bike Tour season.

It will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 8 at the Lighthouse Guild Technology Center, 250 W 64th St., third floor, New York City.

The organizations are teaming up to build the strongest bike team at the 2024 TD 5 Boro Bike Tour, one of NYC's iconic athletic events.

Team #NoLimits will include athletes who are blind, visually impaired, and fully sighted, navigating all five boroughs for an unforgettable 40-mile ride.

The evening will include a raffle with prizes, food and wine and the opportunity to sign up for Team #NoLimits. Those who sign up for the team will receive a gift bag and prizes.

Registration and information about signing up for Team #NoLimits is available by contacting Kiana Glanton at Glantonk@lighthouseguild.org.

CARE CONNECTION WEBINAR OFFERS COPING STRATEGIES

Flying by the Seat of Our Pants & Other Helpful Coping Strategies, a Care Connection webinar will take place from 1 to 2 p.m., Nov. 9.

In this session, Danuta Lipinska, an aging and dementia specialist, psychotherapist and author will offer creative and person-centered solutions to successful caregiving as well as tips for self-care and wellbeing.

Registration is available by visiting https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_sD2OyvNFRi6Em6AOPXgNEw#registration.

VIRTUAL AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM FOR THOSE ON AUTISM SPECTRUM

A virtual afterschool program focusing on the development of social skills for children with a main diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, ASD, is available to New York City residents, with priority given to Bronx children, between ages 3 and 13.

This program is made in collaboration with The Children's Museum of the Arts.

Materials will be mailed to participant families and siblings of similar ages are welcome to attend.

The program is open to those who are not eligible (or are in the process) for OPWDD services or OPWDD HCBS waiver programs.

The program will be provided virtually via Zoom and the link will be sent to parents/legal guardians.

For session dates and registration information one may visit <https://forms.office.com/pages/eresponsepage.aspx?id=GVALB44R4UyGAa3MfK-OuLWKFr5riQPZEm8QzAOxPr6hUMUYzW1BBOFJKSzfXMFRT-la4RUQ3NzU2TS4u>.

DRA CELEBRATES 30 YEARS WITH COAST-TO-COAST GALAS

Disability Rights Advocates is celebrating 30 years on Nov. 9 by welcoming guests from across the country to join in a coast-to-coast celebration, virtually and in person.

DRA will host simultaneous in-person galas in New York and San Francisco with food and beverages, live speakers and performers. Guests from around the country are invited to virtually join so all may celebrate DRA together and participate in the live program.

For information or to register, one may visit www.dralegal.org/30th-anniversary-gala/.

'LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE' AT SBRN EMPOWERMENT RETREAT

Spina Bifida Resource Network will present its annual empowerment retreat for adults with disabilities, Nov. 10 to 12.

"Live Your Best Life," is designed to foster radical self-acceptance and community building in adults with spina bifida and other disabilities.

This year's event will be hybrid. The in-person workshops and festivities will be at the Delta Hotels Woodbridge, N.J. from Friday to Sunday. Participants can choose to attend one, two or all three days. SBRN will sponsor a luncheon on Saturday. The retreat will also be accessible online through Zoom.

Registration is required and there is a sliding scale fee. Anyone interested in more information or to register should visit www.thesbrn.org/news-and-events/retreat/.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY RESOURCE FAIR AT LIBRARY

The Brooklyn Family Support Services Advisory Council will hold a Developmental Disability Resource Fair from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Friday, Nov. 3 at the Canarsie Library, 1580 Rockaway Pkwy at Avenue J, Brooklyn.

They will answer questions about services and programs for people with autism, intellectual disabilities or other developmental disabilities.

Information is available about Brooklyn Family Support Services Advisory Council, the Brooklyn Developmental Disabilities Council, the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities, MTA Reduced Fare, the Center for Independence of the Disabled of New York and service providers.

Information about the fair is available by calling 718 264-5084 or by emailing bfssac@yahoo.com. Interpretation requests are available by calling 917 751-4980 or emailing inclusiveserviceevents@bklynlibrary.org.

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR AHRC NYC FREE FAMILY WORKSHOP

Registration is open for the first workshop, Navigating OPWDD Services, from 6 to 8 p.m., on Nov. 9.

Luis Martinez, manager of AHRC NYC's Referral and Information Center, will present.

The program will include an overview of OPWDD eligibility and care management. Registration is available by visiting <https://ahrcnyc.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJufuuqqzsrHN1kGO2SpkrpSLnvl03LGVJ#registration> in order to receive the Zoom meeting details.

PLANNING AND PREPARING FOR SUCCESS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Every high school student with an IEP has a legal right to transition services to help them leave high school ready for their post-secondary goals, whether that be college, a career, vocational training or independent living.

To that end, a 60-minute webinar, will present information about those rights, how to create an IEP that sets students up for post-high school success and transition services/supports available to young people with disabilities. The webinar will take place from 4 to 5 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 7.

A Zoom link will be emailed to registrants 30 minutes before the webinar begins and a video recording will be sent to all registrants after the workshop ends.

Registration is available by visiting www.eventbrite.com/e/empowering-high-schoolers-iep-transition-planning-preparing-for-success-registration-737132552307?aff=BlackboardBulletin.

GETTING PERSONAL

MEET A COMPANION, PHONE FRIEND, PEN PAL, OR EVEN A SPOUSE

GENTLEMAN INTERESTED IN LADY FOR MARRIAGE

Do you have a physical challenge? In tradition we call you a mitzuyan, "one who excels." Because G-d in his infinite wisdom gives you some compensation--in your case 2 pluses, one is your lovely smile. Jewish man seeks very caring woman, 55 and up. Company president and have great personality. "Wheel of Fortune" thought so, as I was a contestant and did very well. I am very caring. Last winter I made sure my dates had warm hat and gloves and an extra sweater. I made sure the car was warm. As a result of being so caring, a recent survey showed women who dated me, got 50 percent less colds than women who dated brand x. I believe every woman is beautiful, no exceptions. Keep smiling. My mantra is if at first you don't succeed, do not go skydiving. I would like to hear from Maxine F (pianist).

A406

Your Ad Can Be here Call 516 939-2253

WIDOWED 67

seeks simple, playful lady friend. Send phone number. Age, race unimportant.

A407

SWM 57, WHEELCHAIR USER

seeks single female for friendship and dating, into fishing, nascar, baseball, murder mystery dinners, and comedy clubs, I live in Suffolk County NY and I do not drive. Send photo, letter and phone number.

A405

WOULD LIKE TO MEET HIGH FUNCTIONING MEN

for friendship and serious relationship 50-55. Send phone number and picture.

A404

MIKE 62, FROM FARMINDALE

Stroke victim, looking for female friend.

A 408

TO PLACE AN AD

Just write your ad and mail it with payment and coupon below to *Able Personals*, P.O. Box 395, Old Bethpage, N.Y. 11804 or email to ableangela@aol.com. We will assign an *Able* personal number and forward all responses to you. Be sure to include your name and address. Just \$12 for 15 words plus \$1 for each additional word to appear one month.

TO PAY BY CREDIT CARD CALL THE ABLE OFFICE, 516 939-2253

GUIDELINES: Able assumes no liability for the contents of or replies to any personal advertisements, or the actions of any individuals. Any such liability rests exclusively with the advertiser, or a respondent to such advertisements. Able may, in its sole discretion, reject or delete any personal advertisements which it deems inappropriate. This

TO ANSWER AN AD

Put your response letter in an envelope with the A# of the person you are writing on the front. Put this envelope in another envelope addressed to *Able personals*, P.O. Box 395, Old Bethpage, N.Y. 11804. Enclose \$2 per response to cover the cost of handling and mailing fees. Do not send cash. Checks or money orders only. Be sure to include your address or phone number. For faster response place a postage stamp on envelope.

service is intended solely for personal advertisements of singles. No ads will be accepted from couples, groups or organizations. Advertisers and respondents must be 18 years of age or older. No ads will be published seeking persons under the age of 18.

Transgender Law Center Launches Survey

The Transgender Law Center's Disability Project has launched the Disabled & Deaf Trans People's Survey. It is a survey created by and for disabled and deaf trans people to gather and share knowledge about disabled and deaf trans people's needs, experiences and priorities.

Particularly centering Black disabled and deaf trans people and trans people of color who are disabled and deaf, the survey seeks to fill long-standing gaps in research on the perspectives of disabled and deaf trans community members.

The DTSPS has three main components – a set of online

surveys, story collection, and in-depth interviews with community leaders. The survey is designed to account for different cognitive processes and memory access needs and is available in written and audio English, Spanish and interpreted into ASL.

Videos, audio recordings, and interpretations are available throughout. This survey allows people to share in-depth their specific lived experiences in open-ended responses with options to type or record answers.

The survey is available at <https://dtpsurvey.org/> for public participation through November.

AIR TRAVELERS' RIGHTS

Continued from page 3

portation. Its passage represented a watershed moment for non-discrimination in air transportation. Since the passage of the ACAA, the department has issued many regulations to remove barriers to accessible travel by air.

DOT has awarded billions of dollars through Pres. Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to modernize airport terminals and ensure they serve all passengers and workers, including adding wheelchair ramps, accessible restrooms, and more. The infrastructure law also includes the first-ever federal program to retrofit old rail and subway stations, adding elevators, ramps and other improvements.

Airline personnel will receive hands-on training to assist passengers using wheelchairs.

United Airlines is implementing actions that go beyond federal requirements to improve the air travel experience for passengers who use wheelchairs.

In July, DOT finalized a rule requiring airlines to make lavatories on new, single-aisle aircraft more accessible. Airlines are required to take various steps to improve the accessibility of these lavatories short of increasing their size in the short term.

In the long term, airlines are required to provide an accessible lavatory that is large enough to permit a passenger with a disability and attendant, both equivalent in size to a 95th percentile male, to approach, enter and maneuver within as necessary to use the aircraft's lavatory.



CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING



AIDE AVAILABLE

CNA/ HOME HEALTH AIDE

Trained live-in aide/companion for elderly or a disabled person or as a nanny. Caring and compassionate with many years of experience. Great references are available. Call **347 754-2486**.

HAIRDRESSER

HAIRCUTTING IN YOUR HOME
Will travel to your home. For more information call **917 363-6834**.

VAN FOR SALE

2017 TOYOTA SIENNA EXL
105K, wheelchair modified, tie downs, good condition, fully maintained, private owner, \$25,000 neg. Call **516 610-7104**.

TAILOR

SEAMSTRESS AVAILABLE
Tailor, hemming, darning, patches, alterations. This "seamstress" knows sewing. Call **516 799-8716**.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING MAIL-IN FORM

Print my ad as follows
(Use one space per word)

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE () _____
 CHECK ENCLOSED \$ _____
 Make Checks payable to Able Newspaper
 VISA MASTERCARD
 Acct# _____ Exp. Date _____
 Signature _____ Security code _____

CLASSIFIED AD RATES

INDIVIDUAL - \$10 PER 5 WORD LINE
 BUSINESS - \$15 PER 5 WORD LINE

MAIL TO:
 ABLE NEWS
 P.O. 395
 Old Bethpage NY 11804
 OR to place your ad with a credit card by phone call 516 465-1416
 OR by email to ablenews@viscardcenter.org

DEADLINE:
 The 10th day of the month prior to publication

Courtesy Counts Campaign Encourages Respect

Transit riders will be reminded about different ways to respect fellow riders and encourage courteous behavior in public spaces through the Metropolitan Transpor-

tation Authority's Courtesy Counts campaign.

Examples of messages that will appear in the system include keeping seats clear for other riders, keeping pets

in carriers and service animals leashed, letting people on and off the train without obstruction, not talking loudly on the phone, wearing headphones, giving everyone room to stand, not lying down taking up multiple seats, not smoking or vaping, not holding the doors, not charging electric vehicles, not leaving the emergency exit door open for others to enter without paying the fare, not leaving a bike unattended or obstructing space and not littering.

"This campaign is especially important for the disability community and reminds customers what a difference it can make to keep doorways clear or give up your seat to someone who needs it," said MTA chief accessibility officer and senior advisor Quemuel Arroyo. "While New

Yorkers are busy and have a lot going on, we can all take a second to do the right thing and let another rider have an enjoyable time and pleasant ride.

Riders will start seeing rolling images throughout the transit system, displaying messages to remind customers not to block doors, watch their backpacks, clear the aisle ways and make seats available for those who need them, among other reminders.

Digital ads will be displayed on a rolling basis in subway cars, buses, Long Island Rail Road and MTA Metro-North trains and on station platforms across the system. The campaign will also appear on social media and on pamphlet cards that will be handed out to customers.

BALLOT MARKING DEVICES

Continued from page 3

you speak with the Poll Site Coordinator and let them know if the machine is not working properly.

They are required to reach out to the Board of Elections and have a replacement device delivered as soon as possible.

Voters should not be intimidated if their polling center appears crowded or hectic. They are the voters best advocate and tools are available to ensure everyone can cast their ballot, but it's the voters responsibility to ask.

For information about voting

and to learn more about accessible resources available, check out the following links.

Find your poll site - Find My Poll Site/View Sample Ballot (vote.nyc);

Information about accessibility voting - Accessibility | NYC Board of Elections (vote.nyc);

Information about Ballot Marking Devices - Ballot Marking Device | NYC Board of Elections (vote.nyc); and Presentation by Board of Elections ADA Coordinator Ariel Merkel: Accessible Voting: Know Your Rights! - Lighthouse Guild.

THE ACCESS INDEX

WHEELCHAIR SERVICES

ON A ROLL WHEEL

Wheelchair Services
 Scheduled Visits One At A Time
 Covered By Many Insurance Plans
646 653-6266 or onaroll@icsny.org

VISION & HEALTHCARE

LIGHTHOUSE GUILD

We are Here For You
 Low Vision Services • Behavioral Care •
 Guildcare • Vision Rehab & Tech
lighthouseguild.org • 800 284-4422

MANAGED CARE ASSISTANCE

CIDNY

For Questions, Information
 And Assistance
 On ALL Managed Care Issues
212 674-2300

SPORTS SCENE

Access Expanded Ahead Of Paralympics



Evan Correll, 100 meter wheelchair race, April 2023

The University of Michigan Adaptive Sports and Fitness program has created the Adaptive Student Athlete Program through a multi-year grant from the Guardian Life Insurance Company of America.

This national program expands access to competitive opportunities in Para track and field, wheelchair tennis, and wheelchair basketball for

collegiate student athletes with disabilities, paving the way for them to increase their participation and receive equitable recognition alongside their able-bodied peers.

University of Michigan ASF is working with the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee and the United States Tennis Association to create opportunities for Para athlete participation at compet-

itive events. The university's relationship with Guardian includes a grant that will fund some of those opportunities. The first major event will take place April 27 to 29 as part of the Drake Relays, during which an inaugural collegiate national champion in Para track and field will be crowned. The funding covers the costs of the wheelchair racing portion of the event as well as Para athlete travel, lodging, and other costs.

"As a leading disability insurer and financial services provider, Guardian is proud to fund this effort," said Jonathan Mayhew, Guardian's head of group benefits. "Our purpose is to inspire well-being for the partners, customers, members, and communities that we serve. With this grant, we hope to help people with disabilities thrive and move beyond limits."

"The Drake Relays has innovated in the sport of track and field for more than 11 decades and we are proud to work with the USOPC, the

University of Michigan, and Guardian to lead in this new way," said Blake Boldon, Franklin Johnson director of the Drake Relays. "Since 2015, Drake Relays fans have applauded world-class performances from Paralympic athletes, so crowning the first-ever collegiate wheelchair national champion is an exciting next page in the history of an event long regarded as America's Athletic Classic."

The full list of major 2023 events made possible by the grant includes-April 27 to 29: Collegiate Para Track and Field National Championships (Held at Drake Relays) in Des Moines, Iowa; May 19 to 20: Wheelchair Tennis National Championship Finals (Held alongside NCAA DI-DIII Collegiate Tennis National Championships) in Orlando, Fla.; and Sept. 28 to Oct. 1: University of Michigan wheelchair basketball tournament at Saint Clair County Community College in Port Huron, Mich.

Amputee Climbs New Heights, Empowering Others

Stevie Crawford embodies resilience, determination and human potential as he prepares to set out on a charitable mission that will touch readers and inspire action, creating positive change for people in need.

An ambassador for Xtremity, a prosthetic developer, Crawford is a transtibial amputee who is active in a variety of extreme sports and within the limb loss community as a whole.

Far beyond simply being an extreme sports enthusiast and brand ambassador, he is a beacon of hope for anyone facing physical challenges, believing that a person's disability does not define or limit them. He plans to undertake a 19,000-foot

volcano climb next month to help transform lives and create opportunities.

This climb is not about personal achievement but about raising funds for children and adults in Ecuador who desperately need access to prosthetic devices.

In partnership with ROMP Global, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing prosthetic care to underserved communities, Crawford was selected to join the climb team as part of ROMP's mission to help Ecuadorians in need of prosthetic services. The goal is to give the gift of mobility to those in need.

Information is available by visiting <https://give.rompglobal.org/fundraiser/4585973>.

