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NEW YORK STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL, INC.

NYSILC

empowering new yorkers with disabilities

NYSILC News, May 2025

Profile in Excellence

NYSILC Council Member

Michele Juda

Executive Director

Parent to Parent of NYS

Michele is the parent of two boys, the youngest adopted from foster care and both of whom were born prematurely. She navigated the NICU of a hospital more than 125 miles from home when her oldest son was born 30 years ago. That was a prelude for the advocacy that would follow within health, education, and community-based service systems to meet the ongoing needs of her youngest, transition-age son who has a developmental disability and history of skilled nursing needs.

Michele seeks to build collaborative partnerships with state agencies and organizations within New York State, guided by the efforts of other family-based organizations and initiatives at the national level. She has been with Parent to Parent of NYS since 2008, serving as Coordinator and then Project Director for the Family-to-Family Health Information Center and then briefly as the statewide Director of Programs before being named Executive Director in 2014. She is committed to ensuring that Parent to Parent of NYS reaches underserved families so that all families in NYS have access to quality, family-centered, and coordinated health care and community-based services.

Witnessing her son complete a Supported Decision-Making Agreement was the culmination of years of effort to balance the worries and concerns of a mother with the desire to see him flourish and feel confident in leading his life as an adult. The Independent Living movement has opened a multitude of doors for her son and family, and Michele looks forward to identifying and growing the shared interests of the movement, self-advocates, and family caregivers in her role on the Council.

New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL)

2025 Conference - Leading the Way

"Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders Today"

SAVE THE DATE - September 16-17, 2025 at Albany Capital Center

The "Leading the Way" theme embodies the principles of achieving diversity, equity, intersectionality, and accessibility that drive the Independent Living community forward. Leading the Way emphasizes the value of focusing on leadership, advocacy, and innovation in the disability rights movement.

Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity to connect with fellow advocates and leaders, learn from the best in the field, and help shape the future of Independent Living in New York. **STAY IN TOUCH** by joining the NYAIL Newsletter for the most up to date information on our upcoming conference!

and the

NYSILC NYS Disability Rights Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Dinner

Congratulations to the 5 inductees in this year's Hall of Fame!

Diane Coleman (posthumous)
Christina Curry
Doug Hovey
Bryan O'Malley
Sharon Shapiro (Lacks)

This year, NYSILC is partnering with the New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL) to host the Hall of Fame induction ceremony and dinner on September 16th, 2025 as a part of NYAIL's Statewide Conference.

Watch this newsletter for more information about this exciting collaboration - more about tickets, sponsorship opportunities, and joining the honorary committee are all coming soon.

STEPS2: Free Health Education for Young Adults with I/DD

If you know someone who:

- Is 16–27 years old
- Lives in New York State
- Has an intellectual and/or developmental disability
- Has not already participated in STEPS2

They may be eligible to participate in our free online health education program and can earn $100 in gift cards by completing interviews alongside the classes.

How It Works:
STEPS2 is a free online program for New York residents aged 16–27 with I/DD. Participants attend one-hour Zoom sessions for six weeks, covering either sexual health and socialization OR nutrition, exercise, and stress management. Each participant is randomly assigned to one of the two tracks and completes four online surveys, earning up to $100 in gift cards ($25 per survey).

Please call (914) 365-8959 with any questions.

NYSILC Council Members

Executive Committee

Chair: Yaw Appiadu

Vice Chair: Lindsay Miller

Secretary: Beata Karpinska-Prehn

Treasurer: Stephanie Woodward

Member at Large: John Zick

STAFF

Program Coordinator:
Amy Wink
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APRIL 2025 "Lead On" leadership program & Conference Scholarship Opportunity

Are you a youth with a disability between 16-30 years old and passionate about building leadership skills?

Do you know a youth that fits these criteria?

Don't miss out on the "Lead On" Leadership Program and Scholarship to attend the annual APRIL Youth Conference this October 2025!

What is Lead On?
Lead On is a leadership program sponsored by the Ford Foundation where up to 20 youth with disabilities 16-30 years old enroll in a 6-week zoom workshop camp. In the 6 weeks, we will learn and talk about important topics regarding disability, advocacy, and being a leader. The topics will be discussed by other youth with disabilities. There will also be mentor/mentee opportunities, so youth can learn from multiple people and form stronger bonds.

After these 6 weeks, participants will be able to go to the in-person experience at the annual APRIL Conference in Portland, Oregon in October 17-19th, where you will meet people with disabilities both youth and adults of all ages, and have the opportunity to have wider discussions about disability, advocacy, and form in person bonds, friendships, and networks as they so choose. By signing up, you are committing to both the virtual course and the in-person conference.

Here's how it works:

- 6-week Virtual Workshop (pre-conference)
- Getting things together during the summer for the in person conference
- Attendance at the in-person APRIL Youth Conference in October 2025 in Portland, Oregon

For questions or comments, please contact the Coordinator Of Youth Services, Harm (he/him) at htarrant@april-rural.org.

To learn more or apply, click here.

Interested in a Pat Figueroa Scholarship for youth/young

adults with disabilities in New York?

The scholarship provides funding for young adults with disabilities to attend and participate in independent living related conferences and/or national disability and leadership trainings.

Learn more or apply here!

Upcoming NYSILC events/activities:

- Next NYSILC Full Council Meeting - **Friday, June 6, 2025** from 9:30 am to 1 pm at the Wolf Road Marriott in Albany and remotely via Zoom.

Please visit https://nysilc.org/council/meetings-calendar for details.

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