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NEW YORK STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL, INC.

NYSILC

empowering new yorkers with disabilities

NYSILC News, March 2026

Profiles in Generosity

Meet our NYS Disability Rights Hall of Fame sponsors and other NYSILC donors and supporters. Their generosity enables our success!

This month we're featuring

Bridges

Removing Barriers, Advancing Autonomy

Bridges is part of a national network of Independent Living Centers dedicated to independence and equal rights for individuals with disabilities.

Located in West Nyack, NY, BRIDGES helps people with disabilities to self-determine their own lives and works to overcome barriers, stigma, indifference, and the quiet prejudice of low expectations.

Visit their website for more information.

NYSILC Council Members

Executive Committee:

Chair
Yaw Appiadu

Vice Chair
Lindsay Miller

Secretary
Sonam Ben Willow

NYSILC's FREE March Webinar: Independent Living Skills for Autistic Adults

On **Wednesday, March 25 at 1pm**, join us for a workshop on Independent Living for Autistic people, featuring Nicole Russell, founder of Autistic Adults NYC, as a guest presenter in partnership with

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the New York State Independent Living Council.

Register Here!

This virtual conversation will focus on independent living skills for Autistic adults, exploring common challenges across areas such as household management, completing daily tasks like cleaning, chores, and meal prep.

The event will also share helpful resources and include space for group discussion, including common barriers that can make it difficult for Autistic people to access independent living.

American Sign Language (ASL) and CART (human) captioning will be provided. The webinar will be recorded and made available to all who register.

This webinar is the second in our year-long series.

Stay tuned for information on April's topic!

Capital District Center for Independence (CDCI) Food Pantry Visit

Recently, NYSILC staff got to tour the Accessible Food & Hygiene Pantry at Capital District Center for Independence (CDCI) in Albany.

CDCI provides non-residential services to over 1,500 people with disabilities annually living in the Greater Capital District of New York State.

In addition to the work they do with Regional Food Bank of Northeastern NY, CDCI also has a long-standing partnership with Trader Joe's on Wolf Road and Bruegger's Bagels. Their support ensures access to quality food for people with disabilities in the community and their families.

It was wonderful getting a chance to chat with their staff and to see all the great work that they're doing. Thanks, CDCI, for hosting us!

Save the Date!

29th Annual Dessert Spectacular

Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley, Inc.

Thursday, May 21
5:30-8:30pm
at Franklin Plaza in Troy
4 Fourth St. Troy, NY 12180

Desserts/Appetizer:
We are always looking for new restaurants and bakeries to contribute desserts or appetizers! If you are interested in donating food, you'll be joining over 30 local bakeries and restaurants who make this event the most delicious event of the year.

Silent Auction:
Each year, we host a unique Silent Auction that includes a variety of items, including gift cards, gift baskets, tickets to local theater and sporting events, and handmade crafts, photography and art.

Wine:
For just $10, guest can select a red or white bottle, wrapped for an added surprise. Local wine stores and community members donate the bottles for the wine pull.

If you are interested in donating any of the following items, please contact Sara Dolan: sdolan@ilchv.org

Purchase Tickets Here:

Dessert Spectacular 2026 Tickets

We rely on community sponsors to make this event possible

Click on the link below to view available sponsorship packages:

Sponsorship Form

View our Program Ad options:

Dessert Spectacular 2026 Ad Form

Digital Accessibility Foundations

Wednesday, April 15th, 2026 1-2pm EST

Learn the fundamentals of digital and web accessibility from our experienced accessibility experts.

This training will prepare you for the upcoming Department of Justice (DOJ) digital accessibility rule changes for Title II entities (State and Local Governments) and explains how to meet WCAG Level AA guidelines in practice. You will also be introduced to practical accessibility tools and resources you can start using right away. Build the skills needed to meet legal requirements and make your digital content accessible and compliant.

Cost: $40

Registration Link: https://cvent.me/gBPqDo

For More Information: Pacific ADA Center

Employer Responsibilities Under the ADA: A Basic Training for Businesses

Tuesday, April 21st, 2026 1-2pm EST

A virtual training course for businesses on employer responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

This webinar will explore the basic requirements of the ADA in employment. Additionally, it will give employers an opportunity to discuss ADA-related challenges they have faced and learn best practices for creating a welcoming workplace for all.

Cost: $50

Registration Link: https://cvent.me/wlWrX2

For More Information: Pacific ADA Center

ReelAbilities Film Festival

April 23-30, 2026

ReelAbilities Film Festival is the largest international festival dedicated to showcasing award-winning films by and about people with disabilities.

Founded in 2007, it promotes awareness, inclusion, and appreciation of disabled lives through screenings, discussions, and arts programming, held in over 20 cities worldwide.

Learn more here!

Abilities Expo - New York Metro

May 1-3, 2026

New Jersey Convention & Expo Center
Fri. 11am-5pm | Sat. 11am-5pm | Sun 11am-4pm

Up your game with cutting-edge disability products, tech and resources! Conquer the accessible climbing wall, dive into adaptive sports, learn new dance moves, attend info-packed workshops and more.

It's an epic day out and it's **FREE**, so **register today.**

AAPD
American Association of People with Disabilities

The 2026 AAPD Fall Internship Program Application is now open!

AAPD's Internship Program places students and recent graduates with disabilities in paid internships. Interns build leadership skills, explore career opportunities, and connect with the disability community.
The 2026 AAPD Fall Internship Program will be fully virtual and part-time. **The program will run for 14 weeks from August 31 to December 4, 2026.**
Interns will:

- Attend a virtual kickoff call on April 8, 2026
- Work 15 hours a week at the internship placement site
- Attend an optional in-person gathering in Washington D.C. during the week of July 20, 2026
- Participate in a virtual orientation on Sunday, August 23, 2026 from 12 - 4 pm ET with breaks
- Attend weekly virtual community events on Fridays from 12 - 3 pm ET throughout the fall
- Connect one-on-one with a virtual mentor

APPLY HERE

If you have any questions or would like to ask for a disability accommodation, please email AAPD at info@aapd.com or call (202) 521-4316.

Attention Young Adults with Disabilities -
We have $1,000 Scholarships available!

Our Pat Figueroa Scholarship program provides funding for young adults with disabilities to attend and participate in independent living related conferences and/or national disability and leadership trainings.

Are you a Center for Independent Living (CIL) or other organization working with young adults? Please share this information with your young adult consumers!

Learn more and apply here!

Accessible Food Pantries and Resources in New York State

This holiday season, we're sharing some information about accessible food pantries and other food resources throughout New York State, organized by region.

Find the list on the NYSILC website..

This is part of an ongoing project to build a comprehensive resource aimed at helping people identify which food pantries, kitchens, and other resources in their region are accessible.

If you know of a resource in your area not listed, please email Amy at **awink@nysilc.org**.

Let Us Share Your News!

We'd love to help spread the news about your NYS Independent Living Center (ILC) or disability-related organization.

If you have information about a service, event, or news you would like us to share, please email Amy Wink at awink@nysilc.org.

Thank you!

Upcoming NYSILC events/activities:

Next NYSILC Full Council Meeting - **Friday, March 27, 2026** from 9:30am to 2pm at the Wolf Road Marriott in Albany and remotely via Zoom.

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

NYSILC | office 518-400-4210 | awink@nysilc.org | NYSILC.org

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