

NEWS AT RCIL

Official RCIL Newsletter

CEO Corner

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

This past year has been a productive one at RCIL. We have undergone significant renovations at the Dorothy Smith Center for Advocacy and have welcomed community partners as tenants—Temple Beth El synagogue and 4 Elements studio—to bring this space to full occupancy. In October, we held our first fundraising event since fall 2019—the very successful return of our Children’s Brunch & Character Party. Most impactfully, we provided supports that have helped several thousand people live independently in their own homes and in communities of their choice; we continue to live our mission each day.

We are thankful for the privilege to support individuals living with disabilities to make their own decisions and live life the way they choose—in their own homes and communities. Our work and advocacy would not be possible without each and every one of you.

We have begun 2023 with optimism and hope for even brighter days to come.

Best,

Zuia McCormick

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IT'S RCIL'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY!

We view change as an opportunity to grow and when RCIL was first established in 1983, we had no idea just how much growth we would experience and how much impact we would have through the four decades to come! To celebrate our 40th anniversary, here are some points in time to look back on.

- In 1983, the Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) was incorporated as an independent living center with two programs, four employees, and six consumers.
- In 1999, RCIL opened our Herkimer Center and assumed the oversight and operations of an existing Center in Amsterdam.
- In 2001, the Learning Disability Association of the Mohawk Valley (LDAMV) amended its certificate of incorporation to formalize its partnership with RCIL, with RCIL being named the sole member of this Association.
- In 2003, RCIL restructured to allow for diverse expansion by forming a Parent Corporation primarily for strategic planning to support the organization, and a Foundation was formed to manage the agency's investments and to oversee fundraising efforts.
- In 2007, RCIL's Dorothy Smith Center for Advocacy opened at 1607 Genesee Street in Utica.
- In 2010, our Licensed Health Care Services Agency, At Home Independent Care, was established.
- In 2013, following a national search, Zvia McCormick became RCIL's second CEO.
- In 2018, the LDAMV certificate of incorporation was again amended, resulting in the establishment of Living Independently is For Everyone (LIFE) at RCIL. This entity ensures that independent living philosophy, human rights, civil rights, equal access, full inclusion, freedom and choice remain the focus of all that we do as an organization.
- In 2023, our workforce currently exceeds 3,000 employees with our programs and services supporting several thousand individuals in 2022.



Mission Connection

A PERSONAL STORY FROM NY CONNECTS

The Living Independently is For Everyone (LIFE) at RCIL's NY Connects team had the opportunity to collaborate with a variety of services—both inside and outside of our organization—while supporting an individual who let us know that he was seeking stability during a tumultuous time in his life.

He was linked to NY Connects by a LIFE at RCIL Employment Specialist with whom he had been working, and he shared that his father had recently passed away and that he would soon be living on his own, which would be a new experience for him. He shared his feelings of grief and uncertainty and was seeking a long-term source of support to help him navigate this new phase in his life; NY Connects provided him information on case management as a possible option for him to consider. He reviewed the information and expressed wanting to pursue finding a case manager.

The NY Connects Coordinator learned more about him over a series of phone calls which occurred at the pace he shared as being comfortable for him.

He provided information to the Coordinator about his payor sources and based on this she identified a local case management provider with whom he was eligible to work with and she provided him with their contact information. After a short time had passed, the Coordinator touched base with him to confirm that he had successfully established a relationship with a case manager and that he was engaged in case management services.

Other information that he shared with the Coordinator included that he needed to move out of his father's former home and into his own apartment, and that he wanted to get help with addressing problem gambling behavior. He was provided with materials on housing options for him to consider in Oneida County as well as the contact information for problem gambling resources. He also expressed his desire to consider adopting a cat as an emotional support animal (ESA), to aid him in coping with his loneliness; the Coordinator linked him to RCIL's Advocacy Department so he could learn more about adopting an ESA.

We are proud to share that this individual has successfully continued to maintain his goals of being employed full-time and living independently in the community of his choice.



Human Rights Day

DECEMBER 10TH, 2022

Dignity,
Freedom,
and Justice for All.

Human Rights Day is recognized each year on the 10th of December to commemorate the United Nations Assembly's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on December 10, 1948. The UDHR is a document that proclaims the fundamental and inalienable rights that every human is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, sex, language, political opinion, birth, or other any other status.

In the decades since the UDHR was established, we have made tremendous progress in the struggle for human rights. The concept of human rights has even expanded to include other categories, such as disability and migrant status.

The slogan for 2022 on Human Rights Day was "Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All" and the call to action was #StandUp4HumanRights.

Acknowledging and respecting the human rights of all people is something RCIL strives to embody each and every day. Through supporting applicable legislation and providing information and education, we work to empower people living with disabilities to have the same opportunities as everyone else, and to independently live the lives they so choose.



BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

OCTOBER, 2022

Beginning in 1985, Breast Cancer Awareness Month is commemorated every October. This month is widely recognized for the iconic pink theme color, which many people, including those of us at RCIL, wore in solidarity with those affected by breast cancer.

Breast cancer is a disease in which malignant (cancerous) cells form in the breast tissue. Except skin cancer, it is the leading cause of cancer among American women, with one in eight expected to be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetimes. Each year, about 264,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women.

Although it is more rare, men can also be diagnosed with breast cancer. Each year, about 2,400 men are diagnosed with the illness.

An estimated 60 to 70 percent of people with breast cancer have no existing risk factors, showing that anyone can develop it.





Mental Illness Awareness Week

OCTOBER 2ND-OCTOBER 8TH

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic nearly three years ago, there has been an extensive increase in the number of people experiencing mental health concerns. Mental Illness Awareness Week, observed between October 2nd to October 8th, seeks to reduce the social stigma surrounding mental illness.

Did you know that one in five American adults experience some form of mental illness each year, and that 150 million people live in an area with a designated mental health professional shortage?



Are you experiencing a mental health crisis? The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States.

The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States. Just dial **988** whenever you need someone to talk to.

Remember, there is no shame in struggling and it is always okay to ask others for help. You are not alone.

RCIL offers services for those experiencing mental health challenges, such as our Assisted Competitive Employment and On-going Integrated Supported Employment programs. These provide a skill-building foundation to ensure long-term successful, competitive, integrated employment in the community for those living with a mental health disability.



LEARN MORE

Human Rights Day 2022

December 10, 2022. World Health Organization.

Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2022/12/10/default-calendar/human-rights-day-2022>

Human Rights Day

(no date) United Nations. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day>

What is Breast Cancer?

September 26, 2022. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at:

https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic_info/what-is-breast-cancer.htm

What is Breast Cancer?

(no date) National Breast Cancer Foundation. Available at:

<https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/what-is-breast-cancer/>

Mental Illness Awareness Week

(no date) NAMI. Available at: <https://www.nami.org/get-involved/awareness-events/mental-illness-awareness-week>



On behalf of those we support,
thank you!

www.rcil.com/donate



VISIT OUR WEBSITE