**25 YEARS OF SERVICE**

It has been my privilege to lead this organization since its inception in 1987, and I’m very proud of all that we have accomplished together, thanks to exceptional leadership from my board of directors and an outstanding staff.

The impetus for all that we do derives from a philosophy that is no different today than it was twenty-five years ago when Independent Living, Inc. was founded: we believe that the widespread poverty, segregation, and isolation of people with disabilities is unacceptable, should not be tolerated, and requires immediate change. We are dedicated to making positive, systemic changes through advocacy, education and legislation, and to providing full access, power, and self-determination for all people with disabilities. With an unwavering focus on integration, community living and assisting people to reach their greatest potential, we support a culture that encourages risk-taking, creativity, and innovation. To address broader public policy issues, we are committed and deliberate in speaking about the problems and obstacles faced by people with disabilities. We exist as an organization that on all levels abides by a living code of ethics which mandates respect, appreciation, honesty, integrity, empathy, trust, active involvement, and accountability.

We will work tirelessly toward reshaping the culture of our society into one that is truly inclusive of all its citizens.

---

**2012 DISABILITY PRIORITY AGENDA**

The New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL), an organization of New York State Independent Living Centers, calls on all lawmakers, executive officials, and their staff to make specific proposals a reality for all New Yorkers with disabilities. The 2012 Priority Agenda puts many issues confronting people with disabilities in front of our legislators. We need you to help.

continued on page 3

---

**25TH ANNIVERSARY GALA**

On Saturday, May 5, 2012, more than 280 guests attended our Silver Anniversary Gala event at Anthony’s Pier 9 in New Windsor, NY in celebration of 25 years of service to individuals with disabilities and their families in the Mid-Hudson region.

The Gala fundraiser included dinner, dancing and a silent auction to support programs and services offered by Independent Living, Inc. Honored at the Gala were: Senator William J. Larkin, Jr., for his many outstanding contributions to

continued on page 2

---

**Inside This Issue**

- Culligan Named to NYAPRS Board of Directors ........................................... 2
- Getting a Job is One Thing - Getting To It Is Another Matter ....................... 3
- Did You Know? ............................................................. 3
- Upcoming Events ....................................................... 4
- Our Mission ............................................................. 4
the community that have significantly improved the quality of life for people with disabilities; David Rider, of Rider, Weiner and Frankel, PC, for his commitment to the ideals of Independent Living, Inc. and unwavering support of the organization; and Kevin McGuire, of McGuire Associates, Inc., for his personal accomplishments, and as a role model for others.

Independent Living, Inc.’s Founding Executive Director, Doug Hovey, noted that there have been many positive changes toward acceptance and inclusion of persons with disabilities as a result of technology innovations and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that was passed in 1990; however, “much remains to be done to ensure that people with disabilities are successful in finding gainful employment, accessible housing, and alternatives to institutionalized care.”


John Culligan, Senior Mental Health Peer Bridger at Independent Living, Inc. has been appointed to the New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services (NYAPRS) Board of Directors as the Hudson Valley Regional Coordinator.

John is a strong peer advocate who is passionate about assisting individuals in recovery to reshape their future. He has over 16 years of professional experience in the treatment of alcoholism and chemical dependencies. John has worked with many diverse populations including such programs as Work Release, Probation, Parole and Drug Court.

In his new role, John says he would like to “see more self help groups for people who are dually-diagnosed in the region, such as Double Trouble in Recovery or Dual Recovery Anonymous, as well as more support groups and community activities in general.” Congratulations, John!
advocate for these important changes. Your first step is to familiarize yourself with the issues below by reading the full copy of NYAIL’s Agenda, available on our website at: http://myindependentliving.org/EN-Services/SystemsAdvocacy.

2012 Public Policy Priorities

- Housing: Make discrimination by landlords illegal, based on tenant’s source of income
- Civil Rights: Protect civil rights of people with disabilities
- Mental Health: Amend State Social Services Law that terminates the rights of parents with mental illness or mental retardation by claiming parents are unfit.
- Education: Include the history of people with disabilities as required curriculum in all elementary and secondary schools.
- Employment: Establish a small business tax credit for the employment of people with disabilities.
- Transportation: Cap Para-Transit fares at levels no higher than transportation for non-disabled adults utilizing public transportation. Require transportation service providers, such as taxis and limousines, to purchase accessible vehicles.

Sign up to help move these important issues to the Governor’s desk for signature this year: email jlongstreet@myindependentliving.org and put “volunteer” in the subject line.

GETTING A JOB IS ONE THING – GETTING TO IT IS ANOTHER MATTER

Even in the best of times the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is around 70% in spite of the fact that assistive technology and reasonable accommodation offer more opportunities than ever before for people with disabilities to be successfully employed. Outside of the major urban centers that are served by adequate mass transit, the single greatest barrier to employment is transportation.

As a young man in Pine Bush recently learned, getting to a job is a challenge. After months of searching for a job, finally getting an interview and experiencing the exhilaration of getting hired, he was forced to turn down the job because the local dial-a-bus service does not run late enough to get him home. People with disabilities who are dependent upon public transportation find that reliable and affordable transportation is non-existent. There are some limited options, such as NY Rideshare, a NYS Department of Transportation-sponsored ride matching service. While NY Rideshare helps, it cannot fill all the gaps. There is a strong need for better public transportation in our region.

Independent Living, Inc., in collaboration with area businesses, public and private transportation providers, and other agencies of the Orange and Sullivan Counties Employment Alliance Network (OSCEAN), has embarked on a project to develop a comprehensive transportation network serving the disability community in these two Counties. If you would like to help people with disabilities get to work, here are some ideas: Support car-pooling; ask your employer to participate in NY Rideshare by dialing 511, or visit http://www.511ny.org/rideshare/.

Did You Know?

There are 54 million people in the United States who have at least one disability including 10.2 million with hearing impairments, 6.5 million with visual impairments, 19.4 million with mobility impairments, and another 13.5 million who experience difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions.

(Source: disabled-world.com, factfinder.census.gov)
Our Mission

Independent Living, Inc., a consumer-directed, cross-disability service and advocacy organization, is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities. Our vision is a barrier-free society with opportunities for all persons to achieve their maximum potential. Programs and resources offered by our agency provide needed support to individuals with all disabilities at literally every stage of life and include services in the areas of: Early Childhood Direction, Personal Attendant Care, Employment, Work Incentives Counseling, Education Advocacy, Deaf and Hard of Hearing advocacy and support, Medicaid Service Coordination, Access to Home, Mental Health Case Management, Hospital Diversion & Bridger Services, and Peer Advocacy.

Please Join Us

5:15 – 6:15 pm: We start & end on time!

July 18, 2012
August 2, 2012
September 19, 2012
October 4, 2012
10 Prince Street, Suite 12, Monticello, NY
5 Washington Terrace, Newburgh, NY
66 Bennett Street, Middletown, NY
5 Washington Terrace, Newburgh, NY

4th Annual Diversity Job Fair
October 11th in the Green Room at the Cornerstone, 111 Broadway, Newburgh, NY.
For more information call Michael Kochler at (845) 565-1162 ext.246 or email mkochler@myindependentliving.org

Support Group for Individuals with Visual Impairments
2nd Tuesday of every month from 6-8p.m., at 5 Washington Terrace. There is no cost to participate. Light refreshments are provided. Call (914) 993-5389 for more information or to register.