



INDEPENDENT



MARCH, 2023

YOUR INDEPENDENCE IS OUR MISSION

This year RCAL is celebrating its 40th year anniversary. We are celebrating 40 years of serving you the individuals who are living in the community. Celebrating 40 years of providing services and programming that we are proud to say has assisted 10s of thousands of people in Ulster County to continue living independently in the community . There is no greater feeling to me than to be even a small part of this accomplishment. Here at RCAL we have been fortunate over the years to have an endless parade of wonderful staff and advocates. As part of our 40th year of celebrations I am pleased to present our new newsletter format and editor, Keith Gurgui, our Systems Advocate.

We are planning a year packed full of events beginning in April and going through the end of the year.

On April 14th as Part of our RCAL Roving Restaurant Program, we are having a fundraiser in partnership with 3rd and Company Lakeside (<https://www.3rdandco.com/>).

Come and Join us at their restaurant, they will be donating a percentage of the evening revenues to RCAL. Texas Roadhouse will be hosting a similar fundraiser for RCAL on May 11th.

On June 14th come and see us, here at the RCAL Parking lot for a wonderful BBQ. Eat, Dance and be Merry in our parking lot from 12 – 2. There is no charge for this event.

On September 7th in partnership with our Friends at Cross Point Fellowship we will have a low-cost Anniversary event with our individuals, community partners and staff. On October 14th, in partnership with St. James Church we will be hosting a Disability Resource Fair.

On November 2nd, in partnership with Ulster County Chamber of Commerce, we will be hosting our 2nd annual "FriendRaiser" at Stonehenge Restaurant, and there are some additional surprises that are yet to be announced. Come and help us celebrate 40 years of working together with you. If you are interested in having your business partner, sponsor or participate in any of these events, please reach out to me. Working together will help us keep the cost of these events reasonable for our individuals. More details to come. I Hope we all have a wonderful time during our 40th year of celebrations

Anthony Mignone, RCAL Chief Executive Officer

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Remembering Judy Heumann

Judith “Judy” Heumann—widely regarded as “the mother” of the disability rights movement, passed away in Washington, D.C. on the afternoon of March 4, 2023. Judy was at the forefront of major disability rights demonstrations, helped spearhead the passage of disability rights legislation, founded national and international disability advocacy organizations, held senior federal government positions, co-authored her memoir, *Being Heumann*, and its Young Adult version, *Rolling Warrior*, and was featured in the Oscar-nominated documentary film, *Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution*.



Credit TEDX

Born in 1947 in Philadelphia and raised in Brooklyn, New York to parents Ilse and Werner Heumann, Judy contracted polio at age two. Her doctor advised her parents to institutionalize her when it was clear that she would never be able to walk. “Institutionalization was the status quo in 1949,” she wrote. “Kids with disabilities were considered a hardship, economically and socially.” When Judy attempted to enter kindergarten, the principal blocked her family from entering the school, labeling her a “fire hazard.” However, her parents, particularly her mother, fought back and demanded that Judy have access to a classroom. Judy eventually was able to attend a special school, high school, Long Island University (from which she earned a B.A. in 1969), and the University of California, Berkeley, where she earned a Master’s in Public Health six years later.

In the 1970s, Heumann attended Camp Jened, a summer camp for people with disabilities in the Catskills, and she later returned there as a counselor. Several of the leaders of the disability rights movement also were at Camp Jened, which was the focus of the documentary *Crip Camp*. During the same decade, the New York Board of Education refused to give Judy a teaching license because they feared she could not help evacuate students or herself in case of fire. She sued and went on to become the first teacher in the state to use a wheelchair. Continuing her fight for civil rights, Judy helped lead a protest that shut down traffic in Manhattan against Richard Nixon’s veto of the 1972 Rehabilitation Act, and she launched a 26-day sit-in at a federal building in San Francisco to get Section 504 of the revived Rehabilitation Act enforced.



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Remembering Judy Heumann (continued)

In addition, Judy helped found the Berkley Center for Independent Living, the Independent Living Movement, and the World Institute on Disability. She also served on the boards of the American Association of People with Disabilities, the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Humanity and Inclusion, Human Rights Watch, the United States International Council on Disability, Save the Children, and several others.

In 1993, Judy moved to Washington, D.C. to serve as the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in the Clinton Administration, a role she filled until 2001. From 2002-2006, she served as the first Advisor on Disability and Development at the World Bank. From 2010-2017, during the Obama Administration, she worked as the first Special Advisor for International Disability Rights at the U.S. State Department. She also was appointed as Washington, D.C.'s first Director for the Department on Disability Services.

“Some people say that what I did changed the world,” she wrote, “But really, I simply refused to accept what I was told about who I could be. And I was willing to make a fuss about it.”

In addition to her advocacy work and busy professional life, Judy loved to attend musicals and movies, travel the world, make new friends, and hang out with old ones, many of whom were introduced to each other at dinners that she convened. Judy learned Hebrew as a child, became Bat Mitzvahed as an adult, and was a long-time member of the Adas Israel congregation.

Judy is survived by her loving husband, Jorge Pineda, her brother, Ricky, wife Julie and her brother Joseph and wife Mary, her niece Kristin, grand nephew Orion and many other members of both the Heumann and Pineda families. She had many close friends that will miss her dearly.



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Support Groups Back in Person (w/ Hybrid option)

Alzheimer's Support Group: Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm. Facilitator: Tara DeLuca

Mid-Hudson Limb Loss: Meetings are held on the last 4th Thursday of each month from 6:00-8:00 pm.

Facilitator: John Vacca

Traumatic Brain Injury: Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month from 2-3pm.

Looking to volunteer? RCAL invites individuals interested in starting/facilitating a new support group to reach out!

(TBI) Support Group - New Facilitator Stephanie Jackson



“Thank you for the invitation to lead the peer lead TBI support group. I am excited and honored to accompany you on this life- long journey; to facilitate a safe space to come together, and share both the trials and victories of living with a TBI, and to support you and your loved ones in whatever way I can.”



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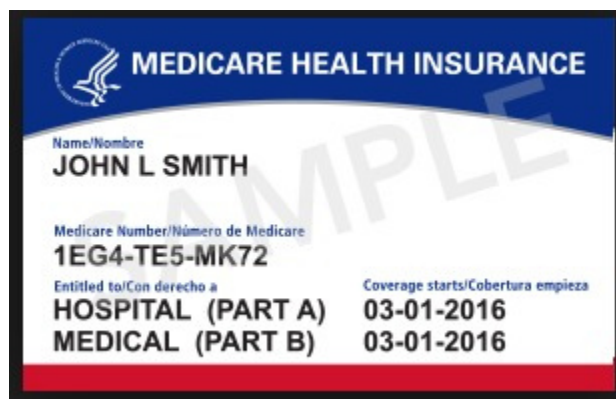
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ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE OF THE AGING

MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM (MSP)

You may be eligible to get help paying your Medicare premiums and you may also get help paying for Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments.



If you are a Medicare recipient and your gross monthly income is \$2,107 OR LESS
(Married income \$2,839 OR LESS)

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE!

Call the Office for the Aging to make an appointment with one of our Health Insurance counselors for free, unbiased assistance with Medicare and to find out more about the **Medicare Savings Program**.

Call 845-340-3579

Leave a message and someone will get back to you.



RCAL EVENTS

WINTERFEST

The second annual Winterfest was held at Old Savannah restaurant, giving not-for-profits and opportunity to showcase what their agencies services are while providing recreational ice-skating opportunity for youth and adults to exercise and socialize. Many thanks to Old Savannah and our staff for attending and braving the weather to represent RCAL!



Thanks to Bob Siracusano of Sawyer Motors for the generous donation!



BUDGET ADVOCACY DAY IN ALBANY



Independent Living staff and volunteers from across New York gathered in Albany on February 6 to advocate for the annual disability priority agenda.

Below from Left to right: Shaun Edwards, Christine Castellana, Leah Gherardi, Elaine Serrur



Above from left to right: Katie Clayton, Michelle Powers, Elaine Serrur, Tanesha Skinner



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March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Every March, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) and its partners collaborate to lead Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM). The campaign highlights how people with and without disabilities come together to form strong communities. DDAM raises awareness of the inclusion and contributions of people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of community life, and it's a time to explore the work we still need to do to remove barriers.

The 2023 theme, *Beyond the Conversation*, focuses on the question, "what next?" With this theme, NACDD plans to highlight change and innovation – what individuals and communities are doing to move past discussions and take action on education, employment, accessibility, and more.

Source: Administration on Community Living (ACL) acl.gov



**Developmental Disabilities
Awareness Month 2023**

Beyond the Conversation

#DDAM2023

Related ACL Work

State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils) identify the most pressing needs of people with DD in their states/territories and work to address them through advocacy, systems change, and capacity-building efforts that promote self-determination, integration, and inclusion.

Independent Living Programs, including Centers for Independent Living, work to support community living by providing resources and supports that promote inclusion, integration, equal opportunities, and self-determination.



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WHAT IS MEDICAID POOLED TRUST?

ARE YOU PAYING FOR MEDICAID
SPEND DOWN?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KEEP
MEDICAID AND YOUR HARD EARNED
MONEY?

IT'S POSSIBLE AND YOU CAN LEARN
HOW



REGISTER FOR OUR MEDICAID
POOL TRUST WORKSHOP

(PRESENTED BY DEBBIE DENISE, BENEFITS ADVISOR)

WORKSHOPS WILL START:

APRIL 12, 2023

COME IN PERSON OR
PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
DEBBIE DENISE AT 845-331-0541 EXT 24
OR EMAIL: DDENISE@RCAL.ORG



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March is National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month - 11 Facts

1. Cerebral palsy (CP) is a group of disorders that affect a person's ability to move and maintain balance and posture.
2. CP is the most common motor disability of childhood. About 1 in 345 children has been identified with CP according to estimates from CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network.
3. CP is more common among boys than girls, and more common among black children than among white children.
4. Most (about 75%-85%) children with CP have spastic CP. This means that their muscles are stiff, and as a result, their movements can be awkward.
5. Over half (about 50%-60%) of children with CP can walk independently.
6. Many children with CP have one or more additional conditions or diseases along with their CP, known as co-occurring conditions. For example, about 4 in 10 children with CP also have epilepsy and about 1 in 10 have autism spectrum disorder.
7. Most CP is related to brain damage that happened before or during birth and it is called congenital CP. The following factors can increase the risk for congenital CP: Being born too small; Being born too early; Being born a twin or other multiple birth; Being conceived by in vitro fertilization or other assisted reproductive technology; Having a mother who had an infection during pregnancy; Having kernicterus (a type of brain damage that can happen when severe newborn jaundice goes untreated).
8. A small percentage of CP is caused by brain damage that happens more than 28 days after birth. This is called acquired CP. The following factors can increase the risk for acquired CP: Having a brain infection, such as meningitis; Suffering a serious head injury
9. The specific cause of CP in most children is unknown.
10. CP is typically diagnosed during the first or second year after birth. If a child's symptoms are mild, it is sometimes difficult to make a diagnosis until the child is a few years older.
11. With the appropriate services and support, children and adults with CP can stay well, active, and a part of the community. Read the stories of children, adults, and families living with CP.



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