

# ARISE

DIRECTOR: SABINE INGERSON

OSWEGO COUNTY EDITION

MARCH 2011

## Center for Independent Living

ARISE Oswego  
9 Fourth Avenue  
Oswego, NY 13126  
(315) 342-4088

ARISE Pulaski  
2 Broad Street  
Pulaski, NY 13142  
(315) 298-5726

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*Our mission is to work with  
people of all abilities to  
create a fair and just  
community in which  
everyone can fully  
participate.*

## March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

by Sabine Ingerson

As we celebrate March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, we pause to reflect on the changes that this past year has brought for individuals with disabilities and everyone involved in providing services to them.

A large advocacy victory accomplished over the past year is the change in name of the State agency OMRDD to the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). This change removed the hurtful phrase "mental retardation" from the name of the agency. I am very proud of the numerous ARISE consumers, their parents, and ARISE staff who advocated strongly to bring about this change. Advocacy does work!

A second victory is the introduction of the Community Habilitation program. Formerly Residential Habilitation, the change in name reflects new regulations that allow more flexibility as to where services can be provided. This change was made by the State in direct response to requests by consumers and their families.

Over the past year, OPWDD also changed regulations for Medicaid Service Coordination, allowing services to be provided through telephone conversations and over e-mail, in addition to traditional home visits. This change directly benefits busy families who found home visits difficult to schedule.

On a local level, ARISE began offering a new In-Home Respite Program, facilitated by Kathy Mahar. This welcome addition to our services allows parents to have a trained respite provider come to their home and care for their child while they attend to their own interests.

ARISE is also pleased to have received funding from OPWDD for two new groups. One is a support and social group for teens with disabilities living in Central Square, and the other is Community Connections, a group for young adults in their twenties.

We look forward to another year of providing advocacy and services for individuals with all types of disabilities while we raise community awareness and celebrate Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month!



## ARISE Advocates Travel to Albany

On February 15, the New York State Assembly and Senate hosted advocates from around the state at the annual Legislative Day for Centers for Independent Living. Advocates spoke about issues important to individuals with disabilities who want to live in their communities.

Sabine Ingerson, Director of the ARISE Oswego County Offices, Jim Karasek, Manager of Independent Living Services, and consumer advocates, Michael Moss, Rachel Eddy and Roger Pullen met with Assemblyman Will Barclay, Assemblyman Robert Oaks, Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush and Assemblywoman Claudia Tenney, and Senator Patty Ritchie. The consumers shared stories about their lives, successes, and barriers they face, and about programs that help them live independently.



For example, the Consumer-Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP) provides assistance with personal care and household tasks.

Roger Pullen, Jim Karasek, Michael Moss, Sabine Ingerson and Rachel Eddy meet with State Senator Patricia Ritchie (center front).

Michael is an alumnus of SUNY Oswego with a degree in Political Science who also has Autism. He is a volunteer at the hospital and library, and has a goal of finding a job in government. When he learned that his parents planned to move out of state, he realized that he would need some help around his home if he was going to live on his own. Through CDPAP, Michael was able to interview and choose the person to provide the help. He receives just a few hours of support from CDPAP to help with tasks that are difficult for him to accomplish without help, and was able to move into his own apartment.

Michael says, “It was great to meet the officials and hear their perspective on issues and getting the ability to communicate our suggestions to try to bring change for persons with disabilities.”

Roger and Rachel also shared some of the barriers they faced. All of the advocates had the undivided attention of the elected officials, who asked many questions about what they were presently doing, what some of their goals were and what barriers were standing in their way.

The advocates shared concerns about the difficulty in finding employment and transportation to and from the workplace. They also discussed other proposals for legislation to foster positive change. The participants enjoyed meeting the legislators, and the legislators were engaged in their conversations, providing a valuable exchange of information.



## Constellation Energy Continues to Fund Call-N-Ride in 2011

All residents in Oswego County who use curb-to-curb transportation received the gift of continued independence when Constellation Energy renewed funding for the Call-N-Ride transportation service for 2011. ARISE partners with the Vision Network and Oswego County Opportunities (OCO) to bring this service to Oswego County. We are all grateful for Constellation's continued support.

Call-N-Ride was launched over 10 years ago and has been funded by Constellation Energy since 2005. Using the program, people who may not be able to drive due to vision loss or other reasons, can retain their independence to schedule medical appointments, visit the hairdresser, go shopping, or visit friends without having to rely on friends and family for transportation.

Over the years, the service has seen a continued increase in use. In fact, with 275 passenger trips, January 2011 recorded the highest January usage so far. Oswego residents enjoy over 3,000 passenger trips annually.

Like most public busses, riders are asked to deposit the bus fare as they enter the bus. New in 2011, riders can also purchase tokens ahead of time. Individuals with vision loss can find this form of payment easier than the challenge of identifying the value of currency bills. Both forms of payment are accepted when riding.



New Call-N-Ride Token

Call-N-Ride is available to all Oswego County residents once or twice a week, depending on what school district you reside in. Fees range from \$2 to \$4 for individuals with disabilities and \$4 to \$8 for people without disabilities. To schedule a ride, call OCO at 1-877-484-3287. You can also check out the Call-N-Ride website at [www.forthibus.org](http://www.forthibus.org).

Individuals who are part of the Oswego County Visually Impaired take advantage of this service to schedule rides to their monthly meetings as well as to a monthly outing. If you have vision loss and would like to know more about this group, please contact Laura Smith at 343-4781.

Take advantage of this opportunity for curb-to-curb transportation and make a reservation by calling 1-877-484-3287.



## THE TRANSITION CORNER TRANSITION SERVICES COORDINATOR

Kelly Howard

Oswego High School

KHoward@oswego.org

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### What Parents Should Consider When Planning Transition Services (Part 2)

As youth with disabilities grow into young adults, families face the issue of planning for the future. Please use the questions below as a guide to be sure that your child's Transition Plan addresses the areas that are of concern to you and to your child.

#### Medical/Insurance Concerns:

- What special health concerns does your child have?
- Will your child have access to health insurance as an adult?
- If so, will this insurance cover any of the following: inpatient mental health, chemical dependency treatment, physical/occupational/speech therapy?
- Will your child need to access ongoing and/or emergency medical care?
- Will an application for Medicaid insurance be necessary?

#### Employment/Post Secondary Education:

- Will your child have a job in the community or will your child attend a college or trade school?
- Will your child have the necessary skills to pursue his/her choice of career or college?
- Will your child need independent living skills training?
- Will your child need vocational services such as job coaching?
- Will your child need supports or accommodations to succeed at work or college?
- Will an application for VESID services be completed if necessary?

#### Social/Personal/Recreational:

- Will your child have the skills necessary to develop positive social interactions?
- Will your child need to develop skills to effectively communicate with family members?
- Will your child have access to telephone, voice mail and email?
- How will your child spend his/her free time?
- Will your child have hobbies, interests or belong to social groups?

**Legal/Advocacy/Guardianship:** Be aware that while your child is legally considered an adult at age 18, you are still responsible for basic needs until age 21, even though you have limited rights to information.

- Will your child be able to advocate for him/her self or does he/she need training to develop self-advocacy skills?
- Will your child need to obtain benefits, treatment, and/or reasonable accommodations at work and/or school that he/she is entitled to receive?
- Will your child be capable of decision making or is there a need to establish legal guardianship? If so, call the **New York State Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy at 1.800.624.4143** to obtain a guardianship packet.
- Will your family need to do any estate planning to reflect the unique needs of your child?
- Will your child know how to access the legal system if necessary?

This information was provided by the Oswego County Department of Social Services. You can find more information at <http://www.co.oswego.ny.us/dss/mental/resourceguide.html>

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## A Parent's Experience

by Aimee Quince

Having a child with developmental disabilities isn't something that anybody plans on, yet each year thousands of people are faced with just that. They are thrown into something that they are unprepared for, and it can leave families feeling secluded and worried about the uncertainty of their future. Fourteen years ago I found myself among those who have struggled to come to terms with exactly what this label would mean to them.

For me, denial was my first reaction when I was told that my daughter had disabilities. As much as I didn't want to face the reality, watching her lack of progress forced me to move beyond my image of what I wanted life to be like for her. As a parent, you feel responsible for teaching your child what they need to know in life, but when your child fails to achieve these milestones, you take it personally and wonder what you did wrong. I've learned that the answer to that question is simple... nothing.

We as parents need to step back and instead of thinking, "why did I fail my child," we need to think, "how can I better help my child." This may mean accepting help from outside of the family unit, which for me was the hardest part. I secretly hated that my world now revolved around a constant schedule of therapists and doctor appointments. It was overwhelming, and I knew of nobody else that could even remotely relate to my situation.

Learning how to care for a child with special needs was a very unique process. There is no literature out there that tells you what will work for your child, so I made it up as I went along. If something worked, I went with it no matter how unconventional it was. You learn how to get creative when your child is afraid of the most simple things in life such as food, soap or even Play-Doh. This is when I really started to value the expertise of my daughter's therapists. It was hard work, but the lessons that she learned were invaluable and I quickly realized that she may not have survived without them.

Eventually, I got involved with some of the wonderful programs in Oswego County such as ARISE and Parents of Special Children, which connected me with other families in similar situations. I began to see that we were not so different than what I had thought years ago. I got to know a lot of very nice people who all wanted the same thing in this world: more acceptance from society.

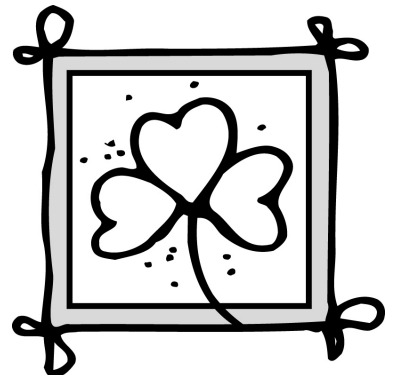
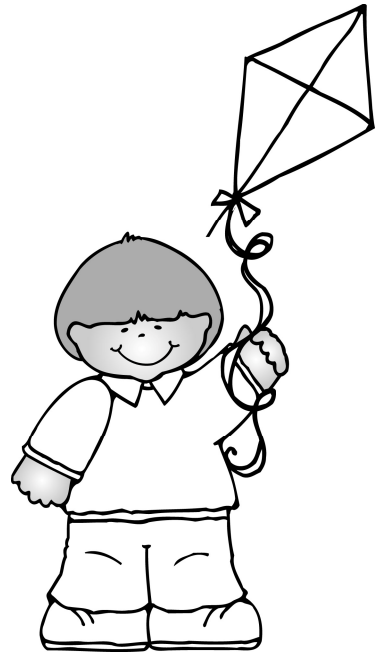
Knowing that I am my daughter's best friend is very hard on me. She has been lucky enough where people generally are nice to her, but that is as far as it goes. There are no birthday party invites, no sleepovers, no hanging out with her friends. Her world consists solely of what I create for her. Socialization is probably one of the hardest concepts that developmentally disabled children face. They may not know how to carry on a conversation or play in the typical way as other kids do, but they do know when they are being singled out or being made fun of.

Being the parent or caregiver of a person with a disability is no doubt the toughest and most rewarding job that anybody can have. It takes a lot of hard work, patience and dedication, but the rewards that you get in return are priceless. These children are among the most loving, innocent and sweetest people that has ever graced this Earth. They love unconditionally and ask for almost nothing in return, and I am grateful that I was one of the chosen ones to have a special needs child in my life.



Aimee Quince and her daughter


# Fun Page





# March



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 <b><u>Fresh Food Giveaway</u></b> Oswego Salvation Army Begins at 3:30	3	4	5
6	7 <b><u>Fresh Food Giveaway</u></b> Sandy Creek UM Church Begins at 3:30	8	9 <b><u>Fresh Food Giveaway</u></b> Fulton Elks Club Begins at 4 pm	10	11	12
13	14 <b><u>Vision Network</u></b> 9:30 am	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day 	18 <b><u>Social Club</u></b> 11 am - 12:30pm  <b><u>Self-Advocacy</u></b> 12:30pm - 1:30pm	19
20 <b>1st Day of Spring</b> 	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	<b>March 2</b> <b>National Day for</b> <b>“Spread the word to end the word”</b>	

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ARISE  
9 Fourth Avenue  
Oswego, NY 13126  
Phone: (315)342-4088  
Fax: (315)342-4107  
TTY: (315)342-8696  
www.ariseinc.org

NON-PROFIT  
US POSTAGE PAID  
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OSWEGO, NY 13126

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OSWEGO COUNTY EDITION

# ARISE

A CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING



*Imagine...* the **smile** on your teen's face when he makes new friends that understand him...  
the **satisfaction** of finally securing a job you enjoy...  
the **sense of independence** gained with a new ramp on your home...  
the **peace of mind** that comes with quality mental health supports...  
the **relief** in finding someone on your side...

*Together we can build a fair and just community in which people of all abilities can fully participate.*

Call to find out how you can join our efforts

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