



Finger Lakes **Independence** Center

Opening Doors to Independence

Our Mission

To empower all people with disabilities while creating an inclusive society through the elimination of social and architectural barriers.

What's New at FLIC

FLIC Welcomes New ADEN Employment Advocate



Jorge Cuevas is FLIC's new ADEN Employment Advocate. Like many long time Ithacans, Jorge graduated from Ithaca College and decided to make Ithaca his home town. He's enjoyed working with youth through giving percussion & dance workshops in schools, as the youth program coordinator for the Community Dispute Resolution Center, and more recently as the apprenticeship coordinator for the Learning Web for the past 9 years. He's freelanced in video production, D.J. services, and plays in a few local bands. Helping people of all ages and abilities find meaningful employment is very rewarding to him, which is why he really looks forward to making a difference with FLIC.

FLIC Strategic Planning Survey - We Want Your Input!

The Finger Lake Independence Center is gathering information from the community in order to inform our strategic planning process. The following survey (in the form of a link) asks several questions about the needs of the community in relation to FLIC's services and strategic direction.

It only takes about 5 minutes to complete the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RC6VZWZ>

For more information or assistance completing the survey contact FLIC at 607-272-2433.

Enter your contact information at the end of the survey to be entered in a drawing to win a \$50 gift card.

Thank you for your time and input!

Sign Up for American Sign Language I

8-Week Course

Thursday evenings 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Thursday, March 5 – Thursday, April 23, 2020

Instructors: Brent and Cheryl Chandler

Course Fee: registration form & \$80.00 payment due at FLIC by February 27, 2020. Required Textbook:

The Joy of Signing (blue cover, 3rd edition, 2014) Author: Lottie L. Riekehof, Publisher: Assemblies of God ISBN-13: 978-1607313618, ISBN-10: 1607313618 Order online at walmart.com for about \$27 inc shipping, or from amazon.com \$30, free shipping (as of 10/18/18). We recommend the hard copy and not e-reader versions of this book.

Optional textbook (not required, grammar lesson handouts from this textbook): A Basic Course in American Sign Language, approx \$15 online or from Barnes & Noble

This course is for adults and teens with no ASL experience, or very little ASL experience The course may be cancelled if fewer than 8 people register No refunds are available once class begins. Please make checks payable to "Finger Lakes Independence Center" For more information, call 272 – 2433 or email info@fliconline.org. Class will meet March 5, 12, 19 26 and April 2, 9, 16, 23.

Interested in how technology can impact the lives of older adults? Become a Longevity Explorer

KICK-OFF EVENT

When: Monday, March 2, 1:00-2:30

Where: Tompkins County Public Library,
Borg Warner Room

Longevity Explorers evaluate products and services geared toward older adults and provide summaries of their thoughts and recommendations.

Sound interesting? Please join us at the kick-off event.

For more information, contact:

Lynn Gitlow, IC Occupational Therapy, lgitlow@ithaca.edu

Jessica Taves, IC Gerontology Institute, jtaves@ithaca.edu

Teri Reinemann, FLIC, teri@fliconline.org

From the Longevity Explorer website:

"Longevity Explorers are a unique sharing, evaluation, and ideation community— made up of older adults (in their 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's), and their friends, families, and caregivers who meet monthly. We believe a variety of socio-economic and demographic factors will change greatly the experience of aging for us and for those who come after us. We know some of the current paradigms of growing older need to change. And we want to influence these changes.

We see ourselves as "explorers" of the future of aging. We want to explore new approaches to living as we grow older, and new products and services. We see the community of Longevity Explorers as a place to explore new ideas and a place where innovative people come to learn how we think about growing older, and to get help developing new and better products and services for future generations.

This community leverages the insights, and years of accumulated wisdom, of older adults themselves to accelerate the emergence of novel solutions to some of the challenges of aging. We are especially interested in technology-enabled products that can push off the time at which functional decline gets in the way of living life to the full."

For more information, visit techenhancedlife.com

Systems Advocacy Update from Valerie Horn

I am an advocacy specialist for Finger Lakes Independence Center and have compiled a short summary of what has been occurring in the federal and state government regarding people with disabilities. If you are interested in advocacy for people with disabilities, please feel free to contact me at Valerie@fliconline.org.

The Social Security Administration has proposed new rules that would require people receiving disability benefits (SSI) to prove disability every two years. This would affect more than 2 million people losing benefits within a decade.

In the US Senate, two bipartisan bills were just introduced for housing stability for low income tenants. The first bill funds emergency assistance to help reduce preventable evictions and create a database for tracking eviction data and disability status. The second bill, Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act



of 2019 creates affordable housing vouchers for low income families.

Governor Cuomo ended subminimum wage for tip wage workers BUT this does not include people with disabilities under 14c certificates where companies with this particular certificate can still pay under state minimum wage. This is very bad and it undermines our efforts for equal rights in the workplace. Governor Cuomo just had his state of the state speech and he never mentioned people with disabilities despite including FDR who has polio. [Transcript here](#). People with disabilities do not have a priority or a part in the Governor's agenda.

The Department of Transportation is seeking public comments on a proposed rule to improve restroom access for passengers with disabilities on single aisle aircrafts with 125 or more seats. This proposed regulation addresses lavatory interiors, on board wheelchairs and training of flight attendants. You can **give a feedback about the new proposal here**: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/01/02/2019-27631/accessible-lavatories-on-single-aisle-aircraft-part-1>

Check out FLIC's new informational brochures on Making Temporary Events Accessible, Access to Medical Care for Individuals with Disabilities, and Modular Ramp Program

Visit <https://fliconline.org/FLIC/accessibility-brochures-and-information/>



United Way
of Tompkins County
Funded Partner

Emergency Preparedness is Everyone's Responsibility: Part 1

The Finger Lakes Independence Center offers FREE Emergency Preparedness presentations to groups of older adults and people with disabilities. Presentations and all materials are funded through a grant from the United Way.

Presentations consist of five or more people and last no more than an hour and a half. Get together a group and we will come to you!

Participants learn:

- How to be prepared in an emergency for up to 72 hours
- Preparation for blizzards, flooding, and other disasters
- How to build and connect with a support system
- Other considerations & recommended resources

Participants receive:

- A Go-Stay-Kit: an easy and organized emergency planner and assistance filling it out
 - A Back Pack to store emergency supplies
 - A flash light/whistle key chain and a water bottle
- To schedule a presentation or to learn more, call 272-2433 or email Amy Jo. DeKoeper at amyjo@fliconline.org or Jeff Boles at jeff@fliconline.org.
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Emergency Preparedness is Everyone's Responsibility: Part 2

To help educate our community in emergency readiness, we plan to post suggestions every month. January's topic is **Make Plans for Emergencies**.

Disasters change things. When an emergency happens you may have to decide what to do very quickly, while you are worrying about what might happen. By planning ahead, it will be easier to make the right decisions when the worst happens.

Tasks:

1. Plan what to do if you have to evacuate.
Choose two places for your family to meet. One should be right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, such as a fire. The other should be outside of your neighborhood, in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate.
Decide where you would go and what route you would take to get there. You may choose to go to a hotel, stay with friends or family in a safe location, or go to a shelter. Hold evacuation drills at home.

Practice getting out of the house quickly, and drive your planned evacuation route. The more you practice, the more confident you will be if you really have to evacuate.
Plan ahead for your pets. Due to health concerns, pets are not allowed in Red Cross shelters. Keep a phone list of pet-friendly hotels and animal shelters that are along your evacuation route in case a designated pet shelter is not available. Contact your local humane society or animal shelter to ask if pet emergency shelters will be opened in a disaster.

2. Take steps now to prevent damage to your home in a disaster.

Once you know what disasters could happen in your community, there are things you can do to lower your risk of injury or property damage. Here are some suggestions:

Tornado - Add a tornado safe room to your home, or add extra protection to an existing room to keep your family safe in a tornado. Look for FEMA publication 320 for more information.

Flood - Elevate your home above the base flood level or take steps to floodproof. Elevate your utilities above the base flood level. Make sure you have adequate flood venting. Use flood-resistant building materials when you build or remodel. Taking steps like these can lower your flood insurance rates.

3. Learn what disasters can happen in your area and decide what you will do in a disaster.

It is important to know what types of disasters can happen where you are. Is your home in a floodplain? Are you in an area that has earthquakes? When are tornadoes most likely to happen? Knowing what disasters could happen can help you know how to be prepared and what to do. Contact your local American Red Cross or emergency management office to learn more about the disasters in your area. Meet with your family or household members. Discuss how to prepare and respond to emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work, and play. Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and plan to work together as a team. If a family member is in the military, plan how you would respond if they were deployed.

Talking About Disasters: Talking about disasters can be scary, especially with children, or with someone who may have difficulty coping with daily life. Be open and positive. The unknown often causes more anxiety than knowing the facts. Listen to what the individual has to say, learn how they feel and what they may be afraid of. Older people and people with disabilities may worry that asking for help during a disaster will take away their independence. Talk about different options for assistance and make a plan with them.

The information is taken from: <http://do1thing.com>

This web site gives suggestions every month that we will pass on to you. If you go to the website yourself, you can learn much more!

Adaptive Climbing at Cornell

At the Lindseth Climbing Center, we welcome people with disabilities that want to take advantage of our climbing opportunities. Climbing offers both mental and physical challenges for beginners and experts alike. Through staff support, instruction, and special gear systems, we can work with the abilities that each person brings to help them achieve their climbing goals. Climbing is for anyone!

Adaptive Climbing Events will be held on the first Saturday of the month, from 2-4pm, and are open to anyone. At the event we will have adaptive systems available to explore, as well as dedicated staff for belaying and coaching.

Cost: This year all adaptive climbers and their supporters will be able to use the facility and gear for free. Climbers will work with the Wall Manager to get set up in our system and discuss access and training options.

Contact:

Josh Giblin, Climbing Wall Manager jbg286@cornell.edu, 607-255-6040

Schedule a personal climbing session by contacting:

Rob Cook, Special Programs Coordinator rjc288@cornell.edu, 607-254-8255

The Finger Lakes Independence Center is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities are able to participate in meaningful activities of daily life. If your organization is taking active steps to make your activities, meetings and events accessible, [please tell us!](#)

We want to highlight and share best practices for making our community more inclusive for all.

FRAUD ADVISORY:
**Inspector General Warns Public About New Twist to Social Security
Phone Scams**

The Inspector General of Social Security, Gail S. Ennis, is warning the public that telephone scammers may send faked documents by email to convince victims to comply with their demands. The Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has received reports of victims who received emails with attached letters and reports that appeared to be from Social Security or Social Security OIG. The letters may use official letterhead and government “jargon” to convince victims they are legitimate; they may also contain misspellings and grammar mistakes.

This is the latest variation on Social Security phone scams, which continue to be widespread throughout the United States. Using robocalls or live callers, fraudsters pretend to be government employees and claim there is identity theft or another problem with one’s Social Security number, account, or benefits. They may threaten arrest or other legal action, or may offer to increase benefits, protect assets, or resolve identity theft. They often demand payment via retail gift card, cash, wire transfer, internet currency such as Bitcoin, or pre-paid debit card.

Inspector General Ennis urges continued vigilance against all types of phone scams no matter what “proof” callers may offer. As we continue to increase public awareness of phone scams, criminals will come up with new ways to convince people of their legitimacy. Social Security will never:

- threaten you with arrest or other legal action unless you immediately pay a fine or fee;
- promise a benefit increase or other assistance in exchange for payment;
- require payment by retail gift card, cash, wire transfer, internet currency, or prepaid debit card; or
- send official letters or reports containing personally identifiable information via email.

If there is ever a problem with your Social Security number or record, in most cases Social Security will mail you a letter. If you do need to submit payments to Social Security, the agency will send a letter with instructions and payment options. You should never pay a government fee or fine using retail gift cards, cash, internet currency, wire transfers, or pre-paid debit cards. The scammers ask for payment this way because it is very difficult to trace and recover.

If you receive a call or email that you believe to be suspicious, about a problem with your Social Security number or account, hang up or do not respond. We encourage the public to report Social Security phone scams using our dedicated online form, at <https://oig.ssa.gov>. Please share this information with your friends and family, to help spread awareness about phone scams.

For more information, please visit <https://oig.ssa.gov/scam>. Members of the press may make inquiries to Social Security OIG at (410) 965-2671.

Need a Public Notary? Contact Cheryl Baker at FLIC. Services are FREE.

[Donate](#)

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