



Finger Lakes **Independence** Center

Opening Doors to Independence

Image Above: Finger Lakes Independence Center--FLiC--Logo: The letters: F-L-I-C and the letter I looks like an open door. Finger Lakes Independence Center Opening Doors to Independence

NOVEMBER 2024

Our **28th Annual World of Skills Job Fair** was a great success! On Wednesday, October 30th, over 100 job seekers and 35 employers convened at the beautiful downtown Hotel Ithaca for a morning of networking, job seeking, and hiring. There were over 25 door prize winners and a grand prize winner of a re-furbished laptop, courtesy of Finger Lakes Re-Use.

We are already looking forward to our next one in 2025!



Image Above Left: 2 adults sitting at the FLiC information table at the Job Fair, Image Above Right: a picture of several people at the Job Fair, some standing and talking to employers who are sitting at tables.

November 3rd: Come Together!

As part of the Your Voice + Your Vote Coalition, FLIC staff are working with other local groups to organize the Come Together event at the First Presbyterian Church in Ithaca on November 3rd, from 3:00 – 6:00 PM. This event will serve to not only encourage people to vote, but also focus on civic engagement they can participate in all year long! Come Together will feature three panel discussions, focused on Protecting Voting Rights, Community Policing, and the Rights of Women, LGBTQ+ Community, and People with Disabilities. The Community Chorus will provide music in between panel discussions.

November is

- American Diabetes Month
- National Epilepsy Awareness Month
- National Family Caregivers Month
- National Long-Term Care Awareness Month
- 11/3 - Daylight Savings Ends - CLOCKS back 1 HOUR
 - 11/5 - Election Day
- National Cancer Awareness Month
 - 11/11 - Veterans Day
- 11/19 - Equal Opportunity Day
- 11/28 & 11/29 - Thanksgiving Holiday
(FLIC Offices CLOSED)

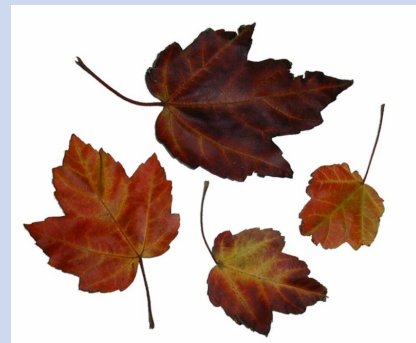


Image Above Left: A picture of an American flag with lettering that says, "Veterans Day: Honoring All Who Served". Image Above Right: Four leaves of varying sizes and colors in a circular pattern to signify autumn.

ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY NOVEMBER 5TH - polls open 6 AM to 9 PM

Why do people with disabilities need to vote in the 2024 presidential election?

Though the below addresses the 2024 presidential election, it speaks well to the importance of the vote from people with disabilities in all elections: local, state and federal. Your vote is important!

Our next president, local, state, and federal representatives can have a tremendous impact on:

- Civil and Human Rights: Every person, regardless of ability, should be able to participate fully in their community and not experience discrimination based on their disability.
- Employment: For most people, work provides a pathway to engage in our society's economic and social institutions; however, employment of people with disabilities continues to lag significantly behind those without disabilities.
- Community Living: Long-term services and supports enable almost 60 million people with disabilities and seniors to live in their homes among their neighbors. However, over one million people with other disabilities continue to go unsupported because of waiting lists, limiting their opportunities to live fully in their communities
- Healthcare: People with disabilities experience health disparities in access to care and in their health outcomes.
- Social Security: The non-retirement components of Social Security were created almost fifty years ago to address the needs of people with disabilities and their families.
- Housing: The lack of affordable and accessible housing leaves people with disabilities vulnerable to homelessness, institutionalization and incarceration. Currently, the need for affordable, accessible and integrated housing for people with disabilities is far beyond supply.
- Transportation: Accessible transportation is vital to the inclusion of people with disabilities in work, school and community life.

https://www.aucd.org/docs/AUCD_PolicyIssues%202020.pdf

****Barriers to Voting 2024****

The Finger Lakes Independence Center (FLIC) is gathering feedback about any barriers to voting people with disabilities faced in the 2024 general election. Your feedback will help us understand and address the barriers you encountered.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeUwy2sO2y-tuNILFOotGHbYtYdUnFtVOalxDMU4TjFzINXjA/viewform?usp=sf_link

If you need an alternative format for the survey, or have any other questions or concerns, please contact Andrea Champlin (andrea@FLIOnline.org) or Jeff Boles (Jeff@FLIOnline.org) via email or by calling at (607) 272-2433.

LOOKING FOR WORK and may NEED AN ACCOMMODATION?

Here is what you need to know:

In recognition of Equal Opportunity Day, November 19, and because of the recently held World of Skills job fair held on October 30, now is a good time to review some basic facts

about Reasonable Accommodations for people with disabilities looking for work.

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, reasonable accommodation applies to all individuals with a physical or mental impairment “that substantially limits one or more major life activities.” the Equal Employment and Opportunity Commission (EEOC), is the government agency which oversees regulations for reasonable accommodations that involve all aspects of the job process. This includes providing equal opportunity in the application process, enabling a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job, and guaranteeing an employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.

While an employee with a disability is expected to perform the “essential functions” of the job, the manner in which these job duties are performed are to be negotiated between the employee and the employer. For example, while a job description for a receptionist may contain a requirement for the individual to stand behind a desk during his or her shift, an employee with a back injury could reasonably argue that sitting could be a reasonable accommodation since sitting does not interfere with performing the essential functions of the position, such as greeting clients, answering phones, etc.

Moreover, this discussion for Reasonable Accommodation “must be an interactive process”, between employer and employee, as directed by the EEOC.

“An ongoing discussion between employer and employee is the most important part of the reasonable accommodation process,” emphasized a representative from the ADA Great Lakes Center who spoke in a webinar for employers. An open and honest discussion between an employer and an employee would be most effective for both to understand one another’s needs and limitations, and therefore would go a long way in a successful and reasonable accommodation, she explained.

Three important component that should be part of this ongoing discussion were highlighted by the ADA representative.

1. Communication: effective listening, willingness to ask questions, and a back-and-forth discussion.
2. Flexibility: Discuss all available options for reasonable accommodation as well as considering possible changes of company work policy, within limitation of work policy intent.
3. Creativity: Both parties should be willing to work with one another, and even “think out of the box” if conventional accommodations are not an option.

Most important, reasonable accommodations should be individualized, that is, there is no one right solution for a specific disability group, for example, there are many degrees of visual impairment, and even totally blind workers have varying skills and different approaches to how they best perform their job duties.

Therefore, as for any two people trying to reach an agreement, the best practice is simply to have an open and honest discussion. Do not make assumptions, ask thorough questions, be respectful of one another’s needs and limitations, and be willing to compromise as long as in the end both parties are satisfied with the negotiation.

Article written by Rick Holborow, FLIC Board Member and Cornell University alum.

NEW ADAPTIVE FITNESS OPPORTUNITY IN ITHACA! Meet Sam Fishman:

Hi all!

Please let me introduce myself. My name is Sam Fishman and I have lived in the Ithaca-area for 21(!!!) years! I moved here for undergrad and quickly realized I had found my

home. During my first semester of freshman year, I discovered that I have a passion for working with people with disabilities. My first job in the community was at Racker as a community support staff. I also worked as a TA for Joanie Groome, the instructor of Understanding Disability, an undergraduate course at IC) and continued to eagerly seek out more opportunities to grow and learn.

Professionally, I have worked as a speech-language pathologist, a special education teacher and most recently I have spent the last nine years working as an EMT and paramedic. Personally, I am a lifelong swimmer and educator and have always enjoyed being active and strong. I discovered CrossFit in 2018 and can honestly say that it has changed my life, in the best of ways.

As of September 1 of this year, I opened my business, AnyBody & EveryBody, Adaptive and Inclusive CrossFit for ANY body and EVERY body. I am located with Pallas Fitness, at 241 Cherry St, in Ithaca. The beauty of CrossFit is that is functional fitness, i.e. the movements that we use throughout everyday life. Whether that's picking something up off the floor or reaching overhead for something, these are movements that we use throughout our days. CrossFit combines functional fitness while being constantly varied, to keep things fun, while adding relative intensity- this is unique to each individual.

There are countless tips and tricks for adapting CrossFit to individuals with disabilities and this can be unique to each person, but here are a few general examples of how we can adapt the rowing machine. Rowers are easily broken down and the seat can be removed. Seated athletes row with a box placed in front of them with dumbbells to weigh the box down and to hold the handle. Using this same setup, people with developmental disabilities who are working on coordination can stand and row, which simplifies the movement. People with upper extremity injuries or amputations can row with one extremity, using a ring or hook adaptation on the handle. There are also commercial velcro products that can be utilized when grip strength is an area of weakness.

CrossFit truly is for ANY body and EVERY body. Below, are two testimonials from members of our community.

From Joanie Groome, IC Instructor of 30+ years and YMCA of Ithaca & Tompkins County Adaptive & Inclusive Program Coordinator:

I have known Sam for over 20 years. We have worked together providing programming for individuals with disabilities in both an academic and non-profit setting. What stands out to me is Sam's energy, enthusiasm and passion to help those with disabilities live their best lives. Sam has an incredible skill to assess strengths and areas of need and to create a program tailored to each and every individual she works with. Functional fitness is a practical and achievable activity (program) that Sam will deliver with impeccable professionalism.

From the parent of a current athlete:

"We cannot thank Sam at Anybody Everybody enough for the incredible support she has provided for our daughter, who has cerebral palsy and uses a gait trainer. At just three years old, she has shown remarkable progress in strength building and muscle development, thanks to Sam's adaptive CrossFit program.

From the very first session, Sam created a welcoming and encouraging environment that made our daughter feel comfortable and excited to participate. Her tailored approach ensures that each exercise is both fun and effective, helping her to improve her mobility and confidence. The activities are engaging, and Sam's enthusiasm is infectious, making each visit a highlight of our week.

We are truly grateful for Sam's dedication and expertise in adapting exercises to fit her needs. Her commitment to inclusivity and empowerment has made a significant difference in our daughter's life. We wholeheartedly recommend Anybody Everybody to any family seeking adaptive fitness options."

Sam Fishman

Adaptive & Inclusive Trainer



 607-262-7286

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 241 Cherry St, Ithaca, NY 14850

Volunteer Advocacy Team Recruitment

Andrea Champlin, Statewide Systems Advocate, is recruiting for FLIC's Volunteer Advocacy Team! Throughout the year, volunteers receive Action Alerts that describe steps they can take to contact local officials and impact policy decisions. Andrea is also hoping to organize additional advocacy events this year, such as letter writing campaigns, participating in legislative meetings, and travelling to Albany to in-person advocacy activities. If you are interested in learning more about the Volunteer Advocacy Team or would like to join, please complete this **short form**. If you have questions or need a different format of the form, please email Andrea (Andrea@FLIConline.org) or give her a call at (607)272-2433 ext. 203.

In observation of National Diabetes Month and World Diabetes Day

November is National Diabetes month and November 14th is World Diabetes Day. Below are some basic facts about what diabetes is, why it is important to keep it under control, and how to live a healthier lifestyle in order to prevent worsening conditions.

Diabetes is a chronic (long-lasting) health condition that affects how your body turns food into energy. Your body breaks down much of the food you eat into sugar (glucose) and releases it into your bloodstream. When your blood sugar goes up, it signals your pancreas to release insulin, which enables your cells to take up the sugar and turn it into energy.

With diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin or can't use it as well as it should. When there isn't enough insulin or cells stop responding to insulin, too much blood sugar stays in your bloodstream. Over time, that can cause serious health problems, such as heart disease, vision loss, kidney disease.

There are three main types of diabetes: type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes (diabetes while pregnant).

Type 2 diabetes accounts for about 90% to 95% of all diagnosed cases. With type 2 diabetes, your body doesn't use insulin well and can't keep blood sugar at normal levels. It develops over many years and is usually diagnosed in adults (but more and more in children, teens, and young adults). You may not notice any symptoms, so it's important to get your blood sugar tested if you're at risk. An equally if not more concerning health condition is prediabetes.

In the United States, about 1 in 3 adults has prediabetes. Worse, more and more children are diagnosed with this condition. With prediabetes, blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough for a type 2 diabetes diagnosis. However, prediabetes raises your risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. There isn't a cure yet for diabetes, but losing weight, eating healthy food, and being active can really help. Other things you can do to help: Have an annual physical, take medicine as prescribed, get diabetes self-management education and support.

One of the largest education and support programs is The National Diabetes Prevention Program—or National DPP. One key feature of the National DPP is the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)-led lifestyle change program. This research-based program focuses on healthy eating and physical activity. Research showed that people with prediabetes who joined a structured lifestyle change program could cut their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58% (71% for people over 60 years old).

For more information about how to prevent or manage diabetes, consult your physician, or find out how to get involved in the National DPP by going to: www.cdc.gov/diabetes-prevention/.

~Rick Holborow

The Registry Referral Program

The Finger Lakes Independence Center administers the Registry Referral Program. This is a free referral service linking individuals seeking independent employment to people who need care in their home. Opportunities include: elder companion, housekeeper, run errands, cook, personal care aide, home care aide, LPN, RN. People looking for help can call and receive names of people willing to provide those services. If you either need assistance or if you would be interested in listing your name as a caregiver, please call FLIC at 272-2433 or email: info@fliconline.org. If you have experience caring for a friend or loved one, please consider sharing your compassion with others. This program is made possible through funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.



Need a Public Notary?

Contact Cheryl Baker at FLIC at 607-272-2433 to make an appointment.

Services are free!



Image Left: gold star seal with the words "Notary Public" in black, bold letters in the center. Double circle surrounds these words. In the circle at top it reads "Official" and, at the bottom, "Duly Commissioned."

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