

THE FLIC

NEWSFLASH

News from the Finger Lakes Independence Center

October 2025

“I am different, not less.”

— Dr. Temple Grandin, scientist and animal behaviorist living with autism

SHORT NOTES

- Voting season is here. If you run into accessibility issues and need assistance, please reach out to Jeff or Andrea in our office. jeff@fliconline.org or andrea@fliconline.org.
- **Register to vote** at the FLIC office, 9am-5pm, Monday – Friday, at 215 Fifth St. in Ithaca. Voter registration deadline: Must be received by Tompkins County Board of Elections no later than October 25, 2025.
- Save the date! Our **29th Annual World of Skills Job Fair** will be 9am-12pm, Wednesday, October 22 at the Hotel Ithaca. See article below.

- **Hiring?** Register for the Annual World of Skills Job Fair by emailing tracy@fliconline.org before October 14. Many employers have already signed up including TCAT, William George Agency, Wegmans, Beginnings Credit Union, Tompkins Financial Services, Lakeview Health Services, NYS Dept of Civil Service and more!
- You can **contact FLIC** by calling 607-272-2433 or by emailing the general mailbox at info@fliconline.org.

Job Seekers can enter to
WIN a **brand new** laptop
donated by Finger Lakes
Independence Center!

29th
ANNUAL



JOB FAIR

Come meet over 30 local employers looking for qualified candidates to fill open positions, including excellent entry-level opportunities!

Lakeview Health Services, Stafkings, TCAT, William George Agency, Unity House, City of Ithaca Human Resources, Cornell University, Express Professionals, Finger Lakes Independence Center, Wegmans, Finger Lakes Residential Center, Cayuga Health, Hotel Ithaca, 6th District Unified Court System, Beginnings Credit Union, Tompkins County Human Resources, Marriott, Women's Opportunity Center, NYS Dept of Civil Service, Cayuga Media Group, Tompkins Financial Corporation, and more!

Wed.
Oct.
22nd
2025
9AM - 12
noon @
Hotel
Ithaca

Event Steering Committee:

FLIC



NEW YORK
STATE OF
OPPORTUNITY
Department
of Labor

DREAM Job Fair



Ithaca
Rotary

Tompkins
Workforce
New York
Put us to work for you



Whole Health

Additional thanks for
financial contributions:



607.272.2433



tracy@fliconline.org



Please help us spread the word about the World of Skills Job Fair!

For 29 years, FLIC has been heading up this annual event, along with other local businesses including Tompkins Whole Health, Ithaca Rotary, Cornell University, NYS Dept of Labor, Workforce NY, Challenge Workforce Solutions and area disability advocates.

All are welcome! Job seekers – come on down! **Enter a raffle to win a BRAND NEW laptop, courtesy of FLIC.**

CHOOSING THE BEST LANGUAGE

There is no single "positive word" for "disabled" because terms like "differently-abled" or "special needs" are often seen as condescending euphemisms. What should you do?

Language to Use:

- Person-First Language: "Person with a disability" places the individual before their condition.
- Identity-First Language: "Disabled person" is preferred by many in the disability community to affirm disability as a part of their identity.
- Specific Language: When appropriate, describe the specific condition rather than using a general term, such as "person who has epilepsy" instead of "epileptic."

What to Avoid:

- Euphemisms. Again, terms like "differently-abled" or "special needs" are often rejected by the disability community as patronizing and condescending.
- "Special." Similarly, "special" is seen as a euphemism that stigmatizes and implies a deficiency.
- "Handicapped." This term is considered offensive.

Key Principles:

- **Ask the Individual:** The most respectful approach is to follow the language that the individual uses for themselves.
- **Focus on the Person:** Remember that disability does not define all that a person is; focus on their individuality and experiences.
- **Avoid Negative Connotations:** Phrases like "suffers from" or "confined to" should be avoided, as they emphasize limitations rather than empowerment.



This Halloween, when possible, let's gently remind others that disability is not a costume. Dressing up as a person with a disability is offensive and perpetuates harmful stereotypes.

For example, wearing a wheelchair, crutches, or a walking cane as part of a costume is disrespectful to people who rely on these tools for mobility or creating costumes that portray burn scars, facial disfigurements, or missing limbs can make people with visible differences feel ashamed.

An Introduction from FLIC's New Student Intern

My name is Spiro Yeo (spear-oh yo) and I'm the new student intern at the Finger Lakes Independence Center!

I'm a junior at Cornell, where I study Industrial and Labor Relations, a field of study that covers subjects like: economics, psychology, statistics, human resource studies, and other fields within social science. It was through a recent diversity class that I became motivated to join FLIC and dedicate my career to serving people with disabilities.

I'll be working at FLIC for the next few months on the procedural and policy handbook, staff handbook, articles for the newsletter, and I'll assist with policy research and management. I also hope to advance FLIC's mission of being a voice of empowerment within Ithaca's broader community.

Prior to my junior year, I worked in various capacities for people with disabilities. I worked at Jaggard Elementary School as a teacher's aide in the preschool autism program. I supported the special education teacher and classroom staff, providing education

services to the kids. I also worked at Peachwood Recreation Club for a few summers as a lifeguard and swim instructor. I taught students on the autism spectrum about pool safety rules and how to swim safely. It was through these experiences that I gained my passion for serving people with disabilities and where I found joy in helping people with disabilities as they learn valuable life skills.

I grew up a few hours south of Ithaca in a small town in New Jersey. I currently live south of Philadelphia, and I am a huge Philly sports fan (Go Birds!). I live with my parents, my brother, and our five-year-old cat, Ari. My brother has hearing loss, so, through him, I learned a lot of important lessons about the need for service centers like FLIC. I enjoy listening to (and playing) music, gaming, and taking trips to the shore over the summer.

I would love to hear from you. Feel free to reach out to me at sey@cornell.edu, and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

FLIC Advocates Andrea and Ila attend the 2025 NYAIL Conference



Advocacy & Support Specialist Andrea Champlin and Employment Advocate Ila Rose recently attended the 2025 NYAIL conference in Albany. The New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL) supports New Yorkers with disabilities; this event brings together individuals with disabilities, staff from Independent Living Centers (ILCs),

families, and service providers for training, workshops, networking, advocacy, keynote speakers, and education. This year's theme was "Leading the Way," embodying the values of diversity, equity, intersectionality, and accessibility that are at the heart of the Independent Living movement.



EMERGENCY Preparedness



Build-a-Kit Tips for Specific Disabilities

In addition to having your basic survival supplies, an emergency kit should have items to meet your individual needs. Consider the items you use every day and which ones you may need to add to your kit.

General Tips for Medications

- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about how to create an emergency supply of medicines
- Keep a list of medications. Include information about diagnoses, dosages, frequency, medical supply needs and allergies
- Store extra non-prescription drugs, like pain and fever relievers, antihistamines and antidiarrheal medicines
- Have a cooler/chemical ice packs available to chill medications that need to be refrigerated

Tips for People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Include weather radio (with text display and a flashing alert), extra hearing-aid batteries, and a battery-operated lantern to assist with sign language or lip reading
- Plan for communication by packing pen and paper

Tips for People Who are Blind or Have Low Vision

- Mark emergency supplies with Braille labels or large print

- Include/make an evacuation plan for your communication devices

Tips for People with Speech Disabilities

- Include/make an evacuation plan for your communication devices
- Plan for communication if your equipment is not working, such as laminated cards with phrases and/or pictograms

Tips for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities

- Keep handheld electronic devices charged and loaded with videos and activities
- Purchase and charge spare chargers for electronic devices
- Include sheets and twine or a small pop-up tent (to decrease visual stimulation in a busy room or to provide instant privacy)
- Include noise-canceling headphones and comfort snacks

Items for People with a Mobility Disabilities

- If using a power wheelchair, have a lightweight manual chair available as a backup*
- Purchase an extra battery for a power wheelchair or other battery-operated medical or assistive technology devices and keep extra batteries charged at all times.*
- Show others how to assemble, disassemble and operate your wheelchair
- Include a patch kit, can of sealant, portable air pump, and/or extra inner tube for wheelchair or scooter
- Keep an extra mobility device such as a cane or walker*
- If you use a seat cushion to protect your skin or maintain your balance, include an extra cushion
- Make a plan with neighbors who can assist you during an evacuation

*If you can't purchase extra items, find out what agencies, organizations or charitable groups can assist you.

Tips for Individuals with Alzheimer's and Related Dementia

- Don't leave the person alone. Even those who aren't prone to wandering away may do so in unfamiliar situations.
- If evacuating, bring a pillow, blanket or other comforting items

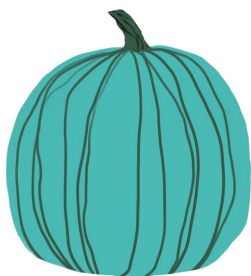
for them to hold

- When at a shelter, choose a quiet corner away from exits
- If there is an episode of agitation, respond to the emotions being expressed. For example, say “You’re frightened and want to go home. It’s ok. I’m right here with you.”

Additional Items to Pack:

- Several days' supply of prescription medicines
- List of all medications with dosages and any allergies
- Extra eyeglasses, contacts, hearing aids and batteries
- Backup supply of oxygen
- List with the style, serial number and special instructions for medical devices
- Copies of insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards
- Contact information for doctors, relatives or friends
- Pet food, extra water, collar with ID tag, medical records and other supplies for your service or support animal

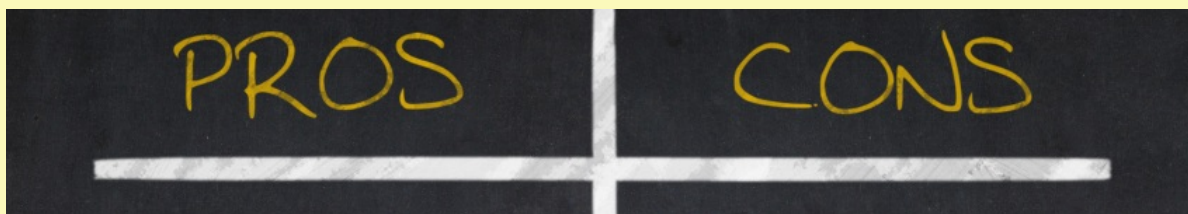
<https://www.ready.gov/people-disabilities>



Teal Pumpkin Project

A teal pumpkin at Halloween signifies that the homeowner is participating in the **Teal Pumpkin Project** and has non-food treats available (like small toys, stickers, temporary tattoos, glow sticks, bracelets, etc ..). This makes the holiday safer and more inclusive for children with food allergies, diabetes, or other dietary restrictions.

Spread the Word: Inform your friends, family, and neighbors about the **Teal Pumpkin Project** to encourage more participation in your community.



Controversy Surrounding Disaster Registries

Amid the increasing frequency of natural disasters across the U.S. —

brought into sharp relief by the [recent deadly floods in Texas](#) — state and local governments from Oregon to North Carolina have turned to disaster registries to prioritize help for vulnerable residents when fires, hurricanes, and other environmental catastrophes strike. But while some politicians say these registries are a potential solution to a public health problem, many disability advocates see them as ineffective tools that give people a false sense of security because there is no guarantee of evacuation help.

“They’re described in a way that communicates that if you place your information in this registry and you will need assistance, they will be able to plan for it, so in a disaster you will be safer. And in reality, that is simply not the case,” said Maria Town, president and CEO of the American Association of People with Disabilities.

Town, who has cerebral palsy, had been in Houston for six months when Hurricane Harvey hit in 2017. Texas makes a free registry called the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry available to cities and counties to help them identify needs in their communities, but how or if they use it is up to them. Fewer than 5% of people who registered were contacted during Harvey, and even fewer got evacuation assistance, according to a [2023 study](#) by the National Council on Disability, a federal agency that advises on disability policies and programs. The hurricane [took 89 lives](#).

“I heard people say, ‘I thought I was safe. I registered,’” Town said of the calls she got during and after Harvey.

The National Council on Disability says registries are harmful. “They are ineffective and provide a false sense of security of future guaranteed assistance,” Nicholas Sabula, a spokesperson for the organization, said in a statement.

The California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services also “[strongly discourages](#)” using registries, saying they can deter people from making their own disaster plans and raise privacy concerns. Disability advocates have also cited privacy as a concern.

“We’ve been through this before with the county. It didn’t work. It hasn’t worked around the country,” said Los Angeles resident June Kailes, a disability advocate who uses a power scooter.

Kailes sees what happened in the Eaton Fire as a problem with emergency planning, saying that the county needs to better understand how to offer people with disabilities emergency transportation. She pointed to Galen Buckwalter, a paralyzed Eaton Fire survivor who reportedly [drove his motorized wheelchair](#) a mile in the dark to evacuate when he realized it would be impossible for a ride-hailing service to pick him up given the conditions.

This article was produced by [KFF Health News](#), which publishes [California Healthline](#), an editorially independent service of the [California Health Care Foundation](#). [KFF Health News](#) is a national newsroom that produces in-depth journalism about health issues and is one of the core operating programs at KFF—an independent source of health policy research, polling, and journalism. Learn more about [KFF](#).

COUNTER-NARRATIVES IN CINEMA

FILMS THAT SUBVERT THE ABLEIST TROPE OF MAKING DISABILITY A SOURCE OF HORROR

- **Freaks (1932)**: This film is a foundational example of subverting disability stereotypes in horror. It features real circus performers with disabilities and presents them as a community of kind and supportive individuals. The true monsters of the film are the able-bodied performers who mistreat them.
- **Wait Until Dark (1967)**: The protagonist, a blind woman, must defend herself against ruthless criminals who break into her apartment. Rather than being a source of terror, **her blindness becomes a key element of her cunning strategy**, as she uses her intimate knowledge of her home to turn out the lights and gain the advantage.
- **Silver Bullet (1985)**: In this horror film, the hero is a boy who uses a wheelchair. **His motorized wheelchair, built by his uncle, becomes his "silver bullet" — a tool of liberation** that helps him hunt down the werewolf terrorizing his town.
- **Hush (2016)**: The protagonist is a deaf writer living alone who is targeted by a masked killer. Her deafness adds a unique layer to the film's tension, but she is never infantilized. Instead, she is **portrayed as an intelligent, resilient, and capable survivor**.
- **Spring Break Zombie Massacre (2016)**: This film was made by two best friends with Down syndrome who also star as the heroes. **The film's protagonists are not defined by their disability**; rather, the film subverts expectations by showing neurodivergent minds leading the creative process and the action.
- **Bird Box (2018)**: In this film, survivors must navigate a world of deadly monsters by remaining blindfolded. Blind characters are the ones who are **safely navigating the world**.
- **A Quiet Place (2018)**: The family's deaf daughter, played by deaf actress Millicent Simmonds, possesses a survival advantage because of her intimate knowledge of living in silence. In a world hunted by sound-sensitive monsters, **her family's fluency in American Sign Language (ASL) is an evolutionary advantage**, not a vulnerability.

TRY THIS FOR FREE!

Brain Buddy Balance Board



Available in our

Try It Room

Items in our Try It Room can be borrowed for one month. There is no deposit or cost associated with using items from the Try It Room.

FLiC

My First 90 Days at FLIC

My name is Janet, and I started working at FLIC in the beginning of July. Taking on the role of Receptionist/Administrative Assistant, I have learned so much! Not just about what FLIC does for our community, but about assistive equipment, how to use different devices properly, and how many different tools and resources there are to assist with all kinds of abilities.



I especially like our Try-It Room, where you can find all sorts of useful items, from adaptive silverware and cooking utensils to all the amazing technology including low-vision aides, magnifiers, and large-button keyboards.

Coming to work every day is fulfilling and rewarding. Everyone who comes into the office is so thankful and grateful that we are a part of this community.

I am proud to work for a company that not only values me but has such a positive impact on our community.



We'd Love More Google Reviews, Please!

We have 50 Google reviews. We should probably have 500 Google reviews! Will you leave us one?

<https://g.page/r/CTZmcWSu2OVJEAe/review>

Want to Make A Difference? **October** offers ...

Down Syndrome Awareness Month

Healthy Aging Month

National ADHD Awareness Month

National Audiology Awareness Month

National Bullying Prevention Month

National Dental Hygiene Month

October 6: World Cerebral Palsy Day

October 9: National Depression Screening Day

October 19-25: International Infection Prevention Week

October 19-25: National Healthcare Quality Week

October 29: World Psoriasis Day

And many more ...

Increased Awareness is a Powerful Tool.



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We'd Love to



Hear From You!

Voice (607) 272-2433

Video (607) 216-9683

Fax (607) 272-0902

info@fliconline.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

9:00am-5:00pm

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Ithaca NY 14850



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