THE FLIC NEWSFLASH

News from the Finger Lakes Independence Center



SHORT notes

- **FLIC will be closed on Monday, October 12, in observance of Indigenous Peoples' Day.**
- About **1 in 4 U.S. adults has some type of disability**, making people with disabilities one of the country's largest minority groups.
- The **Parkinson's Caregiver Support Group** meets in person, 12-1pm, on the first and third Tuesday each month, in the FLIC conference room. For more information, email Carol Grove at **carolgrove6115@gmail.com**
- **Hear it? Say something and help change it.** Calling someone **"crazy"** when they're being unreasonable, unpredictable, or over-the-top can be hurtful, dismissive, and stigmatizing to people with mental health disabilities.
- You can **contact FLIC** by calling 607-272-2433 or by emailing the general mailbox at **info@fliconline.org**.

"My needs are nothing special.

Everyone has different needs.”

— Maysoon Zayid, comedian, actress,
writer and disability advocate living with cerebral palsy

The World of Skills Job Fair is Coming!

The highly anticipated 30th Annual **World of Skills Job Fair** is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, October 21, 2026, at Hotel Ithaca, located at 222 South Cayuga Street, from 9am – 12pm. Come for 15 minutes or come for all 3 hours.

This free community event offers area residents a valuable face-to-face networking opportunity to connect directly with local organizations and jumpstart their careers. This annual event began as a project of Leadership Tompkins to assist people with disabilities to find employment in the community. It has evolved to welcome all interested job seekers.

This year’s milestone event will host over 30 diverse employers from across Tompkins County and the surrounding region. Recruiters from prominent local organizations — including Cornell University, Centralus Health, Ithaca College, TCAT, Wegmans, and the City of Ithaca — will be on-site to conduct interviews, share information about a wide range of open positions, and collect applications.

Designed to support experienced professionals, entry-level candidates, and individuals with disabilities, the job fair provides on-the-spot guidance to help attendees navigate employment opportunities. On-site staff and recruiters will be available to help job seekers apply for active job openings as well as submit general interest applications for future considerations. There will be representatives from agencies that can help with job searching as well.

We look forward to seeing you there!

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

30th ANNUAL

World of SKILLS

JOB FAIR

Wed. Oct. 21st 2026

9AM – 12 noon @ Hotel Ithaca

Event Steering Committee:

FLIC

NEW YORK STATE Department of Labor
WORKING FOR YOU
DREAM Job Fair

Challenge

Ithaca Rotary

Tompkins Workforce New York
Put us to work for you

TOMPKINS COUNTY Whole Health

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

Lakeview Health Services, William George Agency, TCAT, Tompkins County Human Resources, Cornell University, Unity House, Finger Lakes Independence Center, Hotel Ithaca, Women's Opportunity Center, Racker Centers, ACCES-VR, JM Murray Center, New Roots Charter School, Beginnings Credit Union, NYS National Guard, NYS OCFS, NYS DOL, City of Ithaca Human Resources, Fidelis, Tompkins Bank & Trust, H&R Block, RSS - Rehab Support Services, The Guthrie Clinic, WFNY, NYS Dept of Civil Service, WALMART, and more!

Additional thanks for financial contributions:

Ithaca Rotary

607.272.2433 tracy@fliconline.org

Welcome to Our Two New Interns!



Strummer Dunn is a sophomore at Cornell University studying Industrial and Labor Relations with planned minors in History and International Relations. Strummer is working with FLIC through the Cornell University

ILR School High Road Scholar program.

Originally from Geneva, they're excited to continue engaging with the Finger Lakes region and support the community that has long supported them.

Prior to FLIC, Strummer worked with unions including Workers United and UFW Brandworkers, and looks forward to bringing their experience in labor organizing and research to the equally-crucial causes of disability rights and independent living, with a particular interest in invisible disabilities and chronic illness. Strummer is passionate about local and global advocacy for workers both with and without disabilities. They are hoping to build a career in labor advocacy and development, with a specific focus on disability and accessible development infrastructure.



Kaylee Bullock is a graduate student pursuing her Master of Social Work (MSW) through the University of Montana. She graduated from Utah State University in 2023 with a bachelor's degree in Psychology, as well as minors in Sexuality Studies and Mental Health Advocacy & Awareness. Originally from Utah, she recently moved to Ithaca with her partner and their four pets, and is excited to become more involved in the community through her first year practicum placement at FLIC. Outside of school and her practicum at FLIC, she works at a local bookstore, and enjoys reading, taking care of her plants, and spending time outside.

Kaylee is passionate about advocating for people who might not feel like they have a voice, or who feel that their voices have not been heard. She believes that everyone has the right to direct their own lives and make decisions about what is important to them, especially when people or systems have told them that their voice doesn't matter. Her passions also include mental health, trauma-informed practice, and creating more accessible and inclusive communities. She is excited and grateful to learn from the FLIC team and the people they serve.



Ten Far-Too-Common Accessibility Mistakes

An accessible parking space that hasn't been cleared of snow. 🌨️

Blocking a curb cut. 🚧

The “accessible” entrance … with a step. 😡

A ramp that leads to a locked door. 🔒

Saying “We'll just carry you up the stairs.” 😡

A wheelchair-accessible restroom used as a storage closet. 🧹

Tables packed tightly together so there's no room to maneuver. 😡

Touching or turning someone's wheelchair without asking. 🧟

Petting or distracting a service dog. 🐕‍🦺

Talking to someone's companion instead of talking to them. 👂

Meet Our CDPAP Staff

Introducing you to our CDPAP (Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program) team! These amazing staff members began this year specifically to help consumers manage their CDPAP services. They also assist people with disabilities and older adults to navigate home safety and accessibility, independent living and self-advocacy skills training, emergency planning, assistive devices, and more.

On the team:
Brenda Pepe, Program Manager
Erin Vallely, Data Support Specialist
Sheldon Meade, Support Specialist
Shelby Piotti, Support Specialist
Lucas Monroe, Support Specialist
Hiroko Takashima, Program Support Specialist

Do you need help? Reach out to **brenda@fliconline.org**. We're here to help you navigate to a successful result!













It's National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Let's spread awareness!

There are five barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities:

- **Lack of Education or Training**

Many individuals with disabilities may not have access to adequate education or vocational training.

- **Transportation Issues**

Difficulty in accessing reliable transportation can prevent individuals from reaching job locations, impacting their employment opportunities.

- **Employer/Co-worker Attitudes**

Negative perceptions and biases from employers/potential co-workers can lead to discrimination, making it harder for individuals with disabilities to be hired or wanting to stay employed.

- **Need for Workplace Accommodations**

Some jobs may require specific adaptations or support that are not readily available, creating additional barriers to employment.

- **Loss of Government Assistance**

Concerns about losing benefits when entering the workforce can deter individuals from seeking employment opportunities.

So what can we do? Let's talk about Disability Inclusion in the workplace:

Disability inclusion in the workplace involves creating an environment where employees with disabilities are valued, supported, and given equal opportunities to succeed. This includes implementing strategies for hiring/retention and fostering an inclusive culture that benefits both employees and the workplace.

What are the key aspects of Disability Inclusion?

- **Inclusive Hiring Practices**

Organizations should adopt recruitment strategies that actively seek candidates with disabilities, ensuring a diverse talent pool.

- **Workplace Accommodations**

Providing necessary adjustments, such as flexible work hours or assistive technologies, can enhance productivity and job satisfaction for employees with disabilities.

- **Training and Awareness**

Regular training for all employees on disability awareness fosters a more inclusive culture and reduces stigma.

- **Employee Resource Groups**

Establishing support networks for employees with disabilities can promote community and provide valuable resources.

Do you want to talk about disability inclusion in your workspace? FLIC conducts free-of-charge accessibility audits for businesses and organizations in Tompkins County.

Our audits focus on key areas that should be evaluated so that all people, including people with disabilities, can navigate your building and environment effectively, comfortably, and safely. Improvements to accessibility will show your clients or customers that you truly care about their well-being.

To schedule your free accessibility audit call 607-272-2433 or email Tracy at **Tracy@fliconline.org**.

10 Easy Ways to Make Halloween More Inclusive



Skip the "Say trick-or-treat!" rule. Some kids may be nonspeaking, shy, anxious or communicate differently. Just accept their outstretched hands as their Halloween plea.

Don't judge the costume. Sensory sensitivities can make masks, makeup and elaborate costumes uncomfortable. No costume? Still deserves candy!

Don't worry about age. Some teens and adults with disabilities enjoy trick-or-treating, too. Halloween fun doesn't need an age limit.

Let kids choose their treat. A child may have an allergy, sensory preference or difficulty explaining why a particular treat won't work.

Offer a non-food option. Stickers, pencils, glow sticks or little toys give kids with allergies or dietary restrictions another choice.

Keep a clear path to the treats. Move decorations, cords and other obstacles so wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility devices have room.

Bring the treats to them. If your porch has steps, consider sitting at the bottom of the steps or setting up your treat station in the driveway.

Turn down the fright factor. Flashing lights, sudden noises and motion-activated decorations can be overwhelming for some trick-or-treaters.

Be patient. It may take someone a little longer to approach your door, choose a treat or communicate. There's no rush.

Make kindness the tradition. You don't need to know whether someone has a disability — or what it is — to make them feel welcome.

🎃 **If someone comes to your door for a treat, give them a treat.**

Accessible Fall Fun Around Ithaca

🍂 **Take in the foliage at Taughannock Falls State Park**
The amazing overlook can be enjoyed without hiking the gorge, and the park also describes the ¾-mile Gorge Trail as relatively flat and accessible.
The overlook has an EnChroma viewer designed to help people with color-vision deficiency experience the fall colors.

🌳 **Go leaf-peeping at Cornell Botanic Gardens**
The gardens around the Nevin Welcome Center and the F. R. Newman Arboretum are beautiful in October.
The Welcome Center is fully accessible, a wheelchair is available on request, and the arboretum has paved paths and numerous places to park near points of interest.

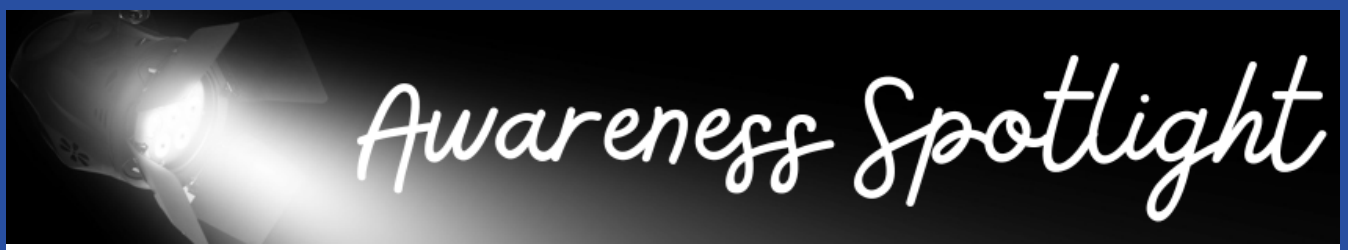
🍁 **Roll, stroll or bike the waterfront**
Cayuga Waterfront Trail is a flat, paved, multi-use trail.
It connects several Ithaca attractions,
so visitors can make the outing as short or long as they want.

🦕 **Spend a rainy fall day with dinosaurs**
Museum of the Earth has wheelchair ramps and accessible exhibits, and it offers Sensory Friendly Hours on the third Sunday of each month as well as Mask Mondays on the third Monday.

🎨 **See some art — and the fall view from Cornell**
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art is free, elevator-accessible,
and has wonderful views over Ithaca and Cayuga Lake.
ASL interpreters can be requested for
lectures, tours and other events.
🦩 **Have a picnic by Cayuga Lake**
Stewart Park has accessible pathways, picnic area
and an inclusive accessible playground.

💦 **Go waterfall sightseeing**
The main falls at Buttermilk Falls State Park can be seen
just a short distance from the parking area.

**Accessibility needs vary and accommodations change, so please call your destination to be sure they can meet your needs.*



October is ADHD Awareness Month

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that can affect attention, organization, impulse control, activity levels, and other parts of everyday life. Although ADHD begins in childhood, symptoms often continue into adulthood and may look very different from one person to another.

One way to recognize ADHD Awareness Month: Check the instructions, forms, or information you give to others and make them more ADHD-friendly — break long directions into smaller steps, use

clear headings or bullet points, and put the most important information first. Small changes like these can make information easier to navigate for people with ADHD — and often for everyone else, too.

Increased Awareness is a Powerful Tool.

Share This Email | Share This Email | Share This Email | Share This Email

Thoughts to Share?

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Video (607) 216-9683
Fax (607) 272-0902
info@fliconline.org

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9:00am-5:00pm
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