NEW YORK NEEDS TO SAVE BILLIONS:

“We have the highest Medicaid rate in the nation, and that’s just not sustainable…. We have to reduce the amount we spend on Medicaid. Let’s redesign the program together, otherwise, I’m just going to have to cut off the top, and that’s not the best way to do it.”

NY Governor Andrew Cuomo

In the wake of a starving economy, and with many finding themselves at the bottom of the survival barrel and struggling even more to make ends meet, the New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL) and the Center for Disability Rights (CDR) concur with Governor Cuomo. Within the scope of their abilities to advance state policy, guard against civil rights violations and ensure quality of life and dignity for seniors and persons with disabilities, the following recommendations for changes are proposed, that would allow New York State to de-institutionalize its constituents and benefit from billions of dollars in savings over a five-year period (doing what’s ethically and morally right and saving money):

• Increase utilization of the Nursing Home Transition and Diversion (NTHD) Medicaid Waiver to transition people from nursing facility placement;
• Establish an expedited enrollment process for the NHTD and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) waivers;
• Implement the Community First Choice Option (CFC);
• Take advantage of the State Balancing Incentive Payments Program;
• Implement a plan to shift some people currently receiving long term services through a Certified Home Health Agency (CHAA) to the less costly Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program;
• Implement a plan to shift some people currently receiving Personal Care Services to the less costly Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program;
• Expand the pool of direct care workers in the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program to match the federal rules for paid family caregivers;
• Better utilize assistive technology to reduce personal care spending.

Excerpted from NYAIL & CDR’s Proposals to Reduce NYS Spending, December 22, 2010. To read the complete proposal, please visit our website.
Welcome New Board Members!

We are delighted to welcome our newest Board Members:

**Linda Muller**

has been the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Hudson Valley Family Health Center since 1991. As champion of the belief that healthcare is a right and not a privilege, the health center offers comprehensive, high quality medical, dental, specialty, behavioral health, and ancillary services to the Mid-Hudson community, with special emphasis on the medically-underserved and those normally without access to care. The vision of the health center is to be the practice of choice in the Hudson Valley. Linda holds a BA in Communications from SUNY Buffalo, and a Master of Science degree in Health Policy and Administration from the Robert J. Milano School of Urban Studies at New School University.

**Susan Stockburger**, currently an attorney in Orange County’s Legal Department, has extensive experience in the legal field, in addition to having worked as an adjunct professor at Marist College in Poughkeepsie and Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, NY. She held positions as Statewide Systems Advocate and Corporate Compliance Officer during her six-year tenure at Independent Living. Susan has a BA from the University of Texas, and earned her JD from Pace University School of Law in 2005.

Personal Care Aide (PCA) Training at IHC

Our sister-company, Independent Home Care, Inc., recently held its first training for Personal Care Aides, qualifying them for employment in the homes of people who are elderly or have disabilities throughout Orange, Ulster, Sullivan and Dutchess Counties. “We are proud to have people who are Deaf, have visual impairments and seniors in our classes,” says Director of Community Services, Helen Portalatin. “One of the things that differentiates IHC from other home care providers is the peer approach: individuals who are personally familiar with the challenges of aging and disability share the perspective of those who receive service and are empathetic toward service recipients.” For more information about PCA training and employment opportunities, call our Human Resources department and speak with Marcy (845) 565-1163 ext. 229.

PLAY BALL!

Frank Gaudioso, manager of the Hudson Valley Lady Vikings softball team, has set his sights on an opportunity to give back, and a goal of raising $2,000 from their annual softball tournament to be held at Mt. Airy Sports Complex in New Windsor, NY July 9-10. Proceeds are earmarked for Independent Living’s Support Group for persons who are blind and visually impaired. Gaudioso lost his sight as a result of an accident when he was sixteen years old. “Loss of sight does not mean loss of vision,” says Frank, who habitually wears a white bracelet with VISION imprinted in Braille.

ILI thanks the Lady Vikings for their support.
Lasting Legacies

We are infinitely grateful to our Board Chair, Matthew Migliaccio, and Vice Chair, Charles A. Walwyn, III for their leadership and ongoing support to help ensure that the programs and services we offer will be perpetually available for people with disabilities. As a first step toward implementing a planned giving program that will ensure support for future generations, Independent Living’s Board of Directors has approved the formation of the Heritage Society.

“Perhaps our greatest obligation as Directors is to promote the well-being of Independent Living in every way we can,” says Mr. Migliaccio, who shares with Mr. Walwyn the distinction of becoming a Founding Member of the Heritage Society.

“A planned gift is a deferred gift made through a trust, will, life insurance policy or retirement plan. Some forms of planned gifts, such as charitable trusts or annuities, provide you with an income,” explains Mr. Walwyn.

For more information about how you may qualify as a Founding Member of the Heritage Society, please contact Development Director, Anne Miller at (845) 565-1162 x202.

ILI Receives Support From Newburgh Rotary Club

The Newburgh Rotary Club recently presented ILI with a check for $350 to support programs and services.

Seated: Doug Hovey, ILI Executive Director, and Cathy McCarty, Newburgh Rotary Club President.  Back Row: Tom Antonucci, ILI Board Member, and Anne Miller, ILI Development Director.

“It is a marvel to me that people give far more attention to repairing results than to stopping the cause.”

(Excerpt from Joseph Malins’ poem, An Ambulance Down in the Valley, 1895.)

To read the whole poem, go to “News” on our website. It’s about a town engaged in a very bitter debate about the best way to deal with the problem of people falling off a cliff high above the city: build a fence at the top of the cliff, or continue to raise funds to park an ambulance down in the valley that was very efficiently hauling people off to the hospital. A lot of the townspeople said, “Look, we’ve always had an ambulance there and it’s worked very well. Why should we raise more funds to build a fence?” But finally common sense hit; someone stood up and said, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” and logic won the day.
Our Mission

Independent Living, Inc., a consumer-directed, cross-disability service and advocacy organization, is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities. Our vision is a barrier-free society with opportunities for all persons to achieve their maximum potential. Programs and resources offered by our agency provide needed support to individuals with all disabilities at literally every stage of life and include services in the areas of: Early Childhood Direction, Personal Attendant Care, Employment, Work Incentives Counseling, Education Advocacy, Deaf and Hard of Hearing advocacy and support, Nursing Home Transition & Diversion Waiver, Traumatic Brain Injury and Medicaid Service Coordination, Access to Home, Long Term Care Planning, Mental Health Case Management, Bridger Services, and Peer Advocacy.

SAVE THESE DATES!

- **Friends of Independence Open House & Tour** 1st Thursday of every month (5:15 – 6:15 pm) at 5 Washington Terrace, Newburgh, NY. (April 7, May 12, June 9)
- **Backyard Barbecue Fundraiser** - Sunday June 5th (Noon – 4 pm) at Thomas Bull Park, Montgomery, NY.
- **Support Group for Individuals with Visual Impairments** - 2nd Tuesday of every month (6-8 pm) at 5 Washington Terrace, Newburgh, NY. Contact Julie at (914) 993-5385
- **Softball Tournament** - July 9-10. Contact Frank Gaudioso: gman915@verizon.net

**Coming in June!**

- **6th Annual Early Childhood Conference**
- **11th Annual Orange County Wellness Conference**
  - further details will be available on our website

January 23, 2011 was declared “Ed Roberts Day” by the US House of Representatives.

Ed Roberts, a great disability rights activist and leader, was considered to be the ‘father’ of the independent living movement. He organized a disability rights coalition at Berkeley College in the late 1960’s which evolved into the first Independent Living Center in 1972. Find out more online at: [http://www.mnddc.org/ed-roberts/index.html](http://www.mnddc.org/ed-roberts/index.html)