

New Visions

www.aspirewny.org

Aspire of WNY (formerly United Cerebral Palsy)

SPRING/SUMMER 2007

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acknowledges
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60th Anniversary

Aspire
OF WNY

Turning Disabilities
Into Capabilities

Universal Mind Adds New Light to the Aspiring Artists Event



Universal Mind, Aspire's rock 'n' roll band, played at DD Day in May. If you missed them in May, or again in June at the Going for the Green Golf Tournament, come see them at this year's Aspiring Artists Art and Wine Celebration on Friday, September 7, 2007.

By now you have most likely heard of Aspire's band, Universal Mind, and hopefully have already heard them play, either at the Going for the Green Golf Tournament or another venue. From the start of iXpress, it had been understood that the premise was to inspire creativity and enable Aspire's individuals to create something concrete to express themselves. Upon talking with individuals, it was realized that a dream of many was to create through other avenues besides visual arts. Thus, "Universal Mind" was formed.

From that small seed that was planted from the desire of a few to share their expression through music, a new plant has begun to grow. Now the group is recognized

throughout the community. They are steadily gaining the respect of the local music community as well.

Motivated by the band "Flame," Universal Mind is continuing to inspire the local community to see past the disabilities, and recognize their talents. Just recently, the band was called upon by the Lewiston Chamber of Commerce. If you haven't heard them, or wish to enjoy their unique sound again, don't miss the opportunity this coming fall. They will be playing at the Aspiring Artists Art and Wine Celebration on September 7 in order to provide participants and patrons with the full "art" experience.

Executive Director's Message



Thomas Szeg

As you read this issue of *New Visions*, Western New York residents are enjoying this mild summer. I am sure each of you is finding ways to enjoy and celebrate the sunshine.

At Aspire, we are busy celebrating as well – most notably by recognizing our 60th anniversary. Aspire has evolved from a group of parents seeking therapies and educational services for their children with CP to an organization now offering a full range of services to people with many differing disabilities.

One thing that has remained constant through the years has been our belief that people with developmental disabilities have a right to realize their full potential and live as independently as possible.

As you review this summer issue, you will read about our first ever formal branding campaign, which was designed with the purpose of strengthening the community's awareness of Aspire while simultaneously advocating for people with disabilities. Featuring individuals currently receiving services from Aspire, the campaign highlighted our compassion and relentless commitment to quality programs. We hope you heard our radio ads, saw a billboard or read one of our print ads.

Lastly, a review of our history shows support by individual community members, corporations and civic groups such as the Junior League. Here you will read about modern examples of the support we continue to receive. Whether it is a van donation by Rich Products, a record 186 golfers playing in our golf tournament, or what we hope will be a record fundraising result at our upcoming Aspiring Artists Art and Wine Celebration, the thread is consistent. Your support makes it possible for Aspire to keep turning disabilities into capabilities.

I hope to see you on September 7th at our art and wine event!

Statewide Organization Honors Local Schools

The New York State Rehabilitation Association (NYSRA) presented school/community partnership awards to two WNY schools.

The Orchard Park Central School District won the NYSRA School Community Partnership Statewide Quality Systems Award. According to Mary Ann Ansell, coordinator of vocational services for Aspire, Orchard Park was honored for providing the most effective service and supports to students in the process of transition. "In addition, Orchard Park has a culture of acceptance of school to work goals and transition services being provided to students with disabilities," she said. The district has collaborated with Aspire for five years.

John Cole, director of special education for Sweet Home high school, won the NYSRA School Community

Partnership Regional Quality Practice Award. He was honored for his work as a pioneer in the field of transition services at Sweet Home and in the local community. "Mr. Cole's leadership has developed a highly individualized and effective transition process at Sweet Home and has encouraged collaboration with community partners to provide innovative services to meet the students' needs," said Ansell. Sweet Home has collaborated with Aspire for nine years.



Paula Kerber (far left), Supervisor of School Projects and Vocational Assessments at Aspire, awards Orchard Park representatives Lynn Czemerynski (starting from left), Cassandra Barnes, and Dennis Fitscher with the NYSRA Award.



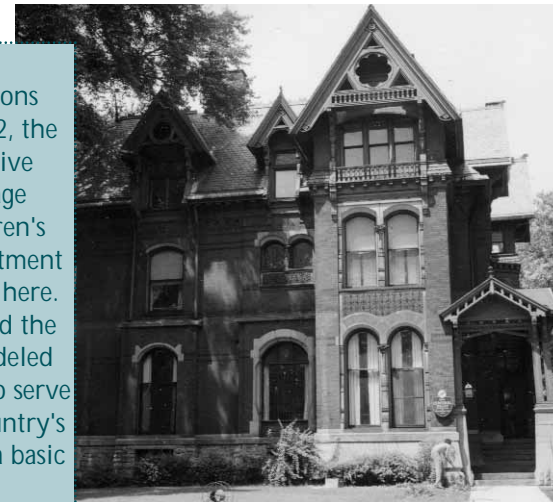
John Cole speaks as he receives his award at the NYSRA Award Ceremony.

CELEBRATE OUR 60TH ANNIVERSARY WITH THEN AND NOW FACTS!



THEN

One of Aspire's earliest locations was 309 North Street. In 1952, the agency expanded its cooperative preschool center to the carriage house playroom of the Children's Hospital cerebral palsy department (Variety Club Clinic) located here. In 1954, the agency purchased the Victorian mansion and remodeled the adjacent carriage house to serve as a school. As one of the country's first such centers, it became a basic model for similar centers elsewhere.



THEN

In 1947, Aspire was founded as the Cerebral Palsy Association of WNY. It later changed to United Cerebral Palsy Association of WNY in 1971.

Now

In 2003, UCPA changed its name to Aspire of WNY. The new name reflects the organization's broad range of service to individuals with all types of developmental disabilities, as well as marks Aspire's new independence.

THEN

In 1947, the Cerebral Palsy Association was started by a small group of parents looking for services and supports for their children who had cerebral palsy.

Now

Today, Aspire serves more than 2,400 adults and children with all developmental disabilities, including: mental retardation, autism, epilepsy, traumatic brain injuries, and other neurological conditions. In fact, less than 35% of those served today have cerebral palsy.

THEN

In 1951, a SUNY Buffalo instructor inaugurated the first preschool for children with cerebral palsy who were five to seven years old. Two classrooms were rented at the Crippled Children's Guild on Delaware Avenue.

Now

Today, our integrated preschool program includes one location at the Aspire Center for Learning and partnerships with several area child care centers. These programs enable children with special needs to receive services close to their neighborhoods.



Now

In 2003, Aspire opened its new headquarters in Getzville. In 2005, Aspire opened its Southern Tier flagship facility in Lakewood. The agency also has major sites in Buffalo, Cheektowaga and Tonawanda, as well as 43 group homes throughout Erie and Chautauqua counties.



THEN

In 1956, the Junior League enabled the Agency to provide social recreation activities for young adults.

Now

Today, nearly 140 people participate each year in community-based recreational and social activities through the Community Integration Program (CIP). Some examples include sporting events, plays, movies, creative expression opportunities and performing arts. This program is largely funded by the United Way.

Giving to Aspire...

We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals and organizations who have made contributions to Aspire with their gifts and pledges.

This listing includes new donations, gifts and pledges of \$50 or more made between January 1, 2007 and July 1, 2007. Although we try to be as accurate as possible, mistakes or omissions may occur. Please accept our sincere apologies. Contact Michael Holley at 716.505.5512 or michael.holley@aspirewny.org to make corrections.

Gifts of \$5,000 or more

Organizations

Dopkins & Company, LLC
Parkview Health Services
Rich Products

Gifts of \$2,500 - \$4,999

Organizations

BlueCross BlueShield
E-3 Communications
Talking Phone Book
Tri-Main Development L.P.
Walsh Duffield Cos., Inc.
Waterbourne Construction Marketing

Gifts of \$1,000 - \$2,499

Organizations

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Buffalo Hospital Supply
The Buffalo News
Buffalo Wheelchair
CARA Medical
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Gifts of \$500 - \$999

Organizations

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Gifts of \$100 - \$499

Organizations

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Aspire of WNY Board of Directors
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TMP Technologies
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Organizations

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Dennis Wilson
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Aspire Launches "Not Created Equal" Ad Campaign



Aspire of Western New York launched a marketing campaign in April featuring children and adults who utilize the 60-year-old non-profit agency's services. The campaign included six print ads, six billboards and one radio spot that could be seen and heard in the Buffalo, Jamestown and Dunkirk/Fredonia markets.

"By taking the idea that 'all men are created equal' and standing it on its head, the ad concept communicates that people with disabilities are not equal to people without disabilities – because they are better in many ways," said Thomas Sy, Aspire's executive director.



The first half of the headline, "We are not created equal," has a negative connotation when combined with an image of a person with a disability. It makes the audience think instantly of the individual's disability. But the rest of the line talks about a superior personal characteristic, such as strength, bravery, intelligence and kindness. It forces people to think about the actual person, not just their disability, which goes hand in hand with Aspire's service philosophy.

The campaign, which was launched as Aspire celebrates 60 years of service, was designed to serve the dual purpose of strengthening the community's awareness of Aspire while simultaneously advocating for people with disabilities. "Our campaign had to capture Aspire's core belief that people with developmental disabilities have a right to realize their full potential and live as independently as possible," said Sy. "That principle is at the heart of our brand identity."

Featuring photographs by Buffalonian Eric Frick, the ads were directed by The Martin Group, which also led Aspire's name change from United Cerebral Palsy of Western New York in 2003. "At that time, we focused on ensuring that individuals we serve, their families and other stakeholders knew us as Aspire, and understood that our service didn't change," said Sy. "The Aspire board of directors determined that it is now time to make certain that the general public knows us."



Brush Up Buffalo!



Aspire employees, family and friends woke up early on Saturday, June 16, to volunteer with Brush Up Buffalo and beautify a house on Buffalo's West Side. Above, Melissa Rager, workforce development manager, works with an extension paint roller. Percy Williamson, director of E&S/Transportation, reaches the higher peaks from the lift.

Step by Step...



Improving Lives, Investing in Hope

For over 25 years, Jaeckle Fleischmann & Mugel, LLP has been proud to support **Aspire** and its mission to improve the quality of life in our community.



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Going for the Green Drives Records this Year!

Every year seems to outdo the previous at the Going for the Green Golf Tournament at Brookfield Country Club. This year the event was held on Monday, June 4. We were able to raise nearly \$106,000 that will be used to improve the quality of life for the individuals we serve and their families.

Michael Holley, Aspire's director of development, stated, "This tournament has meant so much to Aspire, not only because of the money it raises, but because of the friends who have been introduced to Aspire's program and services over the past 17 years. Cumulative giving has exceeded \$1 million and we have a dedicated core of participants who have been with us for most, if not all, of this tournament's existence. We're enormously grateful to our friends at Dopkins & Company, LLP for creating and continuing to coordinate this event for the individuals we serve."

Besides the accomplishment of raising money for our individuals, the day was full of fun and laughter. The winners of the event were The Buffalo News in first place with a score of 57, Waterbourne Construction Marketing in second place with a score of 58, and Maxim Management in third place with a score of 60. The event was a true success yielding a record high number of participants, exciting memories, and funds to help the individuals we serve have a better quality of life!



This year, the Going for the Green Golf Tournament at Brookfield Country Club yielded a record high number of 186 golfers.

TOP SPONSORS:

\$5,000:	Dopkins & Company, LLC	\$2,500:	BlueCross BlueShield
	Parkview Health Services		E-3 Communications
			Talking Phone Book
			Tri-Main Development L.P.
			Walsh Duffield Cos., Inc.
			Waterbourne Construction Marketing

Register Now!

5TH ANNUAL ASPIRE CLASSIC

Monday, August 20, 2007
Chautauqua Golf Club
12 PM Shot Gun Start

For reservations or more information, call Cassandra Taylor at 505-5514.

Aspire Artists Win Jamestown Public Art Commission

Arts Council for Chautauqua Co. is pleased to announce that the Jamestown Public Arts Steering Committee has chosen Aspire's iXpress art program from a field of submissions to design and create art that will be placed in the windows of the Grants Building on Third and Washington Streets in Jamestown. Aspire provides service to more than 250 individuals with developmental disabilities in the Southern Tier.

Arts Council Executive Director, David Schein says, "The Grants Building on Third Street has been vacant for some years and the owner, The Gebbie Foundation, wanted to use its windows to add aesthetic value to downtown Jamestown. At the same time, because the Urban Plan for Jamestown prominently features public art, the Arts Council brought local artists and community members together with the Downtown Jamestown Development Corporation and the City of Jamestown to form the Jamestown Public Art Steering Committee (JPAC). JPAC has created a process to judge projects and get them rolling. A commission for a project in the Grants Building windows was offered by the Gebbie Foundation, and the Arts Council issued a call for artists. Aspire's submission was unanimously chosen by the JPAC panel as the best idea for the Grants Building's windows."

Aspire's arts project will be comprised of six paintings derived and imaginatively interpreted from Jamestown's assets as identified in the Urban Design Plan. The paintings will feature visual representations of the city, the river, the region's people, history and landmarks, as well as the region's arts and heritage.

Aspire's Southern Tier iXpress art instructor, Sara Baker Michalak, says, "The team of artists is very excited about contributing their talents to downtown Jamestown's cultural landscape. It's a great opportunity for the public to gain an appreciation for the talents of people with developmental disabilities."



Artists from Aspire's iXpress art program proudly display sample mockups of proposed artwork for display in the Grants Building Public Art Program. (Front row) Henry Wesley, Derek Kin, Carrie Haas, Derek McCullor, (back row) Josh Weinheimer, JB Murphy and Heather Stevens.

Arts Council Director Schein continued, "Aspire's design is strong and really reflects the nature of the community, its architecture, history and ecology. Another point in their favor is that they are community artists, and it's wonderful when local folks get recognition. We can't thank the Gebbie Foundation enough for providing this commission and for letting us use this project as a pilot project for the Jamestown Public Arts Steering Committee. We hope in the future to create many more projects for Jamestown and in doing so, to offer opportunities for artists to make downtown Jamestown a visually dynamic place."

5th Annual Aspire Classic

The Fifth Annual Aspire Classic Golf Tournament will take place on Monday, August 20, 2007. Dennis Williams, sports anchor for WIVB-TV Channel 4 News, will emcee the four-man scramble tournament at the Chautauqua Golf Club's Hill Course. All proceeds will fund Aspire's programs and services in the Southern Tier.

"Everyday, Aspire helps people realize their full potential and live as independently as possible," said Thomas Sy, executive director. "The Aspire Classic provides a great way for local businesses and community members to partner with us as we respond to growing needs throughout this community."

The tournament will begin with registration and lunch, followed by a 12:00 p.m. shot gun start. Complimentary refreshments will be served on the course. The dinner and awards program begins at 6:00 p.m., following a cocktail hour on the clubhouse patio.

To support the Aspire Classic, please contact Cassandra Taylor at 505-5514 or Cassandra.Taylor@aspirewvny.org. The Aspire Foundation is looking for companies or individuals to take part on many levels. Participants may choose between playing in the event, sponsoring a tee or green, placing an ad in the program book, sponsoring lunch or refreshments, or donating a prize or gift certificate.



Troy Moss (far left), Chautauqua Golf Club Pro, met with Aspire Classic golf committee members. Members include Amy Pring, Norma Jean Angelo, Devin Chimera, Michelle Foti, Derek McCullor and Betsy Dixon-Lang.

Rich Products Donates Van

For more than "60 Delicious Years," Rich's has been defined by innovative breakthroughs and an unparalleled commitment to treating its customers, associates, and communities the same way: *Like Family*. And now Rich's has proven this by donating a wheelchair accessible van to Aspire this June.

Originally the van had been purchased by Robert Rich Sr., Rich's founder and original chairman, who passed away last year. The van is currently valued at \$32,000 and it will be utilized to transport the individuals we serve to and from their jobs, various appointments, social and recreational outings, as well as our day programs.

Thomas Sy attended the giving event, and summed up the affair's atmosphere. "Thanks to companies like Rich's, the individuals we serve lead very normal lives because we are able to provide the resources that their able-bodied peers tend to take for granted, like transportation so they can remain in the workforce. We can't thank Rich's enough for their generous gift and ongoing support."



Above, the van is pictured along with (from left) Thomas Sy, J.B. Brown (Rich's), Kim Rich Lupkin (Rich's), Tom Lesniowski, Mike Cawley, and Brian Townson (Rich's).

Aspire of WNY
www.aspirewny.org
716.505.5500

Thomas A. Sy, Executive Director

Mission

Aspire's mission is to help children and adults with developmental disabilities, cerebral palsy, and conditions with similar personal and family effects live their lives to the fullest in keeping with their informed choices.

Vision

Aspire of WNY is a preferred service provider, collaborator, and employer; a driving force in the community. Aspire envisions full participation of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of community living.

New Visions is published by Aspire as part of its public information and education activities. For comments or corrections, please contact Shannon Welty at (716) 505-5513 or shannon.welty@aspirewny.org.



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