

One-of-a-kind services
for one-of-a-kind people.

Aspire's Mission:

Aspire's mission is to support children and adults with developmental and similar disabilities, helping them to live their lives to the fullest by providing individualized assistance based on personal choices.

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Save the Date

DDAWNY Family
Committee Meeting
7 Community Drive
Cheektowaga, NY
Third Tuesday of the Month
7:00 pm

For event information,
please contact Peggie Giambra
at 716-505-5502 or via email at
peggie.giambra@aspirewny.org

Aspire of Western New York
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WOW Student Isaac Miess, Shauna Uonites (School Psychologist), WOW Student Sydney Stisser, Nicole Baran (Special Education Teacher), WOW Student Natia Garlock – All from Springville-Griffith Institute School District.

2018 World of Work™ Celebration Ceremony

This past June, Aspire of WNY's World of Work™ (WOW) Program held its largest annual Celebration Ceremony at Illo DiPaolo's Restaurant and Banquet Facility. The program began with a single student in 2011 and has blossomed to over 30 students this past year! The WOW celebration ceremony commemorates each student's accomplishments and the growth they've experienced throughout the year. As part of the ceremony, each of our proud students stood up and presented a short speech that they prepared about the WOW program and what it meant to their family, friends, teachers, job coaches, as well as mentors from their internship sites. All WOW students were presented with a certificate of completion to acknowledge their dedication to the program and its values.

This year, each student recorded a short video explaining what they learned during their vocational training, how they felt they grew throughout the year, and what they are looking forward to in their future. Some of the students stated that through repetition and practice they could master certain tasks that they initially perceived to be difficult. Other students recognized that they enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends throughout the year. Each student created and displayed a piece of artwork at the ceremony. The artwork revealed the students' artistic abilities as well as their personal character and strengths. They also incorporated vocational information and vocabulary learned at the weekly WOW workshops. Students also shared

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Student Transition Services

Aspire offers transition services focused on preparing students for future employment through the Individualized Career & Transition Services (ICTS) department. Services can be offered to individuals or groups and to a variety of student populations including Learning Disability, Life Skills, CDOS Local or Regents bound students.

ASSESSMENTS

- **Person-Centered Vocational Assessment:** This non-traditional assessment provides elaborate and creative vocational and transition planning recommendations.
- **Vocational Summary:** This non-traditional evaluation is focused on specific vocational recommendations and supports.

VOCATIONAL SERVICES

- **Job Development:** An individualized community work experience is secured based on a student's area of interest. Can be tailored to student and IEP expectations.
- **Job Coaching:** Individualized coaching at work site or internship to enhance skills and support success.
- **Employer Tours:** Aspire staff facilitate small group tours of local businesses. Students get a firsthand look at job opportunities while being encouraged to consider career options.
- **Employer Presentations:** Aspire facilitates visits by local employers to your classroom to discuss job opportunities, expectations and career growth within their company and business fields.

(WOW) WORLD OF WORK

- The World of Work is an alternative vocational program designed for students with limited vocational experience. The WOW program teaches students transferrable skills in real life work environments. Students are in the community 4 days a week including a two hour instructional job readiness session. Students participate in a career interest inventory assessment.

ProjectSEARCH

- ProjectSEARCH of WNY at Beechwood Continuing Care is an international program. The primary objective is to secure competitive employment for people with disabilities. This is a full work immersion program for students in their last year of high school.

POST-SECONDARY

- **College Support Plan:** Provides student background information and a road map of activities aimed at assisting parents and students with the college search and preparation process. This includes identifying supports on campus via the College Disability Services Office, combined with appropriate questions for families

to ask when evaluating colleges. In addition, the CSP addresses Assistive Technology needs, and provides resources to help students acquire self awareness of their disability and information on how to become better self advocates.

- **Educational Coaching:** Individualized on-campus college coaching eases transition between high school and college. This service is tailored to each specific student.

ONE-YEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH DISTRICTS

- This is a global approach to reach a broad base of students with special needs. Districts choose from our menu of transition services to meet the needs of their student population throughout the school year.

TRAININGS

- Aspire offers Transition related training sessions at the request of the school district for parents, staff, and parent groups. Topics may include the following; Entitlement vs. Eligibility, Social Security/Medicaid Process, Understanding and navigating the system of adult agencies, Determining eligibility for adult services and Post secondary programs including access and criteria.

To learn more or arrange a meeting, contact Paula Kerber at 505-5262 or Paula.Kerber@aspirewny.org.

Aspire Work Skills Program



Brian Jacob has been at the Aspire Work Skills Program for three years. This year Brian worked at the chain restaurant T.G.I. Fridays. During his six weeks at T.G.I. Fridays, Brian worked on job skills such as

the ability to properly weigh foods, counting out exact numbers of food items, sorting food items into pans, and sealing portioned bags. Brian worked hard each day and showed great independence by completing up to eighty bagged food items in a work session, and helping out the Chefs at T.G.I. Fridays. Brian was asked what his favorite task was at T.G.I. Fridays and he said "butterflying the packaged foods (as shown in the photo)." This will be Brian's last year in the program, and he hopes to work in a restaurant as a future career.

Be Good to Your Feet

Studies show that 8 out of 10 people experience problems with their feet at some point in their lives, but only 25% of sufferers seek medical attention. The health of your feet can influence your overall health. In turn, foot problems often indicate other, more serious health issues. Therefore, problems with your feet should never be ignored.

Aspire of WNY's Health Center has operated a podiatry clinic serving adults for more than two decades. Recently, podiatry services have been expanded to accept new podiatry patients 14 years of age and older. The Health Center is serving individuals with disabilities and also members of the community at large.

Doctors of podiatric medicine receive clinical science education and training comparable to that of other medical doctors. This includes four years of undergraduate education, graduate studies, and then two to three years of post-graduate residency training.



Dr. Genau treats Dan in the Podiatry Clinic.

The Podiatry practice at Aspire can assist teens and adults with:

- Skin problems, including warts
- Nail problems, including in-grown nails
- Orthopedic issues
- Gait/walking abnormalities
- Flat feet
- Shoe and sneaker modifications

"I have seen so many advanced orthopedic foot problems that could have been prevented through early intervention," said Dr. Genau. "I encourage teens and young adults to seek care early on, to maximize foot health and function over time."

For more information about podiatry services or to schedule an appointment, please contact the Aspire Health Center at (716) 505-5630. Your feet will thank you!



Dr. Joseph Genau, DPM

Aspire of WNY's Podiatry practice is led by Dr. Joseph Genau, DPM. Dr. Genau received his podiatric medical degree from the renowned William Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine and has practiced at the Aspire Health Center for over 20 years. Dr. Genau, is also a practicing Physical Therapist, is board-certified and serves as a faculty instructor at several local institutions of higher education.

A NEW WAY TO COORDINATE CARE

As of July 1, 2018, the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) made an important improvement to the way supports and services are coordinated for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The new way of coordinating care is an enhanced version of the Medicaid Service Coordination (MSC) program. The MSC program transitioned to Health Home Care Management being overseen by Care Coordination Organizations (CCO). Health Home Care Management uses a holistic approach – coordinating services including medical care, dental care, employment assistance, mental health care, day programs, and more.

Many current Medicaid Service Coordinators have received additional training and are now Care Managers. The Care Managers will work with

individuals to create a Life Plan, replacing the Individual Service Plan. The Care Manager helps to coordinate services across systems, including OPWDD, the Department of Health (DOH) and the Office of Mental Health (OMH), providing one place to plan all services.

Other than MSC, no other services are affected, and families will continue to receive services from the same providers.

ACRONYM CORNER

MSC – Medicaid Service Coordinator

CCO – Care Coordination Organization

DOH – Department of Health

OMH – Office of Mental Health



Above: Chef Fred speaking at the WOW Celebration.

Right top: Joe with his Wegmans mentors Chef Fred and Maggie Leone.

Bottom: The WOW Students End of Year Art Work.



2018 World of Work™ Celebration

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poems and PowerPoint presentations that showcased their individuality. The students completed these digital projects on their WOW iPads which were purchased through a grant from the James H. Cummings Foundation.

This year, 15 students completed the program with vast vocational experiences and a portfolio to take with them on future endeavors. Those who are returning to the WOW program will continue to build their resumes as they work toward expanding their vocational experiences and skill sets. These students will be honored again, next year, at the celebration ceremony for their new accomplishments and achievements. The WOW program's success is built upon the dedication and collaboration between school districts, families, local employers and Aspire staff. All members collaborate to create an environment where students are encouraged to work to their fullest potential and increase their overall independence in the workplace.

To learn more about the WOW program or Aspire's other person-directed employment related programs for High School students contact Paula Kerber, Coordinator of Individualized Transition Services at (716) 505-5262.



Second from bottom: Job Coach Christian Doering assisting Joseph Bugenhagen while giving his speech at the celebration ceremony.

Bottom: Mr. and Mrs. Hallgren and Nick Hallgren.



Comments, Suggestions or Ideas?

If you have any comments, suggestions or a subject you would like to see in an upcoming newsletter, please contact Paula Kerber at 716-505-5262, or email paula.kerber@aspirewny.org.

Want an electronic copy of Transition Times?

Send your email to: paula.kerber@aspirewny.org and we'll send you an electronic version of Transition Times. Thanks for your interest!