

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.

What's Inside!

Another Successful Summer Work Skills Program 1

The Benefits Corner! 1

Discover Technology Today 2

Project Search Celebrates 6th Graduating Class 2

Welcome Aboard to Aspire's New CEO: Renee A. Filip

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

Address: 2356 N. Forest Road
Getzville, NY 14068

Phone: 716-505-5500

Email: info@aspirewny.org

Web: www.aspirewny.org

Aspire of WNY's Success Through Transition™

Another Successful Summer Work Skills Program



John B. was all smiles as he worked at Chili's Restaurant this summer!

The Aspire Center for Learning wrapped up another successful Summer Work Skills Program with a luau-themed party for participating students. Each summer, CFL students have the opportunity to learn new skills and work at a variety of local business partners.

One such student, John B. had the opportunity to work at Chili's Restaurant this summer where he learned how to organize the silverware, wipe down the tables and chairs, and also to greet the patrons as they came into the restaurant. He has worked very hard and is making progress in accurately following directions and even asking for help when he needs it.

When he was greeting customers, one of his favorite approaches was to ask them about their favorite movie or song. Congratulations to all of the hard-working students who participated in the Summer Work Skills program.

The Benefits Corner!

Transitioning for life after school-age years can be a difficult time for navigating many things, one of the trickiest is Social Security Administration's Benefits and Entitlements!

Did you know that Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) can assist with creating a person-centered plan to help you prepare for the world of work and living independently? A Work Incentives Planner (WIP) is certified to assist individuals with learning about work incentives that can help you maximize your earnings while also maintaining Social Security and other benefits that working may not provide. The days spent worrying about losing your benefits because you are working are over and Aspire of WNY has supports in place that can assist you and your family gain a better understanding. This myth has been busted, and the fear of losing benefits should never hold you or your loved one back from the goal of having a career!

Stay Tuned to future Transition Times for more Benefits Advice or contact a Work Incentives Planner today!

To be linked to Aspire of WNY's Work Incentives Planners contact Toni Sullivan, Director of Vocational Services at (716)512-6768 or tsullivan@aspirewny.org

Discover Technology Today

Do you know about Aspire's Technology Today program? Technology Today Tonawanda offers student transitional services designed to aid them in a seamless transition from high school to college or adult life.

Technology Today services include:

- Socializing Activities – Students are encouraged to participate in group activities with their peers to enhance socialization skills.
- Assistance with Homework or Projects
- Structured Day services that follow and aid students in accomplishing the goals as set through their school districts. These Day services can include:
 - A comprehensive evaluation to determine whether a student can benefit from assistive technology.
 - Determining the types of assistive equipment that would work best with a student's learning style.
 - Teaching students how to use and get the most out of adaptive equipment and software. For example, Google Voice Type, Microsoft Voice Recognition, Read&Write, OneNote graphic organizer, and LiveScribe pen.
 - Students are taught techniques that will assist them in achieving success in their next stage of life after high school.

For more information about how Technology Today can benefit you or a loved one, please contact Diane Scheffold, David Dunn, or Kendra Steck at (716) 743-8372.

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!

Project Search Celebrates 6th Graduating Class

This summer, the now-retired Aspire CEO, Tom Sy, was the keynote speaker for the 2019 Project SEARCH program at Beechwood Continuing Care. Project SEARCH is made possible



2019 Project SEARCH graduates

through a partnership between Aspire, Beechwood Continuing Care, Erie 1 BOCES, Access VR, and Summit Center. This unique transition program is housed at Beechwood Continuing Care and provides full-day work immersion with internships right at the Beechwood location. The students, aged 18 to 21, learn work skills, social skills, and much more as they rotate through various job functions. This was the sixth graduating class for Project SEARCH, and three of the graduates were hired by Beechwood at the end of the session.

The upcoming fall Project SEARCH session is still accepting applications. To learn more about Project SEARCH 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.

WELCOME ABOARD TO ASPIRE'S NEW CEO:

Renee A. Filip



Renee A. Filip

On August 1st, the Aspire CEO Search Committee and the Boards of Directors of Aspire and the Aspire Foundation welcomed Renee A. Filip as the new Chief Executive Officer for the agency. Ms. Filip brings a wealth of experience to Aspire of WNY after serving as the Director, Strategic Planning and Communication for the State University of New York at Buffalo and before that as Chief Operating Officer for UBMD Physicians' Group. Her extensive experience creating and implementing strategic plans will be critical as Aspire and the Human Services industry, in general, continue to face regulatory and reimbursement challenges in the shift toward managed care.

Please join all of us in welcoming and wishing Renee much success as she begins this new chapter at Aspire of WNY!