

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

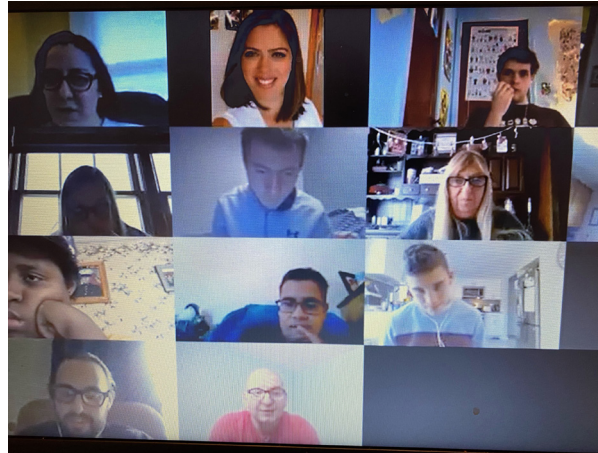
DDAWNY Family
Committee Meeting
7 Community Drive
Cheektowaga, NY
Thurs Tuesday of the Month
7:00pm

For event information,
please contact Shana Caldarella
at 716-505-5512 or via email at
shana.caldarella@aspirewny.org

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Aspire of WNY's Success Through Transition™

WORLD OF WORK EMBRACES NEW LEARNING FORMAT



WOW Program participants continue to learn remotely.

The Year 2020 has been a year like no other. It has been a year of growth, reflection, challenges and inspiration. For Aspire of Western New York's World of Work Vocational Program, it has been a year to demonstrate our adaptability, flexibility, teamwork, and collaboration. Each year the WOW program strives to assist its students in experiencing a true work experience; being

fully immersed in a real world work environment. However, the year 2020 has adjusted the students from being directly in the work environment to having the opportunity to learn more skills and knowledge through remote learning brought directly to them via online learning. The students have fully immersed themselves in adjusting to new normals and utilizing their mastered skills and those they continue to strengthen on their path to success.

The WOW program began the 2020-2021 academic year with a hybrid model of in-person internships and fully remote. With the challenges of COVID-19, new partnerships to have our students gain more knowledge from guest speakers and virtual tours has been expanded. Since the beginning of November the WOW program has become fully remote and has had the honor to partner with the UB Smile Team, KeyBank, The Northland Training Center, Person Centered Services, and Erie County 911 Dispatch, and our partnerships continue to grow.

Until the WOW Program can return to in person services, the students have truly embraced the new format. They are enhancing their technology, communication, problem solving and independent skills.

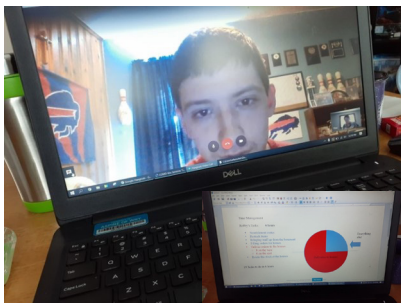
If you have any questions regarding the WOW program or other transition services please contact Paula Kerber, Coordinator of Transition Services, at 716.505.5262 or via email at Paula.kerber@aspirewny.org.

Job Development Continues During Pandemic

Aspire of WNY Community and Independent Living Supports Division continues to provide in person and remote services as a combination of ways to support people on and off the job.

New York State's current Telehealth Guidance allows for our staff to meet with the people they support through several technological modalities. Telephone, Video, and other technology have given us the opportunity to connect with people and continue to work on their goals while providing the needed structure in a person's weekly schedule.

Through Vocational Services, work readiness, job retention, and job development goals can be worked on with an Employment Specialist remotely or as a hybrid of their service delivery. Many of the people we serve through Supported Employment continued working through the recent unprecedented events of the Coronavirus pandemic.



Robert (pictured) has continued to work in his job as a Kitchen Assistant in a local Nursing Home that, during this time, has not allowed visitors. In order to maintain the health

and safety of others, Aspire of WNY's Employment Specialist and Robert made the decision to work on his goals to maintain his job via video. He is seen here on the screen of his Employment Specialist while they meet face to face. His Employment Specialist created a pie chart of Robert's tasks and time as he continues to work on his goals of Time Management and staying focused on the job. Robert's employer stated that he had one of the best days he has had in 5 Years after completing this exercise!

Aspire of WNY Community and Independent Living Supports Division is committed to maintaining continuity of care while also ensuring that needed safety measures are being consistently implemented.

Please contact Aspire of WNY Intake and Outreach at 716-838-0047 or Intake@aspirewny.org

Aspire's Health Center: Serving the Community

Aspire of WNY's Health Care Center provides primary and specialty medical care, along with therapeutic services to adults 18 years of age and older. Providers, clinical support staff and therapists at the health center have extensive experience in provision of services to people with developmental and complex disabilities and the practice is open to the community at large. Services are currently being provided in person or virtually, based on clinical judgment and patient need.

Aspire of WNY's Health Center services include:

- **Primary Medical Care:** The complex needs of each patient are considered at every visit, whether acute or routine, with a focus that supports the patient's care plan as it relates to wellness, functional health, and emotional well-being.
- **Podiatry:** A podiatrist is on staff to diagnose and treat disorders of the feet.
- **Physical Therapy:** Services are provided to maximize functioning, reduce pain and promote good health.
- **Occupational Therapy:** Intervention is designed to promote, maintain and/or restore functional independence in daily living skills.
- **Speech Therapy:** Clinicians provide evaluation and treatment of a full range of communication and swallowing disorders.
- **Mental Health Counseling:** Assessment and treatment services are designed to help people cope with, or overcome, life's traumas, emotional stressors or other mental health challenges.
- **Augmentative Communication evaluations and intervention:** Technology offers a 'voice' to those who have lost the ability to speak or are difficult to understand.
- **Seating, Positioning and Mobility evaluations and intervention:** Tailored seating systems can manage medical symptoms, while providing security and support to individuals. Devices such as wheelchairs, standers, gait trainers and bicycles promote independence and mobility.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact 716-505-5630.

Developing Skills and Independence

The Community and Independent Living Supports division has continued to provide face to face services for people and families through the pandemic. Safety measures have been implemented to keep everyone as safe as possible. Additional training, as well as supplies for personal protection and sanitization, have been provided for all staff.

The people participating in our services often have goals to increase their independence and develop habits for a healthy lifestyle. Eric (pictured) has continued working toward these goals during this time of social distancing. With support and encouragement from both his Self-Directed Services and Traditional Community Habilitation staff he has been



completing some basic at home workouts and learning to cook healthier meals.

Aspire's Respite and Vocational services also continue to be provided in person for those that need this support as the Community and Independent Living Supports division is committed to maintaining continuity of care while also ensuring that needed safety measures are being consistently implemented.

Technology Today Maintains Service Delivery

Aspire of WNY's Technology Today division continues to provide services to individuals in a combination of ways. Our structured day habilitation staff are currently providing sessions to work on goals with individuals via Zoom sessions. We are currently providing a technology session and a socialization session. The socialization session allows individuals to virtually gather with peers that they normally would interact with at the Day Hab. We also have staff conducting technology sessions where the staff will teach individuals about the technology goals that they have. This can consist of learning emails, researching information using Google, creating projects, etc.

Aspire's Technology Today is also currently providing services to ACCES-VR vouchers through a combination of methods. We are currently providing training sessions via remote learning through the individuals' platform choice. This can be Zoom, Teams, etc. Technology Today is also conducting Assistive Technology Evaluations in person at our office in Tonawanda. Protocols are in place to protect from Covid. Some of these measures include the screening of individuals at the door to include temperatures, everyone maintains the wearing of a face covering, all evaluations are conducted in a specific office, 6-foot social distancing is maintained during the interview process, and during the equipment trial phase gloves and hand sanitizer are offered.

Aspire of WNY's Technology Today is committed to maintaining continuity of care and services while ensuring that needed safety measures are being implemented.

Please contact Aspire of WNY Intake and Outreach at 716-838-0047 or Intake@aspirewny.org.

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!