



2021

IMPACT REVIEW

ASPIRE LEADERSHIP

Welcome to Aspire's 2021 Annual Year in Review!



2021 was an extraordinary year. In one sense, we found ourselves still living life in the middle of a pandemic. We continued to adjust and modify our programs, processes and procedures as needed. There was still a great deal of uncertainty as our region's COVID numbers fluctuated throughout the year. However, 2021 was also a year of validation. We were steady. We had gone through the initial uncertainty of the onset of the pandemic. Our initial decisions proved to be the correct ones to make. This confirmation emboldened us to be more comfortable with the unknown and take advantage of all the opportunities and "coming together" that DID occur.



We reengaged our strategic planning process and held many meetings with a variety of constituents. We challenged ourselves to be innovative and work not only "IN the business, but ON the business". We were Zooming everywhere. And while Zoom allowed us to provide remote services and supports when needed, we never lost sight of the importance of getting together, in person, as much as possible and as safely as possible. The Aspire of 2021 looked different than what it did in 2020 and its preceding years. However, it was no less remarkable. We got people vaccinated! Students graduated! Individuals and staff went back to work! We golfed! We celebrated our iXpress program, in person! We embraced every opportunity to continue the extraordinary trajectory of supporting people with IDD, just as we have for nearly 75 years.

WE MADE AN IMPACT!

In this report, you will see the brilliant work of the individuals we support and the staff who support them!

Thank you and be well,

Renee A. Filip
President & CEO

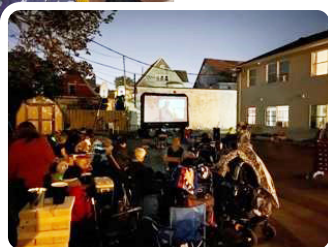
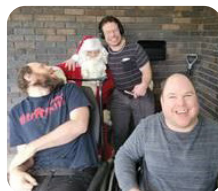
John Earshen
Board Chairman

OUR IMPACT

Residential Opportunities

WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS

Aspire's mission is to support individuals with developmental and similar disabilities, helping them to live their lives to the fullest by providing individualized assistance based on personal choices. Residential Opportunities is at the center of this mission; providing 24/7 support to our individuals; even during a pandemic. 2021 saw the continuation of COVID-19, causing disruptions to the daily life of our residents, staff, and managers.



Director Kelly McDermott challenged sites to showcase “COVID conscious” gatherings and activities to highlight all the positive events that were still taking place throughout the division in 2021. We called this initiative “What’s happening in Residential?” These person-centered events brightened the lives of the participants, and hopefully spread some joy and light to everyone throughout the Agency and in our Facebook family.

Many events were collaborations between sites including a “Labor Day Luau” at Oakwood with friends from Crandon and Ivyhurst and a “Drive-in Movie night” at South Park with their friends from Cayuga Creek. We also showed our support for the wider community with a Pride Parade on the Court at Kingsbridge, and took inspiration from the “Going for the Green” golf tournament by hitting the driving range at West Main.



These experiences gave us the opportunity to pause and reflect; realizing that we truly can, and do, make the most of what is handed to us every day. Our resilience and partnership with one another is clear in these photos.

OUR IMPACT

Agency Outreach

THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

Until 2021's program, the Spirit of Giving Program was affectionately known at Aspire as the Giving Tree. Over its more than two-decade history, The Giving Tree has consistently provided assistance to individuals supported by Aspire and their families in need during the Holiday Season. This has helped Aspire ensure that the individuals and families we support are able to celebrate the holidays; many of whom would not be able to do so without this program. Since 2018, the program has sustained significant program updates and efficiencies to better align with Aspire's Mission, Vision and Values. Most significant is the program name change to Spirit of Giving for the 2021 program.

The other notable milestone the program experienced for the 2021 season, due to growing demand and needs in the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) community, was an expansion, for the first time, of program eligibility to individuals and their families outside of Aspire (individuals were required to produce eligibility for services with the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities- OPWDD).

Aspire's 2021 Spirit of Giving program raised \$5,370 and provided gifts to over 60 individuals and their families. The program recipients responded with overwhelming gratitude when they received their favorite crafts or games, warm winter clothes, various household items, or gift cards to their favorite store. The excitement was high!

The success of the Spirit of Giving Program would not be possible without the heartfelt and generous support of all our donors and "Secret Santas". We express deep gratitude for helping to make the holidays a little brighter for these deserving individuals and families, each and every year.



OUR IMPACT

Community & Independent Living Supports

DREAMS COMING TRUE



This is Sean, showing off his first cooked meal in his very first apartment: Linguini Alfredo with broccoli!

Sean's journey to fulfilling his dream of living on his own began with Aspire in 2014. Sean had just finished high school and he began receiving Community Habilitation services while he lived at home with his family. Aspire's Community Habilitation staff helped him work on learning and becoming more independent with his essential household skills, cleaning, cooking, social skills, and how to navigate his neighborhood and community. These learning experiences helped Sean discover and sort out his personal interests, skill sets, and achievements.

A year later, Sean was enrolled in Aspire's Community Based Prevocational services. He was provided with several community work experiences as part of his career discovery path. His Community Habilitation and Community Based Prevocational staff were able to work with him as a team to ensure continuity of supports and experiences were provided for optimal new adult learning.

In 2019 Sean decided he was ready for more responsibility and decision making. He transitioned from Community Habilitation to Aspire's Self-Directed Services program where he could manage his service budget and hire his own staff. He began to make important decisions regarding his support services and the staff who worked with him. His focus was to work on better managing and organizing his daily schedule, social skills, being healthy, pursuing hobbies, and improving safety skills at home and in his community.

As part of his pursuit for increased responsibility, Sean made another transition in March of 2021: from the Community Based Prevocational services to ACCES-VR. He has an Aspire Job Coach that provides ongoing employment supports through Aspire's Supported Employment program. Through this program, Sean was successful in obtaining a part time job at Allied Industries in Jamestown, New York, where he trims threads off manufactured items.

Sean didn't stop there. In June of 2021 he met with his support team to discuss his budget and explore rental subsidy scenarios and options. After searching with his staff and family, he found the perfect apartment and moved out on his own in November of 2021.

Sean continues to have his family, the support team he has built, and his self hired staff to circle around him to ensure he continues to be successful in living his dream on his own and remains a contributing member of his community.



YOUR IMPACT

Over the Years

GENEROSITY OF OTHERS IS IMPACTFUL

Aspire of Western New York, Inc. (formerly United Cerebral Palsy Association of Western New York) has been fortunate to have had many generous and supportive family, friends, and partners over the span of our 75 years.

From the very beginning, the Junior League of Buffalo offered their assistance to Mrs. Mary Moss, the mother of Sherman Moss, a child diagnosed with cerebral palsy. With their assistance, Mary mobilized friends, family, and other parents of children with cerebral palsy to form the Cerebral Palsy Association of Western New York on September 19, 1947.

While the organization was growing, the Junior League of Buffalo continued to be a supportive partner. They assisted in educating the community on cerebral palsy's meaning and treatment methods, as well as lobbied for state legislation. In 1952, children with cerebral palsy were assured of permanent transportation facilities when the Junior League of Buffalo, Inc. presented the Cerebral Palsy Association of Western New York with two new green station wagons. Moreover, driver maintenance costs were slashed considerably when hundreds of NFT bus drivers volunteered to drive the wagons on the four daily runs to and from the Cerebral Palsy clinic and the Crippled Children's Guild.



The Junior League of Buffalo wasn't the only organization to support us. Over the years, transportation services were ensured with the aide of donors, such as the Amvets Niagara Frontier Post 26 of North Tonawanda, the CPA of WNY PTA group, New York State Elks Association, Toyota Team of Western New York, and the Parents and Friends of the United Cerebral Palsy Association Adult Club.

Early partnerships were formed with the Crippled Children's Guild (now the Children's

Guild Foundation), Children's Hospital, University at Buffalo, Niagara Vocational Rehabilitation Center, and Buffalo State College, all of which aided our organization to strengthen and expand the services we offer to individuals with disabilities.

Several other partnerships were made over the years, such as Walsh Duffield, Parkview Health Services, Accessium Group, Toshiba Business Solutions, The Bonadio Group, Rich Products, Independent Health, Highmark BlueCross BlueShield of WNY, Enterprise Fleet Management, Wegmans Food Market, Inc., and many, many more have also continually offered their support in the form of donations and sponsorships.



Family members and friends have held fundraising events in many forms, some of which include raffles, cookbook sales, carnation sales, concerts, telethons, car washes, dances, fashion shows, bake sales, and more, to ensure our organization has the funds for the equipment necessary to safely and effectively provide services to their loved ones.

Due to the support from all of YOU, Aspire has been able to continue to provide high quality services to individuals with developmental disabilities for the past 75 years. With your continued support, we hope to continue for another 75 years!

On behalf of the more than 3,500 children and adults we support, ***thank you!***

2021 Donors

For a listing of all of our generous 2021 donors, please visit our website at <https://www.aspirewny.org/donors/>

SUPPORT ASPIRE

SCAN TO MAKE AN IMPACT

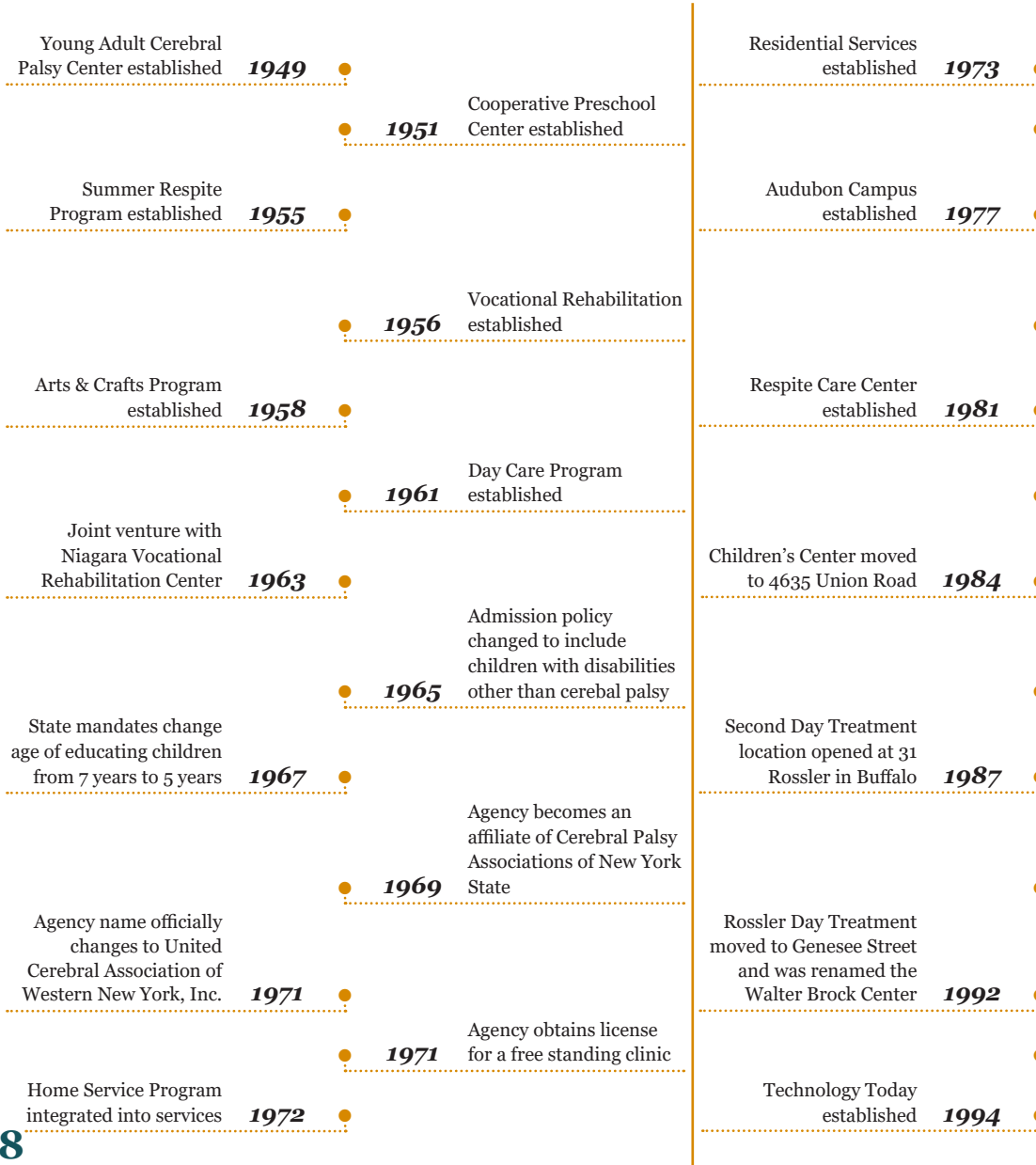
You can make an IMPACT today by supporting Aspire and the individuals we serve. Scan the QR code for a hassle-free donation experience.



Making an IMPACT

Sherwood Moss was born March 25, 1945, to Mr. and Mrs. David Moss. A year-and-a-half Moss family as they lovingly cared for their son. Mrs. Mary Moss was fortunate to have a organization aimed at helping the community and promoting volunteerism – who wanted to form the Cerebral Palsy Association of Western New York on September 19, 1947.

Below is a timeline of integral events within the agency’s history.



CT for 75 years

Later, Sherwood was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. There was little assistance for the group of friends in the Junior League of Buffalo – an educational and charitable women's to help. Mary mobilized friends, family and other parents of children with cerebral palsy

<p>1975 United Cerebral Palsy Employees' Union voted in</p>	<p>Conversion of Day Treatment to Day Habilitation Services 1999</p>	<p>1999 Conversion of residential ICFs to IRAs</p>
<p>1979 Day Treatment established</p>	<p>Agency name change to Aspire of Western New York, Inc. 2003</p>	<p>2003 Administrative Building completed at 2356 North Forest Road in Getzville</p>
<p>1983 Adult Care Center at 7 Community Drive established</p>	<p>Administration Building completed at 140 Mall Boulevard in Lakewood 2005</p>	<p>2015 Major renovation and expansion of Center for Learning completed</p>
<p>1984 Cerebral Palsy Foundation of WNY, Inc. founded</p>	<p>Community and Independent Living Supports established 2018</p>	<p>2018 Agency Outreach and Central Intake established</p>
<p>1988 After School Program established</p>	<p>Aspire celebrates 75 years of making an IMPACT! 2022</p>	
<p>1993 Children's Discovery Corner established</p>		



In 2003, because the agency supported people with all imaginable disabilities and was helping them strive to achieve their greatest capabilities, the agency felt a new name that more fully represented the spirit of the organization should be developed.

On March 14, 2003, the agency became known as Aspire of Western New York, Inc.

OUR IMPACT

Day Services

COLLABORATION BRINGS RECREATION

An important part of Aspires Day Services program is to provide the participants in the program with opportunities for recreational activities and supported volunteer opportunities that occur mostly in the community. The pandemic eliminated many of those opportunities.

Through a collaboration between Amherst Youth and Recreation and Aspire of WNY, along with monetary support from Amherst South Rotary, Aspire's Co-Op and Supported Volunteering Lifestyle Enrichment programs were able to participate in a recreation program utilizing Amherst Recreation facilities.

Amherst Youth and Recreation Staff planned weekly activities, affording Aspire participants the opportunity to try new sports, play team games, and just have fun. They were also able to have an ice time experience at the Ice Rink.



Celebrating 75 Years

A dream come true for young adults!



In September of 1949, the Cerebral Palsy Association of Western New York opened the Young Adult Cerebral Palsy Center, allowing young men and women access to social recreation.



Hal Herring of the Buffalo Bills autographs a football for members of the Young Adult Group of the Cerebral Palsy Association, who were guests of Bills in September 1949.

YOUNG ADULT CENTER

OUR IMPACT

Testimonials

The bond you create with the individuals is amazing.
~ *Aspire Employee*



School makes me happy. I like drawing.
~ *Olivia Seader*



Day Hab helps me get out of the house and work on my movies, see my friends and talk sports. Art helps me express myself and continue learning. School is fun as far as the plays and stories and I like to paint things that my mom taught me to do.
~ *Joseph "Collen" Shaw*

Having my own apartment without a roommate is the best thing Aspire has ever done for me.
~ *Aspire Resident*

I enjoy the people I work with and the people I work for.
~ *Aspire Employee*



I like Tech Today because computers are very important in looking out for my future.
~ *Jacqui Blake*

Meeting new people and socializing better is one of the things I like about going to program. While volunteering I like doing all different projects and not always the same thing.
~ *Joe Chwojdak*



TECHNOLOGY ENABLES INDEPENDENCE

We would like to introduce you to a very special little girl. Her name is Nathalie. Nathalie is 11 years old and enjoys watching TV shows, shopping, sending emails, going outside to play, and going on vacation - all things children her age enjoy. The difference? Nathalie has cerebral palsy-spastic quadriplegia.

Nathalie came to the Aspire Center for Learning in September of 2016 when she was only 5 years old. She struggled with control of her arms and legs and needed multiple people to help her safely transfer into her equipment. She enjoyed art activities but needed hand over hand assistance to participate.

Over the last 6 years, with the support of her Teachers, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and Speech Therapists, as well as the rest of the students and staff at Aspire, Nathalie has learned to use a variety of types of technology to help her be more independent by actively participating in all sorts of tasks throughout her school day.

Nathalie began learning to improve her control of her arms while practicing feeding herself whipped cream in Occupational Therapy. She learned to paint using a specially designed paint brush allowing her to use her head to control the movements of the brush and create gifts for her family and friends.

Nathalie has a limited number of word approximations she can physically produce. To supplement her limited speech, she learned to use a new “eye gaze” system to access and control a communication device. Using the Eye-Gaze, she could control the cursor on the device by moving her eyes. It allowed her to navigate a few pages initially but has now opened her world to many, many pages, allowing her to interact and explore all sorts of information and activities. These communication devices allow Nathalie to talk about her favorite TV shows, vacations, family, and friends. She loves to tell us silly things about her dolls and her life at home.



She loves to be able to make her own choices of music and tv shows. One of her favorite technology devices allows her to control lights using her speech device to activate Alexa. Eye gaze devices have most recently allowed her to send and receive emails to her friends, family, therapists, and teachers.

Nathalie's primary form of mobility is her wheelchair, but she doesn't let that stop her from participating in the tasks she loves. She also has a gait trainer, which she enjoys using at home and at school, allowing her to go outside for walks, participate in family activities, and even for dancing at Aspire's Prom. Nathalie also loves to ride her adapted bike and go for "runs" with her mom in her adapted stroller. Nathalie began training to use a power wheelchair in 2019 with her physical therapist. She uses a "head array switch control" to move her chair. At first Nathalie began learning how to control her speed to go forward. She quickly learned how to use the head array switch to stop and turn the wheelchair on her own. After that, she was off! This new freedom of movement was very motivating to Nathalie. It has allowed her increased independence to explore her world. Nathalie recently received her very first power wheelchair and is practicing her driving skills in therapy with a goal of being able to use it at home and in the community.

Nathalie's journey with technology doesn't end there. Nathalie uses both a knee and head switch to control games on the computer at school as well as her adapted video game console at home. She has started to learn to use a "mouse emulator" as well, which is built into her new wheelchair. During the shutdown of in-person learning, Nathalie still participated in her therapies using her switches to control educational websites and games on the computer during her Zoom sessions.

Nathalie is an inspiration to many other students who are learning to use some of the same technology that she uses. While Nathalie's motor skills may be impaired, she doesn't let that stop her from learning and participating in the things she loves!



Nathalie controls the direction of her wheelchair with sensors on the right, left, and back of the headrest.

IN MEMORIAM

Individuals served by Aspire who passed away in 2021

Marie Katherine Annarino
Joshua Berry
Grace Cali
Anna Fanara
Dorothy Elaine Florjancic
John Goral
Mary Ellen Harig
Edward James Hejza
Adam Hoy

Harry E. LaVoice
Salvatore James Matteliano
Viola McFadden
Clarence A. Steinbach
Deborah Tornabene
Antonio Underwood
Lisa VanVoorhies
Sharlene Williams

“Patience”

- Jennifer Knapp

Do not assume you know what I want
Have patience

I neither speak nor walk alone
I know frustration
Like the dying of my battery
Time running out,
Dwindling moments for final words
Those last words
Every time it starts to go
And then what should I choose to say?

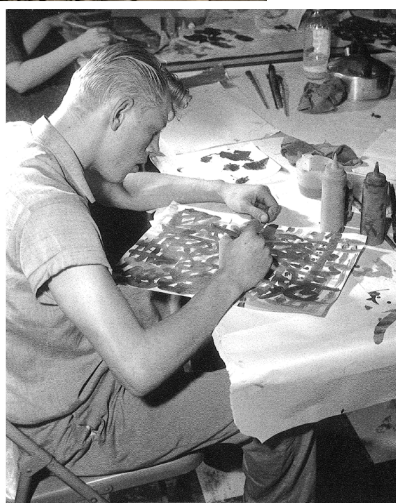
Have patience

Because this way of being, these differences of mine
I go through life seeking patience
from everyone and from me

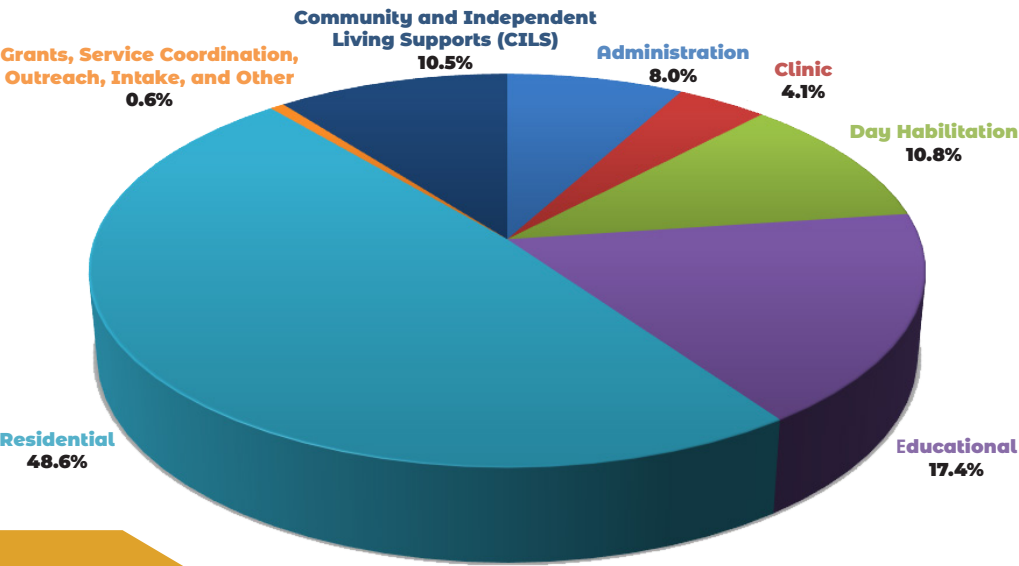
For once I'd like to know I'm not the only one
The other me might be revealed,
As if in an excavation
There,
Myself in ancient rock
Gradually ongoing to the surface

Have patience

This is not yet,
And may never be
But my world is still mine for the taking



2021 FINANCIALS¹



Aspire of WNY & Affiliated Entities – Results of Operations Per Audited Financial Statements

Revenue	2021
Program Service Revenue ²	\$72,597,361
Government Grants	\$1,092,800
Fundraising	\$511,288
Other	\$1,286,513
TOTAL REVENUE	\$75,531,069

Expenses	2021
Administration.....	8.0%
Clinic.....	4.1%
Day Habilitation.....	10.8%
Educational.....	17.4%
Residential.....	48.6%
Grants, Service Coordination, Outreach, Intake, and Other.....	0.6%
Community & Independent Living Supports (CILS).....	10.5%
TOTAL REVENUE	100.0%

¹ The above information was developed by management based on information in the audited financial statements.

² 99% Federal and New York State Governmental Funding



For more information about our programs and services:
(716) 838-0047 | www.aspirewny.org



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