

Rapid Transition Housing Success

In December 2018, CDR became one of two new Rapid Transition Housing (RTH) program locations. Previously the program was offered in New York City and Long Island. The program is funded by the Department of Health through the New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL). NYAIL is also our contractor for the Open Doors Transition Center, so the RTH program is a perfect addition to our nursing facility transition services.

CDR's RTH program covers Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates counties. We have a team of three staff, including the Housing Manager, Housing Specialist, and Independent Living Specialist who work together to help find permanent housing for people with disabilities who are high-need Medicaid beneficiaries and unstably housed. The Housing Specialist assists with gathering all referral documentation and submits it to NYAIL for an eligibility determination. Once approved by NYAIL, the person is enrolled in the program and connects with the Housing Specialist, who works extremely well with landlords to find housing. When housing is secured, inspection of the unit has been completed, and the lease is signed, the individual receives a rental subsidy modeled after the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher paying 30% of the rent. Since the beginning of this program, our team has assisted seventeen people into homes of their own, including two people who were awaiting organ transplants. We are currently working with one participant awaiting a lease signing, and have ten people we are working with to find new homes.

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Maureen, one of the participants, enjoys her first day in her new home after being in a nursing facility. When Maureen was asked "what does RTHP mean to you?" she responded, "found me my apartment."

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Dear Friends,

Our work is more important than ever during the coronavirus pandemic. As congregate settings such as nursing homes have proven to be death traps for disabled people, the need to get people out and into safer settings is even higher.

Many other things have been going on here at CDR. I invite you to catch up on our programs and services, and read about our featured staff member.

Please contact us to learn more about CDR and how you can get involved. Stay tuned for additional information and updates on our work relative to the coronavirus.

Center for Disability Rights works to ensure the full integration, independence and civil rights of people with disabilities and seniors in the community.

Bruce E. Darling

CDR's Staff Highlight: Reginald Faison

The heart of the work of the Center for Disability Rights stems from our employees being people with disabilities themselves. In addition to our advocacy work, CDR's Independent Living Services have a profound day-to-day impact upon our greater Rochester community.



Reggie Faison takes a brief respite from his work.

The New York Association on Independent Living administers a program in selected parts of New York state, working in conjunction with the Center for Disability Rights and other Independent Living Centers. The Rapid Transition Housing Program (RTHP) provides a rental subsidy and supportive housing services to residents using Medicaid and who meet other medical and referral criteria.

Our RTHP Housing Specialist, Reginald Faison, is an instrumental figure toward our organization's successes with nursing home transitions and diversions. Reggie was connected to CDR through our Peer Mentor Training program. Initially hired as a Transition Coach, he was quickly promoted to his current role, and has clearly demonstrated his commitment toward making a positive impact toward obtaining housing for people with disabilities. Before coming to CDR, he worked at Action for a Better Community, and as a health educator/transitional planner for the New York State Department of Corrections.

Nursing home transitions and diversions allow people to be home with their families and loved ones. Given the coronavirus pandemic, it is especially important to recognize our employees, such as Reggie, who create that impact toward increasing the personal safety for people with disabilities.

Thanks to our 2019 sponsors:

Thank you!



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CDR would like to thank Fidelis Care and Wegmans for their ongoing support for our 2019 ADA celebrations and Gala.

Walmart 

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for a fun, safe, & fully-accessible Halloween!

All in-person events are on hold during the coronavirus pandemic.

Virtual events will be announced on our webpage and social media.

Highlight: The SSP Program

CDR offers the only Support Services Program (SSP) for Deaf-Blind individuals in New York State. SSP is a specialized service which provides trained staff to offer communication and mobility assistance.



Launched ten years ago, SSP was intended to provide vital services, as well as be a model for future state-funded programs. CDR continues to advocate at the local and state level for a permanently funded program in NY. In addition, we have also built a definition of support service needs in the Disability Integration Act that would require states to provide these services to Deaf-Blind individuals instead of forcing them into institutions or isolating them in the community.

We have provided SSP for the past decade and will continue to do so. We currently serve 22 participants and have a growing waitlist of people who would like to receive these services. Our 10 SSP staff assist with necessary daily living activities such as grocery shopping, medical appointments, and banking needs. With a permanent funding stream we could serve more people and support socialization activities which are even more critical during this pandemic to reduce situations of isolation.

For more information about the program or to make a referral, please contact Brooke Erickson at 585-286-2021.

Advocacy Update

As the Center for Disability Rights has been focused on responding to the coronavirus pandemic, our advocacy and public policy work has continued. Examples include:

Supporting DRNY's lawsuit demanding that Governor Cuomo provide communication access to Deaf New Yorkers by including ASL in the television feed for his press briefings.

Opposing planned cuts to the CDPA program and to Medicaid in New York state.

Responding to the HEROES act (legislation passed in the U.S. House, in response to the coronavirus pandemic) by:

Supporting the addition of language from the Disability Integration Act when it goes to conference.

Opposing the HEROES act language that would allow the governor to move forward with devastating Medicaid cuts.

Want to join us on our Advocacy Trips? Call us at 585.546.7510 or email us at advocacy@cdrnys.org to join our Advocacy Group!



Are you interested in getting involved with us?

You can help by:

- **Volunteering**
- **Donating**
- **Attending Events**

You can join our:

- **Teams**
- **Advocacy Efforts**
- **Committees**

Ask us how you can get involved!

We are not-for profit organizations working to keep people with disabilities living independently in the community, with help from services and support they may need.

Contact Advocacy



(585) 546-7510
Ask for Advocacy!



advocacy@cdrnys.org
Email Our Team!

**Get Involved
With Us Today!**

Upcoming Board Meeting

August 20, 2020
1:00pm-3:00pm
497 State Street
Rochester, NY 14608

All board meetings will be conducted on Zoom.

Newsletter Accessibility:

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter in an alternate format, including:

- Braille
- Large print

Contact Linda Taylor:
Ltaylor@cdrnys.org



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FEATURES

Rapid Transition Housing Success

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Our RTH program Independent Living Specialist provides wrap around services to each participant. Once someone moves into a new home, the Independent Living Specialist gives them each reliable, long-term support as they gain independence, and also supports people with developing and managing independent living goals. The Independent Living Specialist also provides links to community services and resources. All of these services have proven to be collectively vital for successful community reintegration and living.



For more information about referral and eligibility, contact:

Housing Manager: Mike Townsend, (585) 546-7510
Housing Specialist: Reginald Faison, (585) 546-7510
Independent Living Specialist: Kayla Weston, (585) 546-7510

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