



Beilby Retires Advocacy Reins; Continues Community Activism

After eight years of reigning ATI's system advocacy efforts, Mary Beilby officially retired as the ATI Systems Advocate on December 31, 2007. Even so, she remains a staunch disability rights advocate as she stewards local affordable and accessible housing efforts.

Beilby joined ATI in November 2001 as the agency's first and, until January 1, only Systems Advocate. During her eight year stint, Beilby established ATI's systems advocacy program and built a local disability advocacy network that continues to act on local, state and federal issues.

Beilby's efforts have resounded in the ears of many, whether it be by letters to the editor in the *Cortland Standard*, public service announcements on local radio stations, or by her meetings with local, state and federal leaders to advocate for people in Cortland who have disabilities.

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Disability Awareness Workshops at Cortland Jr. Sr. High School

In December and January, ATI facilitated 27 disability awareness workshops for nearly 1,300 students at Cortland Jr. Sr. High School (CHS). Mary E. Ewing, Fran Pizzola, Chad W. Underwood, Aaron Baier, and Karen Sanford participated in the workshops, which aimed to educate youth on the history of the independent living movement and the monumental nature of the American with Disabilities Act. Perhaps more importantly, the sessions sought to increase awareness of disability issues, stigma and etiquette.

ATI conducted the workshops for all students in grades 7 through 12 during their respective Social Studies, Economics, and History classes. Each workshop began with a 10-minute video clip of the 1990 signing of the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act by George H. W. Bush and concluded with an opportunity for students to ask questions of the panel members. In the middle, the panel offered a brief review of significant disability milestones from the past century along with evidence of how the ADA has changed society as a whole.

Aside from the video, students seemed most engaged when the ATI panel members spoke about their disabilities, how having a disability has impacted their life, and the accommodations that have enhanced their ability to pursue dreams.

ATI is a collaborative partner with the Cortland Enlarged City School District in its Model Transition Program (MTP), which began in September 2007 and will run through 2010. In addition to the Disability Awareness workshops, ATI has facilitated two other workshops at CHS for approximately 90 special education students. Those workshops focused on independent living, problem solving techniques, resources available in the community, citizenship, being active in the community and how to advocate for oneself.

ATI Urges State Leaders to Act on Disability Legislation

On January 28, ATI staff traveled to Albany, NY, to join more than 300 other disability advocates from across the state to advocate for action on legislation that would improve the quality of life and safeguard the civil rights of New Yorkers with disabilities. ATI was one of 40 independent living centers from across the state to participate in the NY Association on Independent Living- (NYAIL) sponsored Legislative Day activities that aimed to educate state leaders on pressing disability issues heading into this year's legislative session.

Mary E. Ewing, Executive Director, and Chad W. Underwood, Systems Advocate, met with Senator Jim Seward, Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, Assemblyman Brian Kolb, and Assemblyman Gary Finch, all representatives of Cortland County residents, to educate them on a variety of pressing local disability issues that require state legislative action in 2008.

In addition to promoting the 2008 New York State Disability Agenda, Ms. Ewing and Mr. Underwood raised a number of pressing disability issues in Cortland County, including housing, education and transportation.



Above: Mary E. Ewing and Chad W. Underwood met with Sen. Jim Seward at his Albany office on January 28, to discuss pressing local disability issues.

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ATI Awarded SSAN Advocacy Grant Extension

Access to Independence (ATI) has been awarded a three-year, \$75,000 grant from the New York State Department of Education to continue its participation in the Statewide Systems Advocacy Network (SSAN), a grassroots advocacy network of Independent Living Centers (ILCs).

SSAN provides a forum for ILCs from across the state to work collaboratively to achieve successful outcomes on disability priority issues. The New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL) coordinates the SSAN activities and develops a disability priority agenda each year that serves as the impetus for SSAN efforts. The 2008 Disability Priority Agenda lists ILC funding, health care, housing, employment, education, transportation, civil rights, and election reform as top priorities.

“There aren’t very many local agencies that offer their consumers an ongoing opportunity to have their voices be heard by state officials on matters that are important to them,” says Mr. Chad W. Underwood, the agency’s Systems Advocate. ATI has implemented a local volunteer disability advocacy network that can be called to action with the distribution of a single email. When combined with other local disability advocacy networks around the state, the impact can be tremendous.

One recent Action Alert called upon volunteer advocates to call the offices of local representatives in Albany to urge their participation in a public hearing that might have direct impact on funding of services for people with disabilities. “It’s amazing,” recalled Mr. Underwood, “one email from the SSAN Coordinator resulted in more than 5,000 calls to state leaders on that one issue!” The Cortland volunteer disability advocacy network consists of about 30 individuals.

For more information on how you can become a volunteer disability advocate, contact Chad W. Underwood at Access to Independence at 607-753-7363.

Interested in Becoming a Volunteer Disability Advocate?

- Keep up-to-date on current federal, state and local disability issues!
- Join our local network & take action!

Please call Chad W. Underwood at 753-7363 for more information.

2008 NYAIL Disability Priority Agenda

Budget Priorities

1. Independent Living Center (ILC) Funding

- Increase funding for ILCs by an additional \$5 million this year

2. Health Care

- Oppose proposals negatively affecting eligibility, benefits, coverage, and/or access to services for Medicaid beneficiaries. Eliminate the systemic bias that leads to unwanted placement in nursing homes and other institutions
- Promote comprehensive long-term care reform that will not reduce coverage or access to services
- Increase rental/housing subsidies to participants in the new Nursing Facility Transition and Diversion (NFTD) Medicaid waiver program
- Expand coverage under New York’s Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program to people with disabilities under age 65
- Expand facilitated enrollment for Medicaid Managed Care into areas/communities where it does not currently exist
- Increase access to comprehensive health care coverage for all New Yorkers with disabilities

3. Housing

- Create a housing trust fund for people with disabilities, including people with very low incomes

4. Employment

- Shift state money away from sheltered employment programs to more integrated options, with the goal of eventually phasing out state support for sheltered programs completely
- Expand the Medicaid Buy-In program by increasing the asset limit and disregarding spousal income for participants

Public Policy Priorities

1. Civil Rights

- Incorporate Titles II and III of ADA into NYS Human Rights Law.
- Waive the State’s sovereign immunity to claims under the ADA and Section 504.

2. Housing

- Incorporate the housing provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act into state law.
- Establish standards for “Visitability” in state law to require all newly constructed single-family houses, townhouses and ground-floor units of duplexes and triplexes built with public funds to be made accessible.

3. Education

- Establish a definition of restraint (both physical and chemical) in publicly-funded schools and require written documentation and notification to the parent when restraint is used

4. Election Reform

- Eliminate provisions in Section 4-104 (1-a) of the NYS Election Law allowing waiver of polling place accessibility requirements.

5. Transportation

- Require transportation service providers, such as taxis, limousines and hotel shuttles to purchase accessible vehicles or otherwise ensure that they have the capacity to serve people with disabilities.

Pizzola Certified ADA Trainer - Cornell DBTAC

Cornell University's Disability Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) recently certified Fran Pizzola as an ADA Trainer for their ADA Trainer Network. The purpose of the ADA Trainer Network is to enhance the DBTACs capacity to reach a broader range of stakeholders in our region.

As an ADA Trainer, Ms. Pizzola, ATI Program Coordinator, will join a network of state-wide experts with varying degrees of knowledge and experiences in the field of disability and the ADA. She will partner with the DBTAC-Northeast to become a vital force in building awareness and educating a broad range of stakeholders who are directly or indirectly impacted by the ADA. Stakeholders include people with disabilities, service providers, employers, government officials, and the business community.

Ms. Pizzola is certified to facilitate nine different training programs, including Disability Awareness: Understanding the ADA; Communicating Respectfully and Effectively with People with Disabilities; Getting Hired and Moving Ahead in a Job When Working with a Disability; Serving Customers with Disabilities: Reaching Out & Expanding Your Market; and Accessible Technology in the Workplace.

For more information, please contact Fran Pizzola at 753-7363.

2008 CACTC Youth Conference

Open to Youth (Grades 6 - 12)

Ramada Inn, Cortland, NY

Sat., May 10, 2:00 - 8:00 pm

Reserve your spot now!

For more info, call 753-3021 x24

Ask for Susan Williams

Visit our website at:

www.aticortland.org

Email us at:

info@aticortland.org

Phone/TTY: (607) 753-7363

Fax: (607) 756-4884

ATI Offers Craft Classes

Every Tuesday at 10:00 am and Thursday at 1:00 pm, ATI offers a Craft Class, facilitated by Karen Sanford. Craft projects include the use of various mediums, including fabric, wood, foam, clay, paper and glue. All are welcome! For more information, call ATI at 753-7363.

2008 Employment Conference

Fri., May 9: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Fri., May 16: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Fri., May 23: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Reserve your spot now!

For more info, call 753-7363!

2007 Holiday Fun Night Photos

Left: Johnny, Sue & Eric enjoy some food in the Community Room.

Lower Left: Karen, Katrina & Kari share their smiles for the camera.

Below: Kristen & Floyd enjoy each others company while taking a break from the holiday festivities.



ATI Celebrates 2008 National Mentoring Month

In January, Access to Independence called upon Cortland County residents to celebrate National Mentoring Month and encouraged the community to participate in local mentoring programs. Over the past 18 months, ATI has developed its own Peer Mentoring Program (PMP), which aims to support individuals with disabilities who are seeking community employment.

The PMP matches each individual with a mentor, a person from the community who has overcome their own personal barriers to attain and maintain community employment. In addition to weekly workshops and monthly support groups, the PMP facilitates 4 – 6 hours of one-on-one meetings between mentors and mentees each month.

By sharing their knowledge and experiences, mentors serve as examples for people of all ages and help teach them the skills they need to succeed in life. They also provide stability, instill important values, and build confidence in those they assist.

Last year, with the support of their mentors, two PMP participants secured local jobs, and another began classes in January at Tompkins-Cortland Community College where he plans to obtain a degree in computer technology.

“The program works! Mentors undoubtedly fill that missing gap that too often exists in many agencies’ transition-to-work programs,” said Chad W. Underwood, the agency’s Peer Mentoring Program Facilitator. He said, “The Peer Mentoring Program is a truly unique program here in Cortland; no other agency offers a comparable service to its consumers.”

ATI has conducted extensive outreach efforts over the last eight months with other agencies that provide pre-vocational and employment services to individuals with disabilities. Mr. Aaron Baier, the agency’s PMP Specialist, said that “perhaps increased awareness of the program’s success stories will help to change the minds of those that still question its usefulness.”

For more information about how you can get involved with the PMP, as a mentor or a mentee, contact Aaron Baier at Access to Independence at 753-7363.

For more information about other mentoring opportunities, visit the USA Freedom Corps website at www.volunteer.gov.

ATI Removes Barriers to Improve 'Access to Home'

ATI anticipates completion of its 25th home modification in Cortland County this spring as its 'Access to Home' program wraps up its second year of service. The program enables people who have disabilities to stay at home rather than move to a nursing home. The program supports low and very low income households.

Rob Ferri, Access to Independence Architectural Barrier Specialist, manages the program, which is funded through the NYS Department of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR). While the initial grant period ends in March, ATI has secured an additional \$200,000 in funding to continue the service for another two years.

Since the start of the program, Mr. Ferri has seen through completion a total of 25 projects, including the installation of 21 ramps and two electric wheelchair lifts, nine bathroom renovations and 1 kitchen renovation, and a variety of other accessibility modifications, including installation of grab bars, interior door modifications, windows, floors, and a fire alarm system for a person with a hearing impairment. "Adaptation work must meet the needs of those with physical disabilities and seniors with an age-related disability," notes Mr. Ferri.

With 21 consumers currently on a waiting list that is growing by the week, Mr. Ferri is eager to pick up the pace of accessibility modifications throughout the County this spring. Mr. Ferri said, "The renewed funding, along with additional funds contributed by Access to Independence and Thoma Development Corpora-

tion, should allow for the renovation of an additional 15 to 20 homes in Cortland County through 2010." Mr. Ferri says that he has "already started the application process to secure additional funding through 2012."

"If you can see the look on the people's faces when the project is complete, it really makes it absolutely worth it," said Rob Ferri. "They can get in and out of their homes and in and out of their bathrooms and showers," he said. "It really changes lives. It gives people independence."

The Cortland County area, with its aging population and old housing stock, has a great need for this service. "Most of the homes in Cortland County are 50 years and older," said Ferri. "Accessibility wasn't even thought of 50 or 75 years ago. The doors were very narrow, especially for the bathrooms, and the bathroom was the smallest room in the house. Now, when you have individuals with wheelchairs or walkers, they can't even get in the door, or if they can, there is no place for them to turn around."

Access to Independence collaborates with the Cortland County Office for the Aging, the Cortland County Community Action Program (CAPCO), the Cortland County Mental Health Clinic, and a variety of other local and regional agencies to provide services and structural modifications for assisted households.

For more information, or to be added to the waiting list, contact Rob Ferri at 753-7363 or by email: rferri@aticortland.org.

Decrease the Cost of Your Medicare Part D Prescriptions

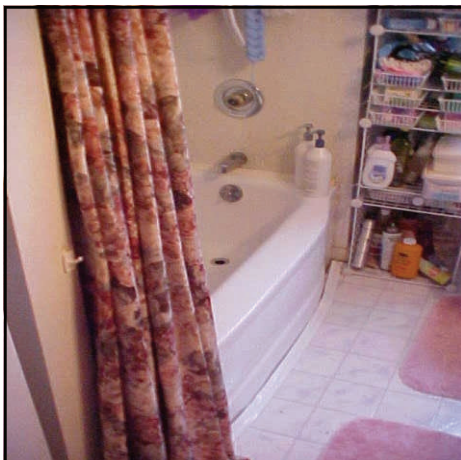
Have you ever gone to the pharmacy to pick up a prescription and then discover that your drug is not covered or is too expensive? Despair no longer! There is a process where you can ask your prescription plan provider to pay for a drug you need that is not on its formulary, or to lower the price of a drug you need that is on its formulary but costs too much. The process is the same whether you are in a Medicare private health plan with drug coverage (MA-PD) or a stand-alone private drug plan (PDP). Note: You cannot ask for an exception for drugs specifically excluded from Medicare coverage, including certain anti-anxiety drugs, weight loss and gain drugs, and over-the-counter drugs.

Simply follow these steps to request an exception to drug coverage guidelines.

1. Get a statement of support from your prescribing doctor. You or your doctor can request an exception. However, you will still need a supporting letter from your doctor certifying that the drug prescribed is medically necessary because other drugs are not as effective or may be harmful for you. If it is an emergency where your "life, health or ability to regain maximum function" are at risk, your doctor can request an expedited exception.
2. Find out where you should file for an exception. To find out where to fax the letter, and whether you need any other forms, you or your doctor should call a representative from your prescription plan. In most plans, you should ask for the "Clinical Review" or Pharmacy Department.
3. Make sure your prescription plan provider responds in a timely manner. If you do not get an answer, consistently follow-up until you do. Plans must respond within 72 hours of receiving your doctor's written statement explaining why the drug is medically necessary for you. If it is an emergency, plans must respond to expedited requests within 24 hours. These are clock hours, not business hours.
4. If the prescription plan provider denies your exception request, you may appeal their decision. Your prescription plan provider should respond to you in writing with a letter titled "Notice of Denial of Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage." The letter will tell you how to appeal.

Below: Before picture of inaccessible bathroom tub and shower.

Right: After picture of remodeled accessible roll-in shower.



World-wide Disability Milestones

- 1755 – The first school for the deaf in the world established in France
- 1868 – The first group or charity dealing with specific disabilities in the world established in Sweden, called the Stockholm Deaf Club
- 1869 – The first wheelchair patent is registered with the U.S. Patent Office
- 1918 – Smith-Sears Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation Act establishes vocational rehabilitation for disabled soldiers in the U.S.
- 1919 – 41 states have some form of worker's compensation, allowing those injured at work some measure of income support and rehabilitation
- 1920's – The first cross-disability organization in the world established in Norway, called the Norwegian Association of Disabled Persons
- 1932 – Herbert Everest and Harold Jennings collaborated to design the first folding frame wheelchair
- 1949 – The first Annual Wheelchair Basketball Tourney held in Galesburg, Illinois
- 1950's – Everest & Jennings developed the first powered wheelchair
- 1960 – The first Paralympics Games held in Rome, Italy
- 1968 – The Architectural Barriers Act is passed, mandating that federally constructed buildings and facilities be accessible to people with physical disabilities
- 1972 – Berkeley Center for Independent Living established
- 1973 – Rehab. Act passed; Title V, Sect. 504 confronts discrimination against people with disabilities (PWD)
- 1975 – United Nations adopts Declaration of Rights of disabled persons
- 1981 – UN Int'l Year of Disabled Persons; PWD are included in UN human rights resolutions (UN proclaimed this in 1976)
- 1986 – Air Carrier Access Act passed; airlines cannot refuse to serve people simply because they are disabled & cannot charge PWD more for airfare than non-disabled
- 1990 – ADA is signed by President George H. W. Bush
- 1993 – UN adopts Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for PWD
- 1999 – Supreme Court challenges federal, state, and local governments to develop accessible, cost-effective community-based services for PWD (Olmstead v. L.C.)
- 2001 – Dedication of a statue of President Franklin D. Roosevelt using a wheelchair at FDR Memorial in Washington, D.C.

'Disability and the Law' Video Series Airing on CACTV-2

On January 28, Cable Access Channel 2 (CACTV-2) began broadcasting a video series entitled, "Disability and the Law." The video series aims to educate and inform viewers about the legal rights of individuals with disabilities. The series is co-sponsored by the Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy and the New York State Bar Association Committee on Issues Affecting People with Disabilities. The series is funded in part by the New York Bar Foundation. Access to Independence is sponsoring the series locally.

"Disability and the Law" will air every Monday at 10:00 AM and repeat every Thursday at 8:00 PM on CACTV-2. There are a total of 21 different videos, including: Technology, the Law and the Disabled; Health Care Decisions for the Disabled; Supported Employment: A Winning Option for All; Special Education from the Law to the Classroom; Parents Talking to Parents: A Parent Support Video; Leveling the Playing Field; Work Incentives Do Work; and Transitioning from School to Work, among others.

CACTV-2 offers a program schedule on its community bulletin board. You may also access the schedule on the city's website: www.cortland.org.

Worksite Wellness Workshops to Feature SUNY Students

Four SUNY Cortland Health Education students will facilitate nutrition and exercise programs in March and April in tandem with ATIs Work-Site Wellness (WW) group. The students will do presentations as part of their service learning requirement for their Health Education class. Nutrition workshops will be held on March 19 and March 26; Exercise workshops will be held on April 2 and April 9.

ATI began its 2008 WW workshop series in January. The group meets every Wednesday from 3:30 - 4:45 in the ATI Community Room. Weekly classes feature discussion on nutrition and exercise current trends or research.

Sessions also include group exercises with a variety of videos for 20 - 30 minutes. A wheel-chair accessible scale is also available on site.

Work-Site Wellness is open to anyone with a disability, their family and/or friends. For more information, please contact Fran Pizzola at 753-7363.



Accessibility Construction Services

26 North Main Street
Cortland, New York 13045
Phone: (607) 753-7363

Planning a home remodel?

Having difficulty with daily activities?

Concerned for the safety of a parent?

History of falls? / Fear of falls?

Call us for a free estimate (607) 753-7363

We are your Local Accessibility Experts!

Reasonable Accommodations at Your Workplace

Employers are required to make a reasonable accommodation to the known disability of a qualified applicant or employee if it would not impose an "undue hardship" on the operation of the employer's business. Undue hardship is defined as an "action requiring significant difficulty or expense when considering an employer's size, financial resources, and the nature and structure of its operation."

Reasonable accommodations may include making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities; job restructuring, modifying work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position; or acquiring or modifying equipment or devices, adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials, or policies, and providing qualified readers or interpreters.

An employer is not required to lower quality or production standards to make an accommodation; nor is an employer obligated to provide personal use items such as glasses or hearing aids.

An applicant or employee who believes that his/her employment rights have been violated on the basis of disability by a private sector, state government, or local government employer, and wants to make a claim against that employer, must file a "charge of discrimination" with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The charge must be filed by mail or in person with a local EEOC office within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation. The 180-day filing deadline is extended to 300 days if a state or local anti-discrimination law also covers the charge. An individual, organization, or agency may file a charge on behalf of another

person in order to protect the aggrieved person's identity.

The EEOC will notify the employer of the charge and may ask for a response. Before a formal investigation, the EEOC may offer to facilitate mediation between the parties. Participation in mediation is free, voluntary, and confidential. Mediation may provide the parties with a more prompt resolution.

If mediation is not pursued or is unsuccessful, the EEOC investigates the charge to determine if there is "reasonable cause" to believe discrimination occurred. If reasonable cause is found, the EEOC will work to resolve the charge. In some cases, where the charge cannot be resolved, the EEOC will file a court action. For more information, visit the EEOC website at: http://www.eeoc.gov/charge/overview_charge_filing.html

Enhanced STAR Program

Did you know that the Star Program offers a partial exemption for school property taxes and applies to all homeowners regardless of your age or income? An additional component to the Star Program is the "Enhanced Star Program," which is available to senior citizens who have an annual income of \$60,000 or less. To qualify, property owners must submit an application to receive the partial exemption; deadlines vary according to eligibility. For detailed information, please contact the City Assessor's Office at 753-1232. Application forms and informational pamphlets are available at the City of Cortland Finance Office. Completed applications must be submitted to the City Assessor's Office.

ATI Announces 2008 Fund Development Initiatives

Last year, ATI received approximately \$5,000 from its fund development activities, including its "Freezer Full of Meat" Raffle, its October bowl-a-thon, and generous donations from community supporters. ATI thanks everyone who made contributions to ATI in 2007, both financially and in-kind.

This year, ATI has set a goal to raise \$10,000 through its fund development efforts. In addition to soliciting local consumers, businesses and distinguished community leaders for financial support, ATI is seeking other innovative ways to raise funds.

ATI currently has two fund development activities underway. On April 12,

from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, ATI is holding a bowl-a-thon at 281 Bowl, located at 3898 State Route 281 in Cortland. Interested participants can sign-up at ATI and then work to secure pledges (donations) from their family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and others in support of ATI's disability awareness and education efforts.

ATI has also begun offering local businesses / agencies an opportunity to advertise on the back of its newsletter at a reasonable rate.

For more information on how you can help raise funds for ATI, or to make a donation, contact Mary Ewing at 753-7363.

Free Tax Return Assistance Available

If you earned under \$40,000 last year you may be eligible for free tax filing help through the IRS-sponsored Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) or Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs. Both programs can provide fast, free electronic tax filing. Community volunteers receive IRS-approved training to assist individuals with tax returns. Some VITA sites can help you open a bank account if you don't already have one. In the Cortland area, please call Barb Henza at the Cornell Co-Operative Extension at 753-5077 to set up an appointment with a VITA volunteer.

Beware of Refund Anticipation Loans

Did you know that commercial tax preparers charge an average of \$150 to prepare a return claiming the Earned Income Credit (EIC)? And if you get a Refund Anticipation Loan (RAL), you may pay as much as \$100 more.

Sometimes RALs are advertised as "fast cash" or a "quick tax refund." But beware, RALs are actually loans with extremely high interest rates. Even more, if there is an error on the return and the IRS doesn't send the refund, you will be stuck having to repay the loan. Avoid commercial preparers who pressure you to sign up for a loan.

RALs are sometimes promoted through car dealerships, furniture outlets or jewelry stores that offer to prepare your taxes and try to convince you to use refund loans for in-store purchases.

RALs may provide a fast cash loan (1 to 2 days) on your tax refund, but having the IRS refund deposited directly into a bank account takes only about 7 to 12 days. Is the extra week really worth paying \$100 or more?

ACCESS TO CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY

This edition's review of cutting edge technology focuses on accessible software and equipment that aim to improve a person's ability to achieve independent living. Each reviewed item is available for use in the ATI Consumer Computer Lab.



Kurzweil 1000™ is award-winning software that makes printed or electronic text readily available to people who are blind or visually impaired. It combines accessibility, communication and productivity tools to ease and enhance their reading, writing and learning experience. The software speaks text aloud in a variety of natural-sounding voices that can be modified to suit individual preferences. In addition, it provides users with document creation and editing as well as study skills capabilities for note-taking, summarizing and outlining text. Kurzweil 1000™ also delivers quick access to a wealth of information including online books, magazines and encyclopedias so users can pursue any reading interests.



The HP ScanJet 5400c is now available for use in the ATI Consumer Computer Lab. The scanner is easy to use and captures attractive, high-

quality images. It is designed for general document scanning purposes and can also be used with Kurzweil 1000™.



The VersaPoint Duo Braille embosser (printer) is now operational and available for use at ATI. The VersaPoint Duo is capable of embossing single or double sided documents and with existing Braille Translation software is able to emboss your MS Office documents into well formatted Braille documents. For individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and who are able to read Braille, stop by ATI to try this great piece of adaptive technology.

The ATI Consumer Computer Lab offers several models of mice and other pointing devices to help those with a variety of mobility impairments. The Lab also features multiple types of ergonomic and special keyboards that make typing easier and more comfortable. These include keyboards that have both split and tenting features and angled keys to prevent neck, shoulder, and wrist injury.

If you are interested in learning more about how to use any of the above software, contact Aaron Baier at 753-7363.

If you are interested in learning how to use a computer or accessing the Internet, contact Susan Lewis at 753-7363.

Beilby, Disability Advocate

(Continued from page 1)

Aside from her dedication to ensuring that polling sites throughout Cortland County are accessible, perhaps her most profound accomplishment relates to her steadfast work with housing issues in Cortland County. Beilby was instrumental in the development of the County's Affordable and Accessible Housing Task Force and continues to steward that group's ongoing efforts.

In addition to serving the disability community, Mary serves on the Board of Directors of the local YWCA and the League of Women Voters. She is also a member of the Citizens for Progressive Reform, the High Hope Investment Club, the Tompkins County Quilters Guild, and the Homer Garden Club.

Next time you see Mary, please join us in acknowledging her outstanding contributions to ATI and the entire community.



Above: Mary Beilby holds her 'Retirement' cake at a recent staff party to celebrate her disability advocacy efforts through the years.

Familiar Faces in the Office...

Meet **Vivian LoMonaco!** Vivian has been an outstanding volunteer at ATI since last summer. Vivian covers the reception area at ATI at least twice weekly, where she answers the phone and completes a variety of office tasks. Vivian is a whiz when it comes to typing, filing or doing data entry assignments. Vivian also participates in a number of ATI activities, including the Peer Mentoring Program. Vivian always has a smile, loves to keep busy with helping out in any way possible, and is eager to learn new skills. Be sure to say hello to Vivian next time you see her!

Meet **Dorothy DuMond!** Dorothy has been a dedicated volunteer at ATI for almost four years. Dorothy first visited ATI to get information, but she has grown to become an integral part of the agency through her ongoing volunteer efforts. Dorothy works part time as an assembler at the J M Murray Center and cares for her mother full-time. Even so, Dorothy is always around to help with anything that needs to get done. She also actively participates in programs throughout the year Dorothy's positive attitude and optimistic outlook is contagious to everyone around. Be sure to say hello to Dorothy next time you see her!

Interested in becoming a volunteer?

- * Advocate for removal of community architectural barriers.
- * Help out at social, recreational and educational events.
- * Become a volunteer disability advocate
- * Assist with computer & clerical tasks.

Please call Mary E. Ewing at 753-7363 if you are interested.



Above: Vivian LoMonaco volunteering at the Reception desk.

