

**Nothing More,
Nothing Less
For All People
With Disabilities**

Access to Independence of Cortland County, Inc.

ACCESS NEWS

Spring 2013

NUMBER XXXVI

ATI Awarded Mini Grants

Access to Independence (ATI) is proud to announce that it has received two grants from area foundations in support of its 8th Annual 2013 Employment Conference, set for this October.

ATI received \$1,000 from the Ithaca-based Triad Foundation, Inc., and a \$1,000 grant from the Syracuse-based Central New York Community Foundation, Inc. The Community Foundation's grant came from the Allen Speiser Memorial Vocational Rehabilitation Fund.

ATI will use the grant funds to underwrite the costs associated with facilitating its annual three-day conference. ATI will hold this year's conference at an off-site location in order to accommodate increased participation. Special guests will be announced in the coming months.

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Area Leaders Learn About Accessibility Problems Downtown

On April 18, Cortland County Legislator Sandy Price and city of Cortland Mayor Brian Tobin experienced a simulation of what it is like for a person in a wheelchair and a person who is blind to walk in downtown Cortland. Both Price and Tobin tried maneuvering sidewalks in a wheelchair and then walked blindfolded with a cane.

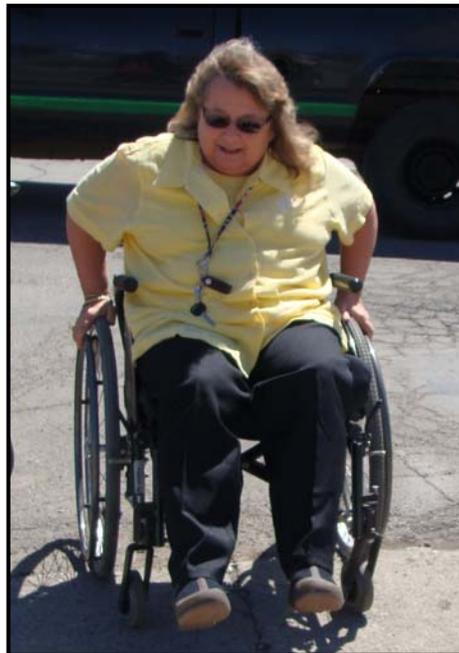
"It's much more difficult than I ever imagined," Price said. Both Price and Tobin experienced first-hand the accessibility issues that so many others face day to day, whether it be a lack of curb cuts, overgrown shrubbery or cracks in the sidewalks.

Fran Pizzola, ATI Community Education Coordinator coordinated the event. Erin Kavanaugh, a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist from the Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc. (AVRE) provided guidance to simulate vision impairment and blindness.

The goal of the simulation was to provide area leaders with first-hand experience of the barriers found on the sidewalks and curbs and to also come up with an action plan to improve accessibility and safety for all of Cortland's citizens.

At the conclusion of the simulation, Mayor Tobin requested a priority list of accessibility modifications based on surveys and research ATI has conducted over the years.

Please stay tuned as changes and updates are on the way!



Above: Sandy Price, County Legislator
Below: Brian Tobin, Cortland Mayor



ATI Expands Housing Advocacy Across CNY and Southern Tier Counties

CORTLAND — Over the last several months, Access to Independence (ATI) has organized several Cortland County Housing Roundtable events in order to facilitate ongoing dialogue on the need for improved housing options in Cortland.

On March 27, more than 30 people representing housing providers, developers, service providers, city and municipal government, and community members were present to learn about current housing programs and to learn more about initiatives such as the development of an updated Consolidated Plan for Housing in Cortland County.

Jackie Leaf from Seven Valleys Health Coalition updated the group on its Cortland Counts Housing Track initiative and discussed the role of Cortland 2-1-1 and how it can be utilized to share housing options and related information.

Joan Martin from Seven Valleys Health Coalition discussed the Agency's current community survey and shared statistics regarding Cortland County and regional population, census and housing trends.

Mike Pisa from Catholic Charities discussed Cortland homelessness, point-in-time count, and the overall need for affordable housing and shelter plus care. Mike also updated the group on its status of joining with the Southern Tier Continuum of Care.

Marie Walsh from Catholic Charities said her Agency had received a grant award to fund five new beds for housing individuals in transition.

Larry Pfister, a Cortland resident and ATI Board Member, voiced his concern on the lack of quality, market-rate housing that is single-story or easily adaptable.

The group discussed the concept of aging in place and the need and desire to renovate existing homes to make them more accessible, especially considering the anticipated growing demand by aging baby-boomers.

Ann Hotchkin from Thoma Development presented information on what is a consolidated plan for housing. She described the benefits, costs and composition of such plans.

On May 29, more than 20 participants attended a second Cortland County Housing Roundtable event. In addition to provider updates, participants had the opportunity to "Skype" with several individuals representing the HUD Buffalo Field Office.

Bill O'Connell, Director of Community Development, and Lisa Pugliese, Director of Public Housing, described HUD programming and community opportunities relating to housing.

Cortland's next Housing Roundtable event is set for Tuesday, August 27, at the SUNY Cortland Main Street building.

ELMIRA — On March 28, ATI joined forces with AIM Independence Center in Elmira to facilitate a Housing Roundtable event for Chemung and Schuyler counties. More than 30 representatives from housing providers, developers, service providers, county legislators, and community members were present to discuss current housing programs and gaps that exist.

In addition to providing technical assistance for the event, ATI provided background information on its housing education initiatives and provided a description of some best practices, including Cortland Counts Housing Track.

Deborah MacDonald of the Schuyler County Catholic Charities facilitated a group session to help identify the unmet needs of housing in the two counties. Those unmet needs included: lack of safe, affordable housing options; lack of homeless shelter in both counties; lack of cooperation from landlords, developers and planning officials; and a general concern about the unknown effects of "fracking".

Going forward, each county plans to facilitate ongoing housing coalition activities to maintain interest and information sharing relating to housing issues.

For more information on the Schuyler County housing group, contact Debbie MacDonald by phone: 607-535-2050, or by email: dmacdonald@dor.org.

For more information on the Chemung County housing group, contact Kathleen Dubel by phone: 607-734-9784, or by email: kdubel@dor.org.

CATSKILL — On June 18, Access to Independence is teaming up with the Catskill Center for Independence (CCFI) to hold a Housing Roundtable event for Delaware and Otsego Counties.

In addition to providing technical assistance for the event, ATI will present information on Cortland's housing education initiatives as well as offer some best practices for promoting community dialogue on housing policy.

Karen Sullivan of the Otsego County Planning Office plans to facilitate a session to help participants identify housing issues and unmet needs for both counties.

For more information about ATI's housing advocacy and education programming, contact Aaron T. Baier by phone at 607-753-7363, or by email at abaier@aticortland.org.

ATI Holds Spring Social Night

On Wednesday, May 15, nearly 40 consumers, friends and family convened in the ATI Community Room for fun, games, music and food. Participants enjoyed hamburgers, hotdogs, salads, soda and punch. Participants had fun making Kentucky-Derby-themed hats and singing their favorite karaoke songs. Although ATI's next official social night will be in the fall, don't miss this year's ADA Celebration at the Courthouse Park, on July 27!



Above: Nearly 40 people enjoyed an evening of fun and games at ATI's 2013 Spring Social Night. The Kentucky Derby-themed event included karaoke, games, food and a craft competition to make Kentucky Derby-themed hats.

2013 Bowl-a-Thon Success

On Saturday, April 20, more than 65 bowlers convened at Cort-Lanes to enjoy a half-day of rocking music, inclusive recreation fun, pizza, and door prizes donated from more than 20 local businesses!

The 2012 ATI bowl-a-thon would not have been such a success without the ardent support of community donors and businesses. This year's event sponsors were Alpa, Inc. and West Construction. Business supporters included: Carbon Copies, Catholic Charities, Cortland Dental, Cortland Regional Sports Council, First National Bank of Dryden, Higgins Supply Company, Matthew J. Dentes, DDS, Refrigerated Transport Electronics, Richman, Shafer & Shafer and Yaman Real Estate.

Many thanks go out to all of this year's bowlers and contributors!



ATI Consumer Grievance Policy: Complaint & Appeal Process

As a consumer of Access to Independence of Cortland County, Inc. (ATI), you have the right to register a complaint or grievance regarding the services provided by ATI. There will be no reprisal to you for registering a complaint or grievance.

In the event you need to register a complaint or grievance, it should be done within 30 days of the incident. You may contact ATI's Independent Living Coordinator at (607) 753-7363 for more information about the complaint or grievance process. You may also file a complaint or grievance by writing, calling, faxing or emailing the Executive Director, who will respond to your complaint or grievance within ten business days.

Access to Independence of Cortland County
Mary E. Ewing, Executive Director
26 N. Main Street
Cortland, New York 13045
Phone: (607) 753-7363
Fax: (607) 756-4884
Email: admin@aticortland.org

In the event you are unsatisfied with the response, or in the event the Executive Director is unable to respond within ten business days, you may file a complaint, grievance or appeal to the ATI Board of Director's Governance Committee, who will respond to your complaint, grievance or appeal within ten business days.

Access to Independence of Cortland County
Lisa Perfetti, Board Chair
26 N. Main Street
Cortland, New York 13045
Phone: (607) 753-7363
Fax: (607) 756-4884
Email: admin@aticortland.org

In the event you are unsatisfied with the response of the ATI Board of Director's Governance Committee, you may file a complaint or grievance with the NYS Education Department:

ACCES-VR Centers Administration Unit
One Commerce Plaza, Room 1605
Albany, New York 12234
(800) 222-5627 or (800) 624-4143



Cortland
YIP
Youth In Power

BE THERE!
Second Wednesday Monthly
4:00 - 5:00 pm

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
WHERE:
Access to Independence
26 North Main Street

Do you face challenges in life?
Do you want to meet new and supportive friends?

Summer 2013 Meeting Dates:

Stay Active Over the Summer: Get Up, Get Going!
Wednesday, June 5, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

NCIL - Getting Ready to Advocate on a National Scale
Wednesday, July 3, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Independence, Disability and Age: Youth Culture and Pride
Wednesday, August 7, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Make a Positive Impression: Preparing for Mentoring Day
Wednesday, September 4, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Sign Up Today! Call 607-753-7363

 Accommodations provided upon request.



Peer Mentoring Program Work Readiness Workshop Series

Are you a person with a disability who would like to be employed in the community?

Would a mentor be helpful to you as you take steps towards employment?



When: Fourth Monday from 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Where: Access to Independence
26 North Main St.
Cortland, NY 13045
607-753-7363

Visit our web site!
www.aticortland.org

Summer 2013 Meeting Dates:

Dialogue with Me: Balancing the Conversation in Your Favor
Monday, June 24, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Let Your Appearance & Attitude Speak for You
Monday, July 22, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Applications, Cover Letters and Resumes: Writing Skills
Monday, August 26, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Put It All Together: Networking & Interviewing
Monday, September 23, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

 Accommodations provided upon request.

Medicaid Managed Long Term Care (MLTC)

If you are a person with a chronic illness who is on or eligible for Medicaid, or if you are a person with a disability and need long-term care such as home care, Medicaid Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) may be the right option for you.

Managed Long Term Care plans can provide an array of long-term care services (like case management, nursing, home health aides, etc.) that can help prevent a nursing home placement. These services and supports are managed by one agency to help keep costs lower.

Each member of an MLTC plan will be involved in creating a care plan that is then overseen by a Nurse Case Manager. This case manager will assist in making sure a member is receiving the correct services from the correct care provider.

At this time, enrolling in a Managed Long Term Care Plan is optional for upstate New York residents needing long term care services for more than 120 days. In the near future this enrollment will be mandatory for anyone meeting the MLTC requirements.

Cortland County residents can choose to enroll in Fidelis Care at Home. At this time, this is the only MLTC plan operating in the Cortland area. The plan can offer these services and more to residents of Cortland County who qualify for MLTC (each service has to be medically necessary and approved):

- Home health care
- Adult day health care or social day care
- Personal care
- Durable medical equipment
- Medical and surgical supplies
- Personal emergency response systems
- Prosthetics and orthotics
- Dentistry
- Optometry/eyeglasses
- Respiratory therapy

In order to qualify for MLTC through Fidelis, you must be eligible for Medicaid, be at least 18 years old, reside in an approved service area, have a chronic illness or disability that makes you eligible for services usually provided in a nursing home, and expect to need one or more of the following services for at least 120 days from the date that you join the plan:

- Nursing services in the home
- Therapies in the home
- Home health aide services
- Personal care services in the home
- Adult day health care, or
- Social day care if used instead of in-home personal care

For more information, contact Susan Lewis, Independent Living Coordinator and Certified Benefits Counselor, by phone: 607-735-7363, or by email: slewis@aticortland.org.



We are now accepting referrals to our NHTD & TBI Medicaid Waiver programs for the following services:

- **SC (Service Coordination)**
- **ILST (Independent Living Skills Training)**
- **AT (Assistive Technology)**
- **CTS (Community Transitional Services)**
- **MA (Moving Assistance)**
- **EMODs (Environmental Modifications)**



For more information, please contact,
Mary E. Ewing, by phone: 607-753-7363;
or by email: mary.ewing@aticortland.org.



Like us on
Facebook!

ATI Computer Lab

**Open Monday - Friday
9:00 am - 4:45 pm**

**For more information,
call (607) 753-7363.**

ATI Wants You!

ATI is currently recruiting interested individuals with diverse backgrounds, with and without disabilities, to serve on its Board of Directors.

For more information, please contact:
Mary E. Ewing, Executive Director
phone: 607-753-7363;
email: mary.ewing@aticortland.org

“With Help From a Friend, You Can Reach the Stars!” A Consumer Vignette by Fran Pizzola

In keeping with ATI's theme "Faces of Independence" I would like to share a story about Dorothy. Dorothy sought assistance from ATI at various times depending on personal circumstances in her life. She is the perfect example of what a "face of independence" looks like.

I met Dorothy in 1998. She was seeking assistance for her 17-year-old daughter, Amy, who was in a rehabilitation center in Schenectady, New York. Amy was in a car accident one year prior and acquired a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Dorothy wanted to help her daughter, but she was not able to be in Schenectady every day.

The first thing I did was offer Dorothy peer counseling support. I had "been there and done that"; in addition, my parents faced the same dilemma when I was in rehab. One big difference however, was that I was able to speak and call my parents. Dorothy and Amy were not able to communicate due to her brain injury.

Yet, I was still able to alleviate some of her fears about life after disability and encouraged her that things would get better. The next thing I did was provide her with information and referral services. I contacted the rehab center in Schenectady and found a counselor there to work with her and Amy to ensure a smooth transition from rehabilitation to community living

for her daughter. After providing Dorothy with these initial services, our paths did not cross for several years.

In 2002 Dorothy came back to ATI looking for help to move Amy from Troy to Cortland. At this point, Dorothy began working with Sue Lewis, ATI's Independent Living Coordinator. In circumstances like this, Sue works one-on-one with individuals to find the best solutions to keep families together. Although Amy was not able to move back to Cortland, Sue advocated with Amy's service providers in Troy to ensure she was placed in housing for individuals with TBI and was receiving appropriate activities of daily living such as physical therapy, socialization and inclusive community activities.

Now that Amy's needs were stabilized, Dorothy felt that she could spend some time on herself and began attending classes and social activities at ATI. Dorothy began meeting with Sue on a regular basis for assistance with independent living skills, such as household budgeting and Social Security work incentives.

In addition to working with Sue, Dorothy joined ATI's peer mentoring program, and started working with Aaron Baier, ATI's Consumer and Systems Advocacy Coordinator. She was assigned a mentor, (a person with a disability who has

successfully maintained employment). Dorothy and her mentor attended ATI's peer mentoring workshops, which were instrumental in helping her get a part-time job at the JM Murray Center.

Unfortunately, as the years passed Dorothy found herself facing another dilemma with her aging mother.

Dorothy began working with Sue again to navigate many of the systems in place to care for an aging parent who wanted to remain living in the community. At one point, Dorothy's mother was placed in a nursing home due to her failing health and lack of caregivers.

As her mom got stronger, Dorothy sought help from ATI to bring her back home but the house had been deemed unsafe. Sue made a referral to ATI's Architectural Barrier Programs. Dorothy and her mother qualified for ATI's Access to Home Program and plans were made to retrofit and make the house safe and accessible. Though there were many challenges and hardships for Dorothy along the way (including a leave of absence from her job to care for her mother), Dorothy respected her mother's wishes and brought her home.

Dorothy first came to ATI as a mother, seeking assistance for her daughter with a traumatic brain injury; then she came to ATI as a daughter, looking for help for her aging mother. Along the way ATI helped Dorothy as a consumer with various personal issues. The "Faces of Independence" may someday be your face. When you find yourself in similar situations ATI is here for you too.

For more information on ATI's programs and services contact ATI by phone at 753-7363 or e-mail info@aticortland.org.

The Wishing Wellness Center
Hours of Operation
Monday – Friday 11:00am- 6:00pm
Call for Information about Activities and Appointments

24 Church Street
Cortland, NY 13045
(607) 423-7472
peers@wishingwellnesscenter.org

 Peer-Run Community Support Services



Coming Soon: Affordable Care Act

As part of the Affordable Care Act, starting in 2014 all Americans will have access to affordable health insurance options. Individuals and small businesses will be able to compare health plans on a health care exchange website. There will also be a toll-free number to call in New York State to get assistance in getting information about the health insurance programs available, what they will cover, and how much they will cost. Middle and low-income families will get tax credits that cover a significant portion of the cost of coverage, and the Medicaid program will be expanded to cover more low-income Americans. All together, these reforms mean that millions of people who were previously uninsured will gain coverage.

Some of the other positives for people with disabilities or chronic illnesses are:

- No discrimination against people with pre-existing conditions. Insurance companies can no longer deny coverage to children because of a pre-existing condition and starting in 2014, discriminating against anyone with a pre-existing condition will be illegal. The insurance companies also will not be able to charge higher premiums to someone with a pre-existing condition.
- Insurance companies will not be able to deny, cap or limit your coverage. In the past, some people with chronic illnesses ran out of insurance coverage because their health care expenses reached a dollar amount limit imposed by their insurance company. Under the health care law, insurance companies can no longer impose lifetime dollar limits on essential health benefits, and annual limits are being phased out by 2014.
- There are new options for long term supports. The Health Care Act is offering states incentives to broaden long term care supports. In this area, we already have a Medicaid Managed Long Term Care agency that can work with individuals with extended long term care needs.
- Insurance companies will be held accountable. If insurance companies don't spend at least 80% of your premium dollars on medical care and quality improvement rather than administrative costs, they will have to provide you a rebate. These companies will also have to publicly justify proposed rate increases of more than 10%.

For people on Medicare, the Part D prescription plans will no longer have a coverage gap if you reach a certain spending level.

Beginning in 2014, there will be a penalty for each person that does not have a health care plan. This penalty will increase from \$95 per year or 1% of a person's income in 2014 to \$695 or 2.5% of a person's income in 2016.

If you have any questions regarding the Affordable Health Care Act and what it will mean for you, contact Susan Lewis, Certified Benefits Counselor, by phone: 607-753-7363.

Save the Date: 2013 ADA Celebration

Holding true to tradition, Access to Independence (ATI) will commemorate the 23rd anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by hosting an ADA Celebration Picnic on Saturday, July 27, 2013.

To begin the celebration, people with disabilities, their family and friends, and the entire community is invited to convene at ATI's office at 10:00 am to participate in an inclusive march called the Stroll & Roll. Participants will be given a free t-shirt and then will walk, stroll & roll through downtown Cortland to the Courthouse Park where the ADA celebration picnic will take place.

The picnic will take place from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm. This year, Smokin' Mule will cater the event with barbeque fare.

Chris Hildebrandt, Chief Operating Officer of the Center of Disabilities Rights in Rochester, New York will provide the keynote address. He will speak about his recent advocacy efforts in Washington, DC and Albany. Chris is also very actively involved in ADAPT, a national grass-roots organization that engages in nonviolent direct action, including civil disobedience, to assure the civil and human rights of people with disabilities to live in freedom.

Regional and local representatives have also been invited to speak about their experiences with the ADA and the civil rights for people with disabilities.

A vendor fair featuring local and regional vendors who serve the needs of individuals with disabilities will also be part of the day's happenings. Vendors will include: Cortland Area Communities That Care (CACTC), Cortland Regional Medical Center's Home Health Services, Way 2 Go Cortland, Cornell University, Autocrafting and Monroe Wheelchair Company.

The picnic celebration will feature music by WXHC Hometown Radio. The day will close with ATI's famous watermelon eating contest! There's still time to participate as a vendor and a sponsor. Please contact Fran Pizzola, Community Education Coordinator, by phone: 607-753-7363, or by email: fpizzola@aticortland.org.

The NYS Commission for the Blind Celebrates 100 Years

On April 30, 2013, the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH) celebrated its 100th anniversary with a special event which featured several special guests including former NYS Governor David A. Paterson as the keynote speaker.

CBVH has consistently been a national leader in helping train and place blind and visually impaired individuals in competitive, integrated employment. Through their years of effort, NYS continues to lead the nation in employment statistics for the blind and visually impaired. In fact, they placed 60 percent more workers in jobs in 2011 than the next highest state. This past federal fiscal year, CBVH placed 403 consumers in jobs, beating their own previous year's record total of 388.

CBVH is an active partner in the Council of State Administrators of the Vocational Rehabilitation National Employment Team. Through this partnership, CBVH has been able to develop relationships with national private and public employers who offer employment opportunities in NYS. CBVH also works

closely with community partners to increase the sharing of job leads and to develop relationships with local employers. This type of outreach has helped them find job placements for their clients even during economic downturns.

"CBVH is a national leader in procuring jobs for the blind and visually impaired. Their dedicated professionals provide training and not only help find jobs, but build rewarding careers. The end result is employers are getting productive employees and these workers are fulfilling their potential and that is a real win-win," said Governor Andrew M. Cuomo. "I am confident that CBVH will continue to build on their successful record and this centennial celebration is the beginning of another hundred years of positive outcomes for blind and visually impaired New Yorkers."

"CBVH is dedicated to working with the blind and visually impaired from childhood through the golden years," said OCFS Commissioner Gladys Carrion. "They have built a strong foundation for their success and whether it's counseling the family of a blind child or helping an elderly person suffering from macu-

lar degeneration, they are invaluable to each and every client they touch."

Brian Daniels, CBVH Associate Commissioner, said, "I feel humbled to be a part of CBVH at this momentous time. Those who have preceded us have bequeathed to us a legacy of focused and responsive service; something we strive every day to perpetuate as we cross over the threshold into our second century of service."

Established in 1913, CBVH works on behalf of people who are legally blind and living in NYS. The Commission partners with vision services organizations to provide comprehensive services to blind and visually impaired New Yorkers of all ages. These services include vocational rehabilitation, orientation and mobility training, independent living skills training, and employment counseling and placement. In addition, the Business Enterprise Program provides management skills training; stock loans and necessary equipment to assist legally blind entrepreneurs in operating newsstands, snack bars and convenience stores in government buildings.

For more information about CBVH programs, or to find a local district office, call 1-866-871-3000 (TTY: 1-866-871-6000), or visit ocfs.ny.gov.



2013 Harvest Moon Gala

Saturday, November 2, 2013
6:00 - 9:00 pm
SUNY Cortland Alumni House

Tickets are \$50.00 each.
To purchase your tickets, call 607-753-7363, or
visit us at 26 N. Main Street, Cortland, NY.

- Exquisite hors d'oeuvres
- Cocktail attire
- Live music
- Cash bar
- Silent auction
- Special Guests

All proceeds benefit Access to Independence of Cortland County, Inc.



Above: ATI's Aaron Baier poses for a photo with Syracuse CBVH District Manager Amy Carreno in April.

Access to Independence Offers Accessibility Construction Services

Access to Independence of Cortland County, Inc. (ATI) is committed to accessibility for everyone and everyplace. Having true “access to independence” requires that an individual have access to getting in and out of their home, be able to move from room to room, and to sit on their porch to enjoy their surroundings.

ATI established its Architectural Barrier Program in 2006 to provide a comprehensive source of consultation, design, planning, construction, and project management services to meet the unique needs and specialized requirements of our individual clients, families, and businesses.

ATI's accessibility experts will come to your home and sit down with you to assess your needs. They will share their ideas and do a written proposal, including a cost estimate.

ATI's Architectural Barrier Program staff includes three individuals: Audrey Jones, Architectural Barrier Programs Coordinator; Richard Platt, Architectural Barrier Specialist; and Phyllis Schrieffer, Program Assistant.

Audrey Jones has a degree in Construction Technology, and has worked in the building and construction field for the past ten years. She has led ATI's ABP for the past two years.

Richard is a registered Code Officer, who has over 30 years of experience building and remodeling homes in the Cortland area.

Both Audrey and Richard have specialized training in the Americans with Disabilities Act, Universal Design concepts, and accessibility guidelines. Audrey will soon complete training to become a Certified Aging in Place specialist.

Here's how it works. ATI will come to your home to complete an accessibility assessment, review your requirements and then develop a proposal. If you wish to proceed with the project after reviewing the proposal, ATI will complete a “scope of work” document that specifies all aspects of the project. Depending on the scope of the project, ATI's fee for this service runs \$250 - 1,000. If ATI will be managing the project, this charge is deducted from the final cost.

Next, ATI will put your project “out to bid” by securing cost estimates from a minimum of three contractors. ATI routinely works with 10 - 15 different experienced and professional contractors who are available to work with us throughout the Central New York area. ATI awards the contract to the lowest bidder that meets all of the project requirements.

Throughout the duration of the project, ATI provides general oversight by completing inspections and ensuring the quality completion of the project. The last step is making sure you, the consumer, is satisfied with the final product.

ATI has successfully managed the completion of more than 200 home modification projects over the past seven years, including projects that include: ramps, lifts, roll-in showers, stair-glides, ceiling tracks, enlarged doorways, kitchen modifications, re-location of bathroom or bedrooms, etc. ATI has experience in performing modifications for the hearing or visually impaired and is available to assist businesses and landlords, as well.

For more information on ATI's Architectural Barrier Programs, contact Audrey Jones by phone: 607-753-7363; or by email: ajones@aticortland.org.



Access To Independence
OF CORTLAND COUNTY, INC.

Accessibility Construction Services
26 North Main Street
Cortland, NY 13045
607-753-7363

We are your Accessibility Experts!

Join NY's Disability Advocacy Network!

- Keep current on pressing disability issues!
- Receive email alerts on policy and budget matters!
- Fight for the civil rights of people with disabilities!
- Join 1,000+ statewide advocates to fight for change!

For more information, or to join our advocacy network, email: abaier@aticortland.org

Independent Living Tops NCIL's 2013 National Disability Policy Priority Agenda

For more than a decade, disability advocates from across the nation have been pushing for the reauthorization of the federal *Workforce Investment Act (WIA)* and the *Rehabilitation Act*. The introduction of a bill to reauthorize both pieces of legislation presents a unique opportunity to improve the nation's Independent Living (IL) Program and to substantially increase consumer control at the federal level.

Over the past several years, the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) and disability advocates from across the country have worked closely with the House and Senate to reauthorize the *Workforce Investment Act (WIA)* and the *Rehabilitation Act* contained within it. For the first time, last year, there was legislation in both the House and Senate versions with language that would create a new Independent Living Administration (ILA).

The bipartisan discussion draft created by the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee, and the *Workforce Investment Act of 2013*, both establish an ILA and would strengthen America's Independent Living Program. These bills would reduce the bureaucracy that Centers for Independent Liv-

ing operate within at no additional cost to taxpayers.

The proposed Independent Living Administration (ILA) would elevate the IL Program at the federal level and create an administration independent of and parallel to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) within the Department of Education. The creation of the ILA would mark a truly historic moment in the Independent Living Movement, and for IL advocates across the country.

The ILA would drastically overhaul America's IL Program and fix problems that have frustrated Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs) for years. Although the majority of solutions and enhancements that affect IL contained in this legislation cannot be listed in this document, below are some of the highlights:

- **Creation of an ILA:** a new organization within the Department of Education, completely separate and independent of RSA. The ILA Director would report directly to the Secretary of Education.
- **New Core Service:** the transition of people with disabilities from nursing homes and other institu-

tions to home and community-based residences would become a fifth core service.

- **Clarification of the Role of the SILC:** Because of RSA's interpretations of the Rehabilitation Act, several clarifications regarding SILC activities are present in the bill, including the duties of facilitating the improvement and coordination of services, resource development activities, and carrying out systems advocacy functions.

ATI plans to send a dozen disability advocates to Washington, D.C. on July 25, to participate in a national rally at the Capitol and to meet with the area's leaders to encourage their support.

In the meantime, please contact our leaders to urge their support today: Sen. Charles Schumer: 1-202-224-6542; Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand: 1-202-224-4451; and Congressman Richard Hanna: 1-202-225-3665.

For more information on the proposed ILA, or to learn more about how you can become an involved disability advocate, contact Chad W. Underwood, ATI Chief Operating Officer, by phone: 607-753-7363; or by email: cwunderwood@aticortland.org.

Got rent?

The Cortland Housing Authority has a rental assistance program that may be able to help you!!

The Section 8 Housing Program helps qualified people meet their monthly rent bills by paying a portion of their rent directly to their landlord.

Interested persons may pick up applications at the Housing Authority offices located at
42 Church Street or 51 Port Watson Street
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Call 607-753-9364 or 607-753-1771 to request to have an application sent by mail

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2013 ADA Celebration
Saturday, July 27, 2013
11:00 am - 3:00 pm
Courthouse Park
Celebrating 23 Years!

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2013 ADA Celebration Vendor/Sponsorship Form

Celebrating 23 years of the Passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)!

Saturday, July 27, 2013 11:00 am - 2:00 pm
Courthouse Park, Church Street, Cortland, NY

Company Name: _____

Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

Telephone/Fax Number: _____

***All Vendors are asked to bring their own table & chairs.**

****Set up will be from 10:00 - 11:00 am.**

Business & Individual Sponsorship Levels

- _____ \$50 "Curb-cut" - table space & mention in program
- _____ \$100 "Accessible Parking" - above plus name on t-shirt
- _____ \$150 "Ramp" - above plus mention on live radio
- _____ \$200 "Automatic Door" - above plus logo on t-shirt
- _____ \$250 "Spirit of ADA": above plus 1 minute on live radio broadcast

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Friday, July 5, 2013

Please mail completed forms & payments to:

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**Please make checks payable to:
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Where: Courthouse Park

  
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See reverse side for more information!

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