

Keeping staff connected.

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YAI NETWORK NEWS

November 7, 2016

Our Commitment to Technology

CEO **George Contos** recently visited YAI's Old Bethpage IRA. During his visit, **Teresa Lowther**, who lives in the home, asked if it was possible for her and the rest of the Old Bethpage residents to have access to their own wireless network. "I like going on Pinterest and looking up different ideas for making jewelry and crafts," she said.

"I was very surprised that she asked about that," said **Patrice Graham**, Old Bethpage Supervisor. "She had the opportunity to voice something that was important to her that she had never raised before. We always let people in the residence know that they are their own best advocates and we're here to support."

Technology is important to all of us and, clearly, the people we support are part of that. Teresa's question reflects why George and YAI have made innovation and technology a priority.



Self-Advocates & Execs Meet

Technology was a major topic when **Ravi Dahiya**, Chief Business and Policy Advisor, and **Eli Khoury**, Chief Information Officer, recently met with a group of Self-Advocates from different regions throughout the YAI Network.

"All of the Self-Advocates agree they want more access to technology, but they also mentioned a number of roadblocks," Ravi said.

Exploring Wireless Access

Eli and the Information Technology team are exploring ways YAI can ensure our Self-Advocates and people we support in our group residences can have access to YAI's wireless network. The Self-Advocates welcomed our offer to train them on different technologies which will help them connect securely and safely as a community.

Empowering Self-Advocates

Janice McPhillips, a member of YAI's Manhattan Self-Advocacy Group, called the meeting with YAI executives "empowering." While Facebook is her favorite way to connect with friends and family, she welcomed the idea of learning about other apps and platforms

Eli was just as thrilled to meet with our Self-Advocates and looks forward to attending more meetings with them. "We (the technology team) are dedicated to delivering connectivity and training to empower the people we support online," Eli said.

You, Me and Technology Initiative a Hit

Sonja Williams and **Anna Sheehy** from YAI's Learning and Talent Development Department were guests at the 16th Annual Coleman Institute Conference, where the six recipients of the Declaration Implementation Grants met for the first time about the progress of their initiatives.

YAI's "You, Me and Technology: Spreading the Word" initiative was a huge hit.

"YAI was the only one that was looking at the people we support and how they could help spread the word about access to technology is important for everyone," Sonja said. "They were really impressed with the role of our Declaration Champions and their perspective of 'nothing about us, without us.'" Sonja and Anna shared YAI's [video featuring some of our Declaration Champions](#), who also did the voice over.

If you haven't already signed the Declaration of the Right of People with Cognitive Disabilities to Technology and Information Access, we encourage you to [sign today](#).

Around the Network



Wagner House Warriors

Congratulations to the members of the Wagner House Warriors "Aktion Club" for being inducted recently into the Port Washington/Manhasset Kiwanis Club. Each member received a certificate and Kiwanis pin. "It was an honor to be here to witness history in the making," said **Adrienne Hood**, A.M. DSP at Wagner. "I was so proud to be a part of their special day." They will support the annual Pancake Breakfast this Sunday and ring bells for the Salvation Army with Kiwanis members throughout December.

Maria Cuneo, Senior Supervisor at Wagner, developed the relationship with the Kiwanis Club through her uncle, **John LaLena**, a longtime member. **Vera Halpenny**, Chief Program Officer, vowed to dedicate some of the \$6,300 the Kiwanis donated to YAI toward staff scholarships. The Kiwanis Club has donated more than \$20,000 to YAI over the past three years through its annual golf outing and will continue to support



Christine Reinhard, Executive Director of RCALD was a guest of Raymond and Tracie Florida on WRCR-AM last week to discuss the important supports the agency provides to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Rockland County and the Hudson Valley region.

Make Your Voice Heard

Tomorrow is Election Day and we want to encourage you and the people you support to vote. It's also important for you to make your voice heard at YAI.

us with this annual event.

It Pays to Know Your Numbers

We truly care about your health and wellness and have upgraded our "Know Your Numbers" program accordingly. If you send proof of your annual physical and complete a [Personal Health Assessment](#) with the Difference Card, you will receive \$100! All employees currently enrolled under our Oxford Liberty Medical plan are eligible.

- Complete your annual wellness exam any time from May 1, 2016 thru April 30, 2017.
- Send proof of your exam to the Difference Card using the [Physical Exam Form](#) or submit a signed letter from your physician.
- Complete your [Personal Health Assessment](#) on the [Difference Card website](#) by April 30, 2017.

Fax your form to the Difference Card: [914.220.0901](tel:914.220.0901) or mail it to: The Difference Card, 245 Main Street, Suite 605, White Plains, N.Y. 10601

If you have questions about this process, please contact the Difference Card: [888.343.2110](tel:888.343.2110) or Suzanne Brown in Human Resources: [212.273.6509](tel:212.273.6509).

Got ideas? We're listening! We want to hear from you. Why? Because we're better together. Email ideas@yai.org.

You can speak up today by completing YAI's Staff Feedback Survey. Our Leadership Team is listening. Your feedback is important and will help shape and guide our organization.

You can access the survey by clicking [here](#). It takes no more than 10 minutes to complete and your responses are 100 percent confidential. Please complete the survey by Friday, Nov. 11, 2016.

Moving Up

Back by popular demand, we are sharing recent staff promotions.

- **Hazel Davis**, (Madison Ave. Day Services), promoted to Assistant Behavioral Intervention Specialist (BIS)
- **Emily Ditolla**, (RCALD 3 Alice Drive), promoted to Assistant Supervisor-in-Training Day Hab Without Walls
- **Adena Edelberg**, (Brentwood Day Services), promoted to Supervisor
- **Tiffany Marie Goldson**, (Riverdale), promoted to Assistant Supervisor
- **Jennifer Mathis**, (Cobble Hill), promoted to Senior Morning DSP
- **Jessica Miller**, (Johnson Ave.), promoted to Morning DSP
- **Olabiyi Olanrewaju**, (E. 35th St., Suite 1), Health Care Specialist-in-Training
- **Jennifer Orozco**, (Hollis Hills), promoted to Health Care Specialist



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