

Headway is a support and advocacy agency for persons with brain injury, other disabilities and seniors.



SUPPORT GROUP NEWS

Over the past quarter, our support groups have included several people and their caregivers who have reached out to Headway of WNY, an affiliate of People Inc., for services. Several have known individuals who have had their lives impacted by traumatic brain injury and have been wanting to find help for someone whom they care about. There are others who have bravely taken the step to reach out for themselves in order to receive help during these most recent times. As we continue to move through the global COVID-19 pandemic, Headway of WNY would like to encourage people to continue to take care of yourself and others in both the physical sense and to take care emotionally as well.

If you find yourself having difficulty with stress, your emotions have been impacted or if you find it difficult to take care of someone during this time, perhaps it is time to reach out for help and resources. The local 2-1-1 of WNY is a beneficial resource to call for any resources, including respite and mental health support that you may be in search of. Just pick up any phone, and you can dial 2-1-1, or for a more formal phone number, call 1.888.696.9211. If you or your loved one is over the age of 65, NY Connects with Erie

County can be reached at 716.856.8526 for services, which are available to people who are specifically 65 years of age and older. Yet another resource for finding any type of health care professional is to call the toll-free number on the back of your health insurance card, if applicable, in order to find providers, doctors and specialists, who are covered within the network under your health insurance.

Our support groups at Headway of WNY have been running virtually since the beginning of the pandemic and have continued in this manner for the safety of our clients and their loved ones. If someone you know has been impacted by a stroke or traumatic brain injury, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at support@headwayofwny.org or 716.263.6558. If you would like to attend a support group, they run every first and third Wednesday of the month, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. and can be reached by visiting our website at headwayofwny.org – click the link for “Support Groups,” scroll down and you will find the link where you enter the group where it says, “Click here” to enter our virtual room when the support group starts. Hope to see you there!

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Headway is a donor designated agency of the United Way 501C3 Non-Profit Organization

FROM THE DIRECTOR



I looked back at my last two newsletter columns and both focused on getting through the global COVID-19 pandemic and steps Headway of WNY have taken to continue to operate safely to help meet the needs of the community. I had planned to try a different theme for this column, but still unable to present the return of in-person services or the exact date of our gala fundraiser. It does look like that it is more hopeful for a return to in-person for Headway, and relief of increased staffing for agencies providing home care to help reduce the stress for families, who have been doing their best for their loved ones.

In our own staffing news, we send our best wishes to Christine Melchiorre, who for over eight years worked for Headway of WNY as our Funding and Outreach specialist. She has not gone far, as Christine has moved to a full time position at People Inc., our parent agency, and we wish her well.

In other news, I'm pleased to announce that our offices will be moving later this year to the Tri-Main Center on Main Street in Buffalo, NY. More info will be announced as it becomes available! We are targeting the fall season for the return of our gala and a celebration of perseverance. Headway continues to be an agency that looks to community inclusion. You can become a member of Headway, plus there are opportunities to volunteer or take part in committees, including our quarterly Advisory Committee. Give us a call for more details.

With all the current world challenges, the need for services has not lessened. Change is a constant and we all move forward together.

Ronald Fernández, RRDS, CRC, LMHC
Director

STAFF UPDATES

This past fall season, Headway of WNY was pleased to add two new staff members: Mia Rich accepted the Regional Resource and Development specialist position, mostly for the Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Waiver Program. Around the same time, Rennel Williams accepted the Assistant Regional Resource Development specialist, mostly for the TBI Waiver.



Mia Rich, RRDS

Mia received her Bachelor's and a Master's degree in Criminal Justice from SUNY Buffalo State College. Prior to working at Headway of WNY, Mia worked as an incident investigator for a local home care provider agency. Working at the home care agency allowed Mia to realize that she enjoyed working with people who have disabilities and advocating for those who may not be able to do so themselves.

Mia is eager to gain more knowledge about our Waiver Program and working with people in need while being part of the Headway Team!



Rennel Williams, Assistant RRDS

Rennel previously worked in care coordination and property management. In 2006, Rennel received her Associate's degree from Bryant & Stratton College, majoring in Human Services. Later, she received her Bachelor's from SUNY Buffalo State College, majoring in Sociology and a minor in Social Welfare. Earlier in her employment history, she worked in residential settings and day habilitation programs. She realized that she loved helping people and that's what made her decide to work at Headway! Rennel spends her free time teaching children's Yoga/Art and Life Coaching. She is impressed about how resilient children can be and satisfying to her to make a difference. She is a lifelong learner and is looking forward to all of the knowledge that she will gain from being a Headway employee!

The mission of **Headway of WNY, Inc.**, an affiliate of People Inc., is to ensure that individuals in WNY with brain injuries, other disabilities and seniors have access to advocacy, resources and support systems to enable them to live as independently as possible. We seek to educate the broader community about the causes, consequences and means of prevention of brain injury.

BENEFITS OF ADULT DAY PROGRAMS

Adult Day Programs provide caring services and open access to structured activities during day-time hours. If you or someone you know could benefit from having activities during the day, and have a traumatic-brain injury or another type of medical impairment, perhaps you may find some benefit in enrollment in a local day program. They can come in the form of both social and medical-type programs, depending on your needs or those of your loved ones. In some cases, transportation is available to and from a person's residence. In this newsletter issue, Headway of WNY spotlights medical and social day programs providing services for people on the TBI Waiver and fee for service. In future newsletters, OPWDD day programs and options for older adults will be featured. Listed below are some day programs that may be a resource. You can also visit our website, headwayofwny, for more information on day programs in the area.

GuildCare Adult Health Care Program

Provides services for people with any type of visual impairment.

1170 Main Street, Buffalo, NY

716.885.8041

lighthouseguild.org

The Resource Center Day Program

Services for people on the TBI Waiver Program.

Dunkirk, NY

716.483.2344

resourcecenter.org

Schofield Adult Day Health Program

Provides medical day services for people available through Medicaid and private pay.

190 Fulton Street, Buffalo, NY

716.849.8720

schofieldcare.org

St. Francis Adult Medical Day Program

The program provides specialized adult day services, respite care, education and support.

34 Benwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY

716.862.2513 saintfrancisadulthooddayhealth.com

VA Adult Health Care Program

Provides medical day services for veterans.

716.834.9200

va.gov/western-new-york-health-care



Venture Forthe Inc.

Provides social day program services for people on or off the TBI Waiver and others through private pay or some insurances.

Ellicott Square Building, 295 Main Street, Suite #101
Niagara Falls, NY

716.285.8070

ventureforthe.com

Warner Place Adult Daycare Program

Provides medical day program services.

Jamestown, NY

716.664.4905

lutheran-jamestown.org/warner-place

For help in deciding if one of these or other day program options are right for you or your family member, call Headway of WNY at 716.408.3110. It is recommended to consult with your medical physician prior to starting any new health and medical program. Headway of WNY does not endorse any particular wellness or day program.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE
MOVE FORWARD WITH HEADWAY

Become a Member of Headway of WNY and get involved!
We need you to help sustain our mission. Call 716.408.3120.

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE: THANK YOU TO UNSUNG HEROES

This article was submitted by a parent of a participant in the Headway of WNY TBI Waiver Program

The last two years have been hard on everyone. The isolation has been particularly hard on those who have barriers to living full and independent lives. Many heroes have emerged from this global COVID-19 pandemic. Some are well known, but there are many unsung ones as well. This is my heartfelt thanks to one of those heroes.

My son suffered a traumatic brain injury (TBD) five years ago. At the same time, he experienced an abrupt halt to his full, busy and active life. The pandemic was something of a double whammy for him. He had slowly begun to build back a life, meeting new people and enjoying new experiences. One of his favorite new activities was twice a week attendance at Venture Forth's Day Program in downtown Buffalo, NY. He particularly liked Bonnie Porter, one of the people who runs the program.

The program took him into his beloved city from his suburban home. He went on field trips to different places around the area, enjoyed the Friday music program, and played pool and video games, as well as engaged in other activities with the people who attended. He frequently would offer a critique of the day's hot lunch offering. It was usually positive.

The shutdown halted the program, which meant he sat in his apartment with little social contact. If the weather was nice, he would go for long walks. That was his life.

But then he began telling me he was getting weekly phone calls from Bonnie Porter. I suspect the calls were to make sure all was well with him, but they weren't just checkups. They also involved music trivia questions, other quizzes and at times just social chitchat. After these calls, I noticed his spirits seemed brighter, he was a little more talkative and he seemed more upbeat. In many ways, I feel these calls were a lifeline to the wider world. That's something we all need.

I was always informed of his weekly "Bonnie call." His critique was *always* positive.



Noreen Flynn and son Ben

FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING: THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO COLLABORATES WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO SECURE BRAIN INJURY RESEARCH FUNDING

Contributed by Jacob I. McPherson, PT, DPT, NCS; Christopher J. Stavisky, PhD, OTR/L; Sue Ann Sisto, PT, MA, Ph.D., FACRM and Jeanne Langan, PT, PhD



The University at Buffalo's (UB) Department of Rehabilitation Science has recently submitted a grant proposal to the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), one of the federal government's leading disability research organizations. This effort would not have been possible without the support of other local organizations

involved in serving individuals with traumatic brain injury, including Headway of WNY, People Inc. and Venture Forthe Inc.

If funded, the grant would allow the UB research team to investigate the unmet needs of brain injury survivors, beginning with their initial contact with the healthcare system, through hospitalization and rehabilitation, and their eventual return to living in the home and community. The work would have an additional focus on uncovering issues affecting care partners of individuals with brain injury and how their relationships with the survivor may be affected.

The hope is to be able to better understand disparities and barriers in healthcare and service delivery affecting individuals with brain injury. We also hope to be able to share this information with brain injury survivors, their care partners, healthcare providers, community organizations and people involved in health policy. The title of the proposal includes the phrase, "From Surviving to Thriving," and we believe that by bringing potential issues to the attention of others, we can improve the long-term quality of life for individuals with brain injury and their care partners.

We feel very fortunate to have support for this concept from Headway of WNY, in particular Ron Fernandez and Christine Melchiorre. Learning about the issues facing people with brain injury from those directly involved in coordinating and/or providing services has been critical to the development of our proposal. We are also thrilled to build and strengthen our UB relationships with other local organizations providing such critical services to our community!



**Dr. Dick O'Connor &
Dr. Alyssa Fortuna**

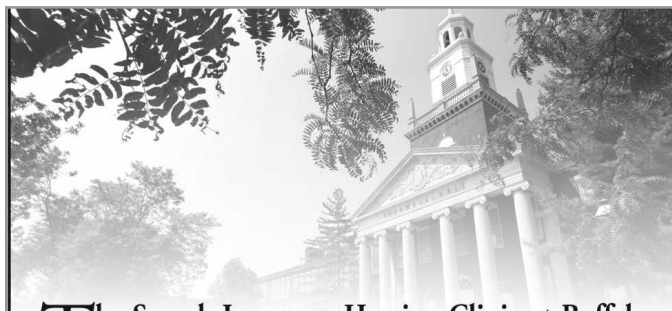
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980 West Maple Court, Suite 200
Elma, NY 14059

P: (716) 398-4300

E: info@VisionTherapyWNY.com

visiontherapywny.com



The Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic at Buffalo State offers individually tailored assessment and treatment for persons with brain injuries due to trauma or stroke, weekly aphasia support group meetings, and an intensive aphasia therapy summer program.

Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic

1300 Elmwood Avenue • Caudell Hall 149
Buffalo, NY 14222 • (716) 878-3530

speech.buffalostate.edu/speech-language-hearing-clinic



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NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS: PEOPLE INC. AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS AND SENIOR LIVING LOCATIONS IN ERIE AND NIAGARA COUNTIES



People Inc. provides a wide-variety of apartments across Western New York that are accepting applications. Options include:

People Inc. Affordable Apartments: Provides those who are income-eligible and meet the qualifications for set-aside units, based on our funding sources with safe, affordable apartments. Specific locations include:

Brand NEW Apartment Complex – Oakwood Senior Apartments, 15 Oakwood Avenue, Blasdell: 55+ Years, income-eligible. Additionally, there are seven furnished set-aside apartments for people 55+, who are income-eligible and are frail elderly homeless individuals.

Grant Street Apartments, 25 Grant Street, North Tonawanda: Age 18+ and income-eligible or who has an intellectual or developmental disability.

Highland School Apartments, 105 Highland Avenue, Tonawanda: Age 18+ and income-eligible; have a traumatic brain injury or an intellectual/developmental disability. A two-bedroom unit with hearing and vision accommodations available.

Linwood Lafayette Senior Apartments, 637 Linwood Avenue, Buffalo: Age 55+ and income-eligible, physically disabled and/or intellectually/developmentally disabled. Market rate units available.

Locations for the Olmsted Apartments, managed by People Inc., include the following (preferences for people with physical disabilities or vision impairments are provided):

- **Austin Manor Apartments:** 395 Tonawanda Street, Buffalo, NY
- **Elizabeth Harvey Apartments:** 525 Oliver Street, North Tonawanda, NY
- **Gratwick Manor Apartments:** 840 Tonawanda Street, Buffalo, NY
- **Haskell Stovroff Apartments:** 30 Alpine Place, Cheektowaga, NY
- **Nelson Hopkins Apartments:** 5562 Davison Road, Lockport, NY

People Inc. Senior Living: Affordable and maintenance-free one-bedroom apartments for independent older adults age 62 and up who are income-eligible. Many locations are accepting applications, including Amherst, Angola, Blasdell, Buffalo, South Buffalo, Gowanda, Grand Island, Lackawanna, Lockport, Springville and Wheatfield. Two benefits of People Inc. Senior Living are affordable rent based on income and safety features. (*Our Gowanda location provides HUD Section 202 Affordable Housing and NYS Tax Credit apartments for seniors age 62+. Accessible unit available. Amenities vary. TTD/TTY: 1.800.662.1220).

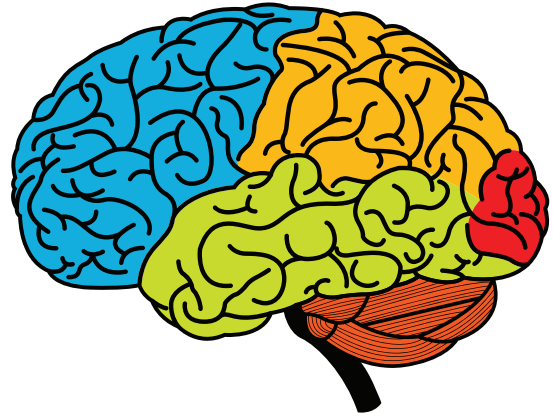


For additional info about any of these apartment options, email housing@people-inc.org or call 716.880.3890.

HEADWAY HIGHLIGHTS!

Recent research on how we remember has uncovered that neuro cells in the brain will break up the flow of memory of an event when there are interruptions or other changes in the experience.

A study led by Ueli Rutishauser, Ph.D., professor at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, and made possible by the NIH BRAIN Initiative's Research on Humans program, worked with 20 patients who were undergoing brain recording activity in order to guide surgery for their drug-resistant epilepsy who were shown two different videos of people playing baseball. The first video showed a "soft boundary" where a batter was shown hitting a ball and cut to the fielder making a play. The second video showed a "hard boundary" of the same batter hitting the ball with the video cutting to a commercial. Brain imagery showed "boundary cells" responding to both videos, signifying an open recording of memory, whereas the second group, "event cells" only responded to "hard boundaries," signifying a close of that memory. The participants were then showed pairs of images from the clips they'd just watched and asked which had occurred first. It was found that participants had a harder time choosing the correct image if they'd occurred on different sides of the "hard boundary" memories, possibly because they'd been placed in two different "events." This study can help us to guide future therapies to help strengthen the foundation of memories. The study also suggest the importance of being present to an experience to have better recall.



"This study can help us to guide future therapies to help strengthen the foundation of memories."

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people-inc.org/careers or call 716.322.7050



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