



Creating a Continuum of Housing Options

Program Agenda



"I'm Home Now:"

*"Creative Solutions to Meeting the Housing Needs of People with
Developmental Disabilities"*

*Division of Person-Centered Supports
Office of Home and Community Living*

**June 18 & June 19, 2012
10:00AM-2:00PM**

Funded by
New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
Faith Community Development Grant



Mission

We help people with developmental disabilities live richer lives.

Vision

People with developmental disabilities enjoy meaningful relationships with friends, family, and others in their lives; experience personal health and growth; live in the home of their choice; and fully participate in their communities.

Our Values

Compassion: The capacity to appreciate what others think and feel.

Dignity: The recognition of the worth of each person and the treatment of individual rights and preferences with respect, honor, and fairness.

Awareness: The ability to recognize the strengths within our environment, and where continual improvements are necessary.

Excellence: The continual emphasis on innovation, increasing knowledge, and delivering the highest quality supports and services.

Honesty: The foundation on which trust is built and truth is communicated.

Guiding Principles

Put the Person First: People with developmental disabilities are at the heart of everything we do, and this person-first ethic is embodied in the way we express ourselves.

Improve Overall Quality of Life: OPWDD's vision of productive and fulfilling lives for people with developmental disabilities is achieved by creating opportunities and supporting people in ways that allow for as many people as possible to access the supports and services they want and need.

Provide Equal Opportunity: Access to supports and services is fair and equitable; a range of options is available in local communities to ensure this access, regardless of where in New York State one resides.

Ensure Accountability: There is a shared accountability and responsibility among and by all stakeholders, including individuals with disabilities, their families, the public, and our nonprofit providers. OPWDD's staff and providers are held to a high degree of accountability in carrying out responsibilities. We strive to earn and keep the individual trust of people with developmental disabilities and their families, as well as the public trust. Creating a system of supports that honors an individual's right to be responsible for their own life and accountable for their own decisions is of paramount importance.

Nurture Partnerships and Collaborations: The needs of people with developmental disabilities are as diverse as the individuals themselves. We believe our services and supports are most effective when there is collaboration with the many local and statewide entities that are partners in planning for and meeting these needs; this may include people who have developmental disabilities, their families, nonprofit providers, communities, local government and social, health, and educational systems.



SUCCESS STORIES

Central NY DDSO

John Gleason, Director
Debra Bojarski, Treatment Team Leader (TTL), County Liaison & Housing Coordinator
Michael Kennedy, Homeowner
Channing Curry & DelMarshia Curry, Uncertified Apartment
Paul Stern, Director of Community Services
Dana Guernsey, Associate Vice President of Community and Vocational Services
Upstate Cerebral Palsy
Work Independence Support Home (W.I.S.H.) Program

Bernard Fineson DDSO

Donna Limiti, Acting Director
Robyn Mooney, Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW), Placement & Housing
Coordinator
Danielle Lazzarra, Individual Support Services (ISS)
Lisa Severino, Individual Support Services (ISS)

Hudson Valley DDSO

Michael Kirchmer, Director
Vivian Street, DDPS 2 & Housing Coordinator
Jen Oates, Residence Manager, Crystal Run Village
Judy Card, Medicaid Service Coordinator (MSC), Crystal Run Village
Mary Lu Llaveria & Flo Eve, Supportive Apartment
Anita Reisman, Director of Residential Program, Yedei Chesed
Tal Zamir & Miriam Zamir, Individual Support Services (ISS)







SUCCESS STORIES

Western NY DDSO

Kirk Maurer, Director
Bonnie Evert, DDPS 2 & Housing Coordinator
Linda Schott, Customized Residential Option
Paula Jones, Service Representative, Heritage Christian Services, Inc.
Mara Wright & Jeffrey Wright, Customized Residential Option

Broome DDSO

Mark Lankes, Director
Margaret Frommer, Contract Management Specialist 2 & Housing Coordinator
Melissa Mann, MSC, Challenge Industries, Inc.
Tim Martin, Supportive Apartment

Finger Lakes

Michael Feeney, Director
Colleen Delaney, DDPS 1 & Housing Coordinator
Drew Bielemeier, Senior Vice President
Julie Owen, Director of Customized Supports & Services, Heritage Christian Services, Inc.
Glenda, Paula & Sue Roberts, Supportive House

Brooklyn DDSO

Donna Limiti, Director
Phyllis Ball, DDPS 2 & Housing Coordinator
Julio Colon, Supportive Apartment

Capital District DDSO

Cheryl Greiner, Acting Director
Keith McCauley, DDPS 1 & Housing Coordinator
Gary Tetreault, Supportive Apartment



Start	End	
<i>June 18, 2012</i>		
10:00	10:30	<u>Welcome and Opening Remarks by Commissioner Burke</u> Gerald Huber, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Division of Person-Centered Supports Lucinda Grant-Griffin, Ph.D., Director, Office of Home & Community Living
10:30	11:00	Central NY DDSO Debra Bojarski, TTL, County Liaison & Housing Coordinator Michael Kennedy, Homeowner
11:00	11:30	Bernard Fineson DDSO Robyn Mooney, LMSW, Placement & Housing Coordinator Danielle Lazarra, ISS
11:30	12:00	Robyn Mooney LMSW, Placement & Housing Coordinator Lisa Severino, ISS
12:00	12:30	Hudson Valley DDSO Vivian Street, DDPS 2 & Housing Coordinator Jen Oates, Residence Manager, Crystal Run Village Judy Card, MSC, Crystal Run Village Mary Lu Llaveria & Flo Eve, Supportive Apartment
12:30	1:00	Western NY DDSO Bonnie Evert, DDPS 2 & Housing Coordinator Paula Jones, Service Representative, Heritage Christian Services, Inc. Linda Schott, Customized Residential Option
1:00	1:30	Bonnie Evert, DDPS 2 & Housing Coordinator Paula Jones, Service Representative, Heritage Christian Services, Inc. Mara Wright & Jeffrey Wright, Customized Residential Option
1:30	1:55	Broome DDSO Margaret Frommer, Contract Management Specialist 2 & Housing Coordinator Melissa Mann, MSC, Challenge Industries, Inc. Tim Martin, Supportive Apartment
1:55	2:00	Closing Remarks



Start	End	
<i>June 19, 2012</i>		
10:00	10:30	<p>Welcome and Opening Remarks by Executive Deputy Commissioner James Moran Gerald Huber, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Division of Person-Centered Supports Lucinda Grant-Griffin, Ph.D., Director, Office of Home & Community Living</p>
10:30	11:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Finger Lakes DDSO Colleen Delaney, DDPS 1 & Housing Coordinator Julie Owen, Director of Customized Supports and Services, Heritage Christian Services, Inc. Glenda, Paula, and Sue Roberts, Supportive House</p>
11:00	11:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Central NY DDSO Debra Bojarski, TTL, County Liaison & Housing Coordinator Channing Curry & Delmarshia Curry, Uncertified Apartment Paul Stern, Director of Community Services Dana Guernsey, Associate Vice President of Community and Vocational Services Upstate Cerebral Palsy Work Independence Support Home (W.I.S.H) Program</p>
11:30	12:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Hudson Valley DDSO Vivian Street, DDPS 2 & Housing Coordinator Anita Reisman, Director of Residential Programs - Yedei Chesed Tal Zamir & Miriam Zamir, ISS</p>
12:00	12:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Brooklyn DDSO Phyllis Ball, DDPS 2 & Housing Coordinator Julio Colon, Supportive Apartment</p>
12:30	1:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Capital District DDSO Keith McCauley, DDPS 1 & Housing Coordinator Gary Tetreault, Supportive Apartment</p>
1:00	1:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Finger Lakes DDSO Colleen Delaney, DDPS 1 & Housing Coordinator Drew Bielemeier, Senior Vice President of Operations Julie Owen, Director of Customized Supports and Services, Heritage Christian Services, Inc.</p>
1:30	2:00	<p>Closing Remarks: Gerald Huber; Lucinda Grant-Griffin; Catherine Patterson; Robert Addis; Martha Schunk; William Reid; Alexander Brooks; Leon Dukes; Cinda Putnam; Timothy Elliot; Regina Fowler; Veronica Johnson; Nelcy Ramirez; Zefa Dedic; Niesha Williams; Debra Barnaby</p>

OUR STORIES





Michael Kennedy's

Story

(Central New York DDSO)

Michael and his wife Lori married 19 years ago, lived in an apartment for three years, when approached by a work colleague about purchasing his two-family accessible house in the city of Syracuse. Michael and Lori both employed and using wheelchairs for mobility were excited about the prospect of owning their own home. They went to see the house, and liked the neighborhood; the open layout of the first floor; the large kitchen; the roll-in shower; the garden and yard; and the prospect of rental income to cover the mortgage. They didn't ask anyone to help them make this decision, and relied on help from the seller, who they considered a trusted friend. Michael and Lori went to a bank and qualified for a mortgage. The seller helped them locate a realtor, and hired his own home inspector. He even loaned them money for the closing costs, which they paid back over the first year.

Shortly after moving in, the fuse box on the second floor caught fire and needed to be replaced. The electrician told them the wiring did not pass code, and was illegal. This was a costly repair. The furnaces (there were two, one for each floor) needed replacement. After eleven years and constant repairs, including a costly one to replace the roof, Michael and Lori decided to sell their dream home. In addition to the repairs, the tenants, former friends, did not always pay their rent, and the neighborhood became dangerous, with a shooting nearby. The tenants eventually had to be evicted and never paid more than \$2,000 in back rent.



Michael and Lori found an accessible apartment that accepted pets, sold the house for a loss, and moved. They discovered they enjoyed being without the stress of landlord-related issues, as well as the money they now had for things like vacations and

a new van. The decision to sell was a difficult one, and there was somewhat of an emotional attachment to the house and the idea of being a homeowner.

The couple spent six years as renters, when a friend saw an accessible ranch-style home for sale on Craig's List. Intrigued, the couple looked at the ad, complete with lots of photos. It was in the suburbs in a quiet well-kept neighborhood. They took off their rose-colored glasses and went to see it. This house was truly accessible, complete with a kitchen with wheelchair level appliances and a laundry room on the first floor. Michael and Lori visited the house several times, and asked for help from family to give them feedback. They hired their own home inspector, after ensuring it was a reputable firm. The inspector sat down with them for a long time reviewing the report. As a result of the inspection, the seller agreed to replace a main pipe in the home. This would have been an expensive repair.

Michael and Lori will celebrate their one year anniversary in the home in July. There have been no major surprises, just routine maintenance. They have a neighbor they have hired to help with upkeep. They are now working on things to the home to enhance their living space, not because things are breaking down. Michael has his own set of tools, and enjoys watching home shows on the DIY channel. This helps him understand how things are repaired, as well as ideas for future upgrades.

Michael receives services through OPWDD to assist him with personal care, community integration assistance, MSC, brokerage, and transportation. He is a Portal participant.



Danielle Lazzara's

Story

(Bernard Fineson DDSO)

Danielle had a lifelong goal to live on her own one day. After moving out of her parent's home, she resided with a family friend, but was told she could not stay. She was then placed in a shared supportive apartment (IRA), but had difficulty with staff coming in and out of her home at different times, following certain rules, and different housemates.

Danielle continued to dream of living in her own apartment one day to allow for increased privacy and increased opportunities for self directed activities. After being unhappy at the supportive apartment, Danielle decided to leave and move back with a friend of the family. Again, she was not able to remain in that living environment, through no fault of her own.

Danielle is a very strong self advocate and called many different agencies on her own to see if she could find an independent living situation, to no avail. Finally she was able to connect with a MSC of her request who found an agency willing to support Danielle in an ISS setting (a non-24 hour setting).

Danielle is extremely happy now that she has her own studio apartment, has input into the selection of her own staff, creates her own schedule of times for staff to



assist her, and lives in a quieter living environment. She is able to have complete privacy when her friends and family come to visit her. She reports that her father is also very happy that she now has her own apartment in an area she desired.

Danielle currently works part time in Manhattan and helps run social programs for other individuals with developmental disabilities. She teaches self advocacy skills, such as how to be safe in the community and travel training.

Danielle has expressed interest in speaking with others in similar situations to help them gain access to more independent living arrangements.



Lisa Severino's

Story

(Bernard Fineson DDSO)

For the past years, Lisa has been living in a supportive housing program with Heartshare Human Services. Prior to living in her ISS setting, she resided in a supportive apartment operated by Heartshare, which she shared with another individual.

Lisa has always wanted her own place to live. Her family was worried about her going to a less restrictive environment, as they felt she would not have enough supports in place and would lose services. Through her own self advocacy, Lisa was able to work with her agency to obtain her own apartment through an ISS grant.



Mary Lu Llaveria and Flo Eve's

Stories

(Hudson Valley DDSO)

Mary Lu has always wanted her own place, just like her sister. It always bothered her that her sister got to live on her own and she did not. Moving into her own place was a dream come true for her. The only dream Crystal Run Village (CRV) cannot help her realize is her dream to be pals with Derek Jeter. Mary Lu is a major fan. She went to spring training in Florida with her sister last year and is a frequent flyer at Yankee games.

Flo lived a fairly sheltered life with her family before she moved to a CRV group home. Staff always considered her a good candidate for a supportive apartment, but her mother had made it clear during the placement process that this was not an acceptable idea. CRV's former Executive Director, Jim Lawler, always listened to his staff, but had always supported the mom in her need to protect Flo. Staff in recent years challenged Jim on his stance and through the efforts of many (with Flo at the forefront!), Flo moved to CRV.



Linda Schott's

Story

(Western NY DDSO)

Justin and his parents began a 10 plus year journey working towards developing a certified home with 7 other young men. Throughout the journey, there were many obstacles that the group endured such as location, change in the original group pursuing the dream to live together and finally NYS putting a stop to the development of certified group homes. We were so close and yet so far. Heritage Christian Services (HCS) and OPWDD worked with us to find an alternative solution to our dream. HCS purchased a home for the four guys wanting to live together. Justin and his friends, some of which he has known throughout his school years, moved into their home in June 2011.

Justin was excited, and yet reserved, about his new home at first. It was important to him not to lose the traditions he had grown up with and the connection to his family. It did not take long for Justin to show everyone how he could rise to the expectations of being responsible for his needs. Justin enjoys the camaraderie of his home and works with the staff that provide support to him in learning skills in the kitchen, household maintenance tasks, health care skills, and communication with his peers.

Justin continues to participate in his day services and occasionally likes to attend the Personal Enrichment Program for some social activities he enjoys. Justin's parents live close by and are a huge part of his life, but he also enjoys being in his own home with the company of his housemates. Justin knows what he needs to do and what his responsibilities are. With support from his community hab staff, he is learning and becoming more independent each day. Justin has established his own routine of his preferences as well as his needs. He is making responsible decisions and having a great time in his new home.



Mara Wright and Jeffrey Wright's

Story

(Western NY DDSO)

Mara moved into a Customized Residential Option in Tonawanda in June of 2011. Mara had previously lived in a certified IRA for several years. While she lived in the IRA, Mara worked hard to improve her skills with cooking, household chores, financial management and managing her own healthcare. When Mara made the decision to move into a CRO she had no reservation whatsoever. She was eager to use all of the skills she worked hard to acquire. She was successful from day one of her move.

Mara enjoys the freedom of being able to go anywhere she wants at any time as she coordinates her own transportation through natural/community supports. She chooses to find work close to her new home and she now walks to her job at a local sandwich shop. Mara is able to go to her physician's appointments independently for the first time in her life, but she likes having staff supports available to her if she is uncomfortable going to a specific appointment alone.

Mara manages all of her own medications, plans her meals with the support of staff, and recently started an exercise routine. She joined a local church and is a valued member of their congregation. Mara also has a new job that is within walking distance to her home. Mara and her housemates strive to be the best neighbors on the block and work hard to develop relationships with their neighbors. Mara is happy in her new home and loves being part of her new community! Mara's parents committed early in Mara's life that they would help her live as decently as she possibly could throughout



her life. They are extremely pleased with the CRO and the independence that it has allowed their daughter to have!



Tim Martin's Story (Broome DDSO)

If you look up the word *portal* in a dictionary it can be defined as “an entrance, gateway, or doorway, any access to a place”. For Tim, the Portal Initiative through OMRDD was an entrance to independence, self-reliance and ownership of a life that he never dreamed would be his own.

For most of his 47 years he had lived at home with his mother, with only intermittent residence in a boarding school and group home. Tim and his family often wondered if Tim could live independently, but never truly thought it could become a reality. When they were presented with the idea of the Portal Initiative and the supports that it offered for independent living, they were on board to give it a try.

After several months of searching, planning and approving Tim was able to locate the ideal apartment in his beloved home community. The apartment had all the elements that Tim was looking for, close to town, within walking distance to his mom and central to the bus system. More importantly, it kept him in the community where he felt a sense of belonging. With the assistance of his service coordinator and a lot of family discussion, Tim was able to locate an agency for residential and day habilitation that could provide adequate supports during the down time Tim had from work at Challenge's Hydroponic Greenhouse.

Tim has been working with his Community Support Staff through Franziska Racker Centers for the last three months. Together they grocery shop, plan and prepare meals, attend workshops and appointments, exercise and explore the community that



surrounds Tim. Tim has become accustomed to living independently and taking responsibility for himself. He remains an active community member and motivates others who might be skeptical to independent living a try.

When you asks Tim's mother about this experience she will tell you, "This this is better than anything we have ever imagined...a dream come true". Tim has made a seamless transition into living independently, he is a great guy who is always has a joke and a smile ready for the friendly folk he meets, and these days he has a lot to smile about.



Paula and Sue Roberts'

Story

(Finger Lakes DDSO)

After being raised in a loving and supportive family home, Paula and Sue Roberts were excited to move in to their first apartment in March of 2000. They, along with 8 of their friends, lived in a 24 hour supervised apartment setting operated by Heritage Christian Services, Inc.

When the agency launched its first customized residential settings in the spring of 2011, Paula and Sue immediately expressed interest in a new type of home for themselves. Their strong desire for greater independence and their advocacy resulted in their new home.

In March of 2012, Paula and Sue moved in to their two bedroom ranch and have never looked back. With the unwavering support of their family and the customized services through Heritage, Paula and Sue are living their dream.



Channing Curry and Delmarshia Curry's

Story

(Central NY DDSO)

Channing previously lived in an IRA but dreamed about living in his own apartment. This dream became a reality and since October 2011 Channing has resided in his own place, thanks to our WISH apartment program. Today, Channing and his mother will talk about his path to independence.



Tal Zamir and Miriam Zamir's

Story

(Hudson Valley DDSO)

Tal lived in a supervised IRA for the past six years at the Hillside IRA run by Yedei Chesed. Tal felt he did not have a good quality of life due to the nature of his disabilities (Tourettes and Aspbergers). He was unhappy about the living arrangements and felt he would do much better in a more independent housing arrangement on his own. For the past two years, prior to his move, Tal worked hard with the staff and other professionals to gain the skills required to live on his own in an ISS. Tal has moved out of the Hillside IRA about ten months ago and is enjoying his new independence.



Julio Colon's Story (Brooklyn DDSO)

Julio Colon is a 53 year old Hispanic male who functions in the mild range of Intellectual Disability. He is independent in all areas of personal development and community living.

During the early part of 2010, a residential opportunity became available. Julio demonstrated through the years that he had the necessary skills to live independently therefore the program planning team decided he was ready for independent community living. With the proper supports in place of counseling services, residential habilitation services for a small number of hours, day services (SEMP and/or competitive employment) and case management services, it was determined that he would do well.

He was offered a supportive living environment with a voluntary agency that developed some apartments (studios) with a developer in Brooklyn, NY. On December 20, 2010, Julio was able to reside in his own apartment which was fully furnished to his taste. He travels daily to his worksite and earns roughly \$140.00 bi-weekly.

Julio schedules all of his medical appointments and plans his recreational/social activities. He attends all of his therapy services while enjoying the independence he is experiencing. Julio is very satisfied with his new living environment.



Gary Tetreault's Story

(Capital District DDSO)

Gary lived most of his life with his parents in Florida. After the passing of his parents he lived with some friends and had an unsuccessful attempt living on his own in an apartment. Gary was a victim of a violent crime that almost took his life. Gary then moved to New York to live with his sister in 2005. It has been Gary's dream to have his own apartment. He has been very involved in his community and hoped for a place where he could maintain those connections. He is an active member of his church and enjoys volunteer work. The supportive apartment program has been a perfect fit for Gary. Gary's next goal is to obtain a job in his community.



Acknowledgements

Courtney A. Burke, Commissioner

James A. Moran

Julio Colon

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Jen Oates

James Huben

Judy Card

Michael Kennedy

Anita Reisman

Channing Curry

Paula Jones

Delmarshia Curry

Melissa Mann

Danielle Lazarra

Drew Bielemeier

Lisa Severino

Julie Owen

Mary Lu Llaveria

James Keil

Flo Eve

Jean Corbi-Ciappi

Tal Zamir

Catherine Patterson

Miriam Zamir

Janelle Pfister

Linda Schott

Margot Wibbie

Mara Wright

Dan Cropsey & Staff

Jeffrey Wright

James Girmindl

Tim Martin

Paula Roberts

Glenda Roberts

Sue Roberts



NYS Office For People With Developmental Disabilities

Putting People First



Andrew M. Cuomo, *Governor*
Courtney Burke, *Commissioner*