The Employment Connection is proud to provide individuals hope and fulfillment of living a life without limits. The Employment Connection helps individuals in conjunction with our coaches to disseminate valuable information and pointers on job search, including conducting career assessments, search for job openings, completion of online job applications, receive guidance and help preparing your resume, participate in webinars and recording and practicing job interviews on video.

The Employment Connection (http://theemploymentconnection.com) is the “leader in connecting Long Island businesses to qualified workers with disabilities. Businesses today need qualified workers of all types to meet their hiring needs and diversity guidelines. People with disabilities need satisfying and meaningful jobs that match their skills and interests. Connecting the two is what we do! We’ve provided services to thousands of Long Island job seekers since 1994.”

UCP Long Island has an active relationship with The Employment Connection. We successfully place participants in jobs with its assistance and job coaching. Thanks to Linda Browne and Joel Evans, on their assistance in these connection stories.
UCP-LI Success Stories
Employment Connection Placements:

Ronald McAuley

Ronald has worked at Target in Farmingdale for over 13 years. His position is that of a cart person mainly working Monday to Friday on a part-time basis. Recently, he was recognized for his outstanding job performance and selected as one of Target’s “Dedicated Business Owners.” Ronald’s supervisor stated that Ronald has an excellent attitude and he is always willing to go the extra mile to help out in the store. Ronald is especially helpful when the store is short of staff. He readily works extra hours if needed. Ronald is a true team member who is well-respected by his supervisors and co-workers and thoroughly deserves his recent award. Gary Rowe serves as his job coach.

- Joel Evans, Volunteer

Matt Schill

Matt has been employed by the Stop & Shop supermarket in East Northport since 2007. He works in maintenance and anywhere else that he is asked. That includes bottle recycling, sanitation, and stocking shelves. Recently, Matt received additional responsibilities: picking in-store items for fulfilling Peapod orders. Matt has a great attitude and when needed, he will come in on very short notice to help out. Because of his outstanding work ethic, a short while ago, Matt was honored as “Employee of the Month.” [Please note: several of UCP’s participants work in the East Northport Stop & Shop.] Gary Rowe serves as his job coach.

- Joel Evans, Volunteer
Samantha Buonamico

In October 2018, UCP Long Island assisted one of its clients Samantha in applying for a janitorial position at LA Fitness in Lake Grove. Sam quickly heard back from Matt Dicristian, the Operations Manager, who asked her to come in for an interview. Matt provided Samantha with a full description of the job and was open to UCP providing job coaching. Once Samantha was hired, she quickly proved to be a competent worker and Matt noticed this. He then reached out to UCP to ask if they had any more workers that would be interested in a janitorial position. Since then UCP has referred several candidates to LA Fitness, with great results. Her job coach is Veronica Reyes.

-Joel Evans, Volunteer

JAQUAN GILES

Citizens First has existed for more than 25 years with the mission “to protect and advance the well being of all individuals with disabilities.”

Today, Citizens First is more active than ever. Last month, it elected a new president, Jaquan Giles. In addressing the group before his selection, Jaquan spoke: “Good morning, my name is Jaquan Giles, and I’m running for the position of President of the Citizens First self-advocacy group. A position I’m no stranger to. In 2013, I previously served as President and then I advised other Presidents on how to run the group effectively. I encouraged them to learn from earlier mistakes, as I have learned from them. Moving forward, we as a group need to further evolve and extend our reach even further beyond this building. I believe we are more capable than ever before.”

Citizens First Self-Advocacy Group: An UCP-LI Success Story

First Citizens, also recently sponsored a celebration in honor of the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. There was a strong attendance and every participant received a gold medal. The ADA Act is a key resource in the struggle against discrimination regarding disabled persons.

One other example of First Citizens’ involvement in the community was the participation of a large contingent of officers and others in September at the annual Long Island Regional Self-Advocacy Conference. The full-day conference is run by the Self-Advocacy Association of NYS. This year’s topic was “It’s My Life, My Plan.” -Joel Evans, Volunteer
DID YOU KNOW UCP of LI...
Spends over 92 cents of every dollar on programs and services.

WAYS TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Volunteering can range from a few hours to a long-term relationship.
To sign up or for further questions, please e-mail info@ucp-li.org.

Make a meaningful, long-term gift that will cost little or nothing now and can create income opportunities for you and your family.

DONATE

Please contact the Office of Development at 631-232-0015.
Happy Holidays to you and yours. Wishing your friends and loved ones nothing but joy and well-wishes!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Santa’s Little Helper pondering his next move to help his boss spread the Holiday cheer!
ASHLEY'S STORY

Ashley at UCP's Adult Day Program

Early On

April is a UCP of Long Island “parent”, whose daughter, Ashley – her “princess” – graduated from the Children’s Center in June. Ashley, now 21, was born with Cerebral Palsy; her graduation was joyously celebrated by her entire family. “My father flew in from Trinidad for Ashley,” April shares, her pride in her daughter overflowing. “Her happiness is all we want.”

Isn’t that what we all want for our children?

Parents of a child with a disability have to work hard to find the support
Once again, after visiting other programs, April decided that UCP of Long Island offered a full range of Adults Services that proved to be the best match for Ashley. This August, Ashley enrolled in UCP’s Adult Day Habilitation Programs. These months have been an adjustment for the whole family. Ashley – always social – has made friends and is getting used to her new schedule and her surroundings. April and Ashley are working with staff to select services that reflect Ashley’s needs and interests. As an adult, there are many choices available to her. Ashley’s program day will include on-site and community-based learning to and services that will help ensure their child’s safety, learning, and yes – happiness. April recalls her diligent search, nearly 20 years ago, to select a school for Ashley. She visited many different schools before deciding The Children’s Center was the perfect match for her then 2-year-old daughter.

“Really, it’s just a happy, warm place.” April shares, thinking back. “And Ashley loved that school from day one. I remember, on her first days of school, waiting for the bus – she was so tiny but so excited! I was nervous, but she was super excited to go.” Ashley grew up at The Children’s Center, making friends and receiving the personalized care and support she needed to learn, grow, and thrive. Those were happy years.

Fast forward nineteen years to graduation day: Ashley is beaming, alongside family, friends and staff. Mom April, Ashley’s sister, Ariel – and UCP of Long Island – are by Ashley’s side as she transitions from The Children’s Center to the next, adult chapter of her life. So, Ashley is 21. An adult. Now what? All smiles on graduation day!

Last spring, Ashley was one of 250+ students with a disability to graduate from Long Island schools and transition to adult programs. Once again, April searched to find the best program for Ashley, one that would meet her on-going adult needs. Fortunately, April has always been focused on transition services.

In the years leading to Ashley’s graduation, April researched adult day habilitation programs that were person-centered, that provided opportunities for recreation and socialization, and that would help Ashley become more independent.
increase her independence, build her social and communication skills, and enable her to pursue her interests and hobbies.

“UCP is so important to us....” April shares. “It is so good to know your kids can go somewhere where they are happy and accepted.”

For 70 years, UCP of Long Island has been a trusted and supportive resource.

Thankfully, we ensure that moms like April, and all families with a loved one with a disability, aren’t alone. We provide the compassionate care and individualized programs for children and adults that help each individual we serve live a *Life Without Limits*.

But we can’t do it alone. We need your help.

**David Fox: Beautiful Poetry**

David Fox is an UCP individual and a published author!

His free poetry book, released late in 2019, entitled "Critters, Creatures, and Creations" is available now!

David is another great example of UCP's *Life Without Limits*.

We sat down with David for a one-on-one chat.

"I like the freedom of expression. Poetry

David Fox, quietly eats his lunch in the UCP-Long Island Marcus Boulevard lunchroom. He is
allows me to express that."

- David

Critters, Creatures and Creations

By David Fox
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Footsteps
www.footstepsbyfootsteps.com
footsteps@outlook.com

POETRY

made of the person's
language. Poet
labels an object with
words, instead of me
labeling an object with
pictures. Poetry
Y. 1920). The 13th cent.
(1020): The 13th cent.
expected to write songs for
other court occasions.

Poetry
Language which
labels an object with
words, instead of me
labeling an object with
pictures. Poetry is
music made of
language. Metaphor
is when you say
"this is like that.
" I want to do a collection of poems about nature
in regards to children. I thought it was a cute
idea," David said.

For Critters, Creatures, and Creations, David
collaborated with his younger sister
Jessica Fox, who provided illustrations for each
of his poems.

In addition to writing poems, David lives a very
active life. "I play miniature golf, I go bowling
and play volleyball," David describes.

His true passion though is writing poetry. "I
wanted to do a collection of poems about nature
in regards to children. I thought it was a cute
idea," David said.

When he isn't writing or playing sports, David
raves about UCP-LI's day trips.

"I love the day trips to the mall and going to
Walmart. When the weather is warmer we
volunteer and hand out food to the homeless
and do some prayers," says David.

Living in his own room at the Silverleaf Resident
House, he enjoys his room and freedom.

"My room is private, I get to email whenever I
want, the house is very close to UCP-LI, it is very
...
nice", said David.

As we wrap up our chat, and David finishes his rice, I ask for a picture. It isn't every day you get to talk and take a picture with a published author. David doesn't hesitate.

"No problem, let's take it under the picture of the Christmas tree," said David.

Goodbyes were exchanged, and David sat back down. Two things were apparent. I need the recipe for his rice dish and I can't wait to read his book.

David’s book can be downloaded for free through your home computer by copying and accessing the following link:

CLICK BELOW


BONUS:

David with the help of Joel Evans also has a new Poetry Book just released to download as well.

CLICK BELOW!

David's New Book

ADULT SERVICES

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Say hello to Lowell. Lowell is new to the Adult Day Program as he has only been here six months. However, in six months Lowell has gained a following for his outstanding work as an artist. As he calls it, "Abstract Drawings." His hard work paid off as he was just named "Artist of the Month."

An individual in UCP-LI’s Day Brushstrokes Program, which helps participants share their thoughts and feelings through painting in an adapted studio, Lowell’s passion and creativity comes from his family.

As they say, "the apple does not fall far from the tree."

"My grandfather was a talented artist," says Lowell. "He was offered a job as an illustrator for Walt Disney, but it didn't work out. Eventually he took a job working with Joan Crawford's husband, Alfred Steele, the CEO of Pepsi-Cola, as a sign painter. I believe my passion came from my grandfather," Lowell adds.

Lowell's drawings and paintings can be seen all across the building at UCP-LI's Marcus Boulevard location.

"When drawing, I am really in my element."

-Lowell
As Lowell continues at UCP-LI, we are excited to see what he has in store for all.

Meet Jean Caligiuri: 49 YEARS AT UCP-LI

In The Spotlight

"What success means to
Jean Caligiuri celebrated 49 years working at UCP-LI on January 4th, 2020. Let that sink in for a moment. 49 years, over those 49 years, nearly a half a century, the country has seen nine different Presidents. Gas has risen $2.00 a gallon and the cost of a baseball ticket was just $3.00. Jean has seen it all at UCP-LI. She wears as many hats as anyone. Her responsibilities include a wide range from her direct title of Quality Insurance Coordinator to over-seeing all the incident reviews. She also takes part in The Human Rights Committee and acts as the Home Community Support Coordinator.

In the early 1990's, Jean was the former coach of the Suffolk Seagulls, a Disabled Competitive Sports Team that was unstoppable. They participated in a variety of sports, including Track and Field, Power Lifting and Wheel Chair Racing. She coached for 14 years.

"The most joy that it brought to me was how we taught the individuals how to compete naturally," Jean said.

Capturing medals across the Island and eventually the nation wasn’t so much about the trophies and hardware. To Jean, it showed that no one should be limited to anything in life based on their circumstances.

There are so many wonderful miracles that happen at UCP-LI, but none stand out more than the look of pure happiness attained by the individuals.

"What success means to me here at UCP-LI is when an individual never smiled before and then they smile for the first time, it’s a miracle," Jean says.

"When they warm up to you and they realize they have a skill and use it, it is sheer bliss," Jean continues.

"It can be as little as picking something up and putting it in a box or as extreme as them realizing that they can do wonders with their lives," Jeans says.

Jean has a confident look to herself, decades of knowledge, years of experience. She has seen it all, heard it all, experienced it all. Yet, everyday, she comes to work and it is like for the very first time.

"We work for the individual. We advocate
success," Jean adds.

"Whatever program an individual is in, and whatever they are working on, whether it be a painting, a song, any type of fun project, it isn't about the end result, it's about the journey," Jean says.

Jean over the years discusses the growth and support UCP-LI has seen.

"The growth has been amazing. Over the past few decades, we have received unbelievable support and it brings tears to my eyes," Jean says with watery eyes.

"Like I mentioned, everyday here is a miracle. I have seen children grow to be adults. From being hit with such a difficult circumstance from birth to achieving amazing things through their lives," Jean says.

When not working, Jean has many hobbies and loves. She loves the band Alabama and the musician Billy Joel.

Her favorite vacation spot is Italy. She loves watching reruns of Downtown Abby and "anything on PBS."

When asked what her three dinner guests would be if she had to choose from anyone, her answer was exactly what you might think it would be, compelling and thoughtful, just like her.

"My three dinner guests would be Michelle Obama, because she is a strong, decisive woman, but just as compassionate. I would have my family, because they will be there to carry on the tradition and Angela Lansbury, a versatile actress, who is a very strong and creative woman," Jean adds.

Jean has been a rock at UCP-LI for nearly a half of century. She has impacted so many lives in a positive way. Individuals, staff and anyone who has ever met her would attest to that. Michelle Obama and Angela Lansbury, too.
Psychic Thursday 2020

With the
Psychic Sisters

MARCH 5th
6PM-9PM
(Doors open at 5:00)

$50 PER PERSON
Refreshments

UCP-LI Offices
MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
250 Marcus Blvd
Hauppauge, NY 11788

To purchase tickets:
Courtney Scully • 631.232.0011 ext. 402 • cscully@ucp-li.org
www.ucp-li.org

Register online $50.00 plus $4.00 processing fee: https://specialevents.ucp-li.org/psychicthursday

For questions regarding non-profit organizations contact:
Charities.bureau@ag.ny.gov or (212) 416-8401
2020 SPECIAL EVENTS

YPG Brewery & Trivia Night  •  Thursday, April 9th
A Night In Monte Carlo  •  Wednesday, April 22nd
Psychic Thursday  •  Thursday, March 5th
Golf Classic  •  Monday, June 15th
Gold Coast Invitational  •  Monday, August 3rd
5K Walk & Wheel  •  Saturday, October 3rd
Life Without Limits Gala  •  Thursday, October 22nd
Handbag Bingo  •  Sunday, November 15th

For more information about the events or sponsorship opportunities,
Contact the Office of Development:
dev@ucp-li.org  •  631.232.0015  •  www.ucp-li.org

To learn more visit:
www.ucp-li.org