

## A Voyage To Remember!



About fifty friends and staff flocked to Westchester Broadway Dinner Theater in Elmsford, NY on Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, to see the dazzling holiday musical "The Christmas Voyager", thanks once again to the generosity of the Chris

McCarthy Fund. Before the show our friends were treated to a nice dinner and some time to socialize and bond as many have not seen each other since the last McCarthy event, the Fall Festival in September 2009.

The production was a true celebration of the Season. In this original story, a starman from another galaxy journeys through time and space and tradition, to the four corners of Earth as he searches for that magical December 24<sup>th</sup> that will change the course of history. This was a family-oriented show featuring such musical Christmas favorites as: We Need A Little Christmas, Holly Jolly Christmas, Deck The Halls, Santa Claus Is Coming To Town, and many more. Everyone had a wonderful time. One person even shared that she was brought to tears!

The Chris McCarthy Fund is a special fund managed by the McCarthy family in memory of their son and brother Chris McCarthy. Chris, who passed in 2001, suffered from epilepsy and worked with ESSNY for many years. This special fund in his honor is dedicated to providing meaningful socialization to those with epilepsy and other disabilities. To learn more about the fund's many benefits please visit our website.

## Heading To College?

Starting college can be a fun and exciting time, but it can also be challenging. Here is an overview of helpful hints with the goal of making the transition a safe one for persons with epilepsy.

-Develop a plan with your doctor in case you have a seizure and outline it in writing so the key people at your school are aware of what to do (roommates, school nurse/physician)

-Take your medication consistently and make sure you have an adequate supply available. Remember your medication does not mix with alcohol, so please avoid it.

-Make sure to eat well and schedule your classes to get enough rest.

-Manage stress by trying some relaxation techniques like listening to music or taking a break with friends.

-When studying make sure to set enough time aside, find a quiet place, prioritize, and stay organized. Meet with your professors if you need help.

Have fun and don't get discouraged! A pamphlet with more tips can be found on our website. Keep the lines of communication open and don't hesitate to call if you need advice about seizure management. We're here to help!



Would you like to  
receive our  
newsletter online?

Sign up to receive our newsletter  
and other exciting updates online!

Go to  
[www.learnaboutepilepsy.com](http://www.learnaboutepilepsy.com)

Click on "In The News" to register



## Upcoming Events



More information about these events can be  
found on our website.

- ◆ **Adult Epilepsy Support Group**– third Monday of every month at the Palisades Center Mall Community Rooms
- ◆ **Monroe-Woodbury High School Summer Health Fair**– April 15th, 9:30-12:30
- ◆ **Bounce Out The Stigma with Mike Simmel**– Basketball, workshops, & fun for the whole family, April 25th, 11:30-3pm at Dominican College
- ◆ **McCarthy Trip to Torches Restaurant/Paddleboat Cruise**– May 16th, 12-5pm
- ◆ **19th Annual Rockland County Bowl-A-Thon**- June 18th, 6-10pm at New City Bowl
- ◆ **CPI Job Club**– 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month at our Rockland County office.

ESSNY/CPI  
450 West Nyack Road  
Suite 9—Third Floor  
West Nyack, NY 10994  
800-640-0371

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# Services Corner!

## Services We Provide

In each newsletter we will spotlight one service provided by ESSNY/CPI. This time we will focus on service coordination.

What is a service coordinator and what services does s/he provide?

A service coordinator is an advocate. They work hard to get in place whatever services are available for the people with disabilities they serve (called consumers). The service coordinator is like the quarterback of the team of people who are available to help our consumer. As the point person on the team, they find and implement whatever services are available and needed to enrich the life of their consumer. Then the service coordinator manages the team to ensure the services are appropriate and are doing what they are intended to do.

Let's take a step back and see how this all works.

A consumer calls the Agency. A service coordinator will return the call and talk to the consumer about their personal situation. Maybe they want some information about the latest epilepsy drugs, or maybe they want information about services they may be eligible for. Sometimes the service coordinator will make an appointment to meet with the consumer face to face. Either way, the service coordinator is trying to match consumer needs with what social services may be available. Depending on the situation, the service coordinator may begin the work to determine eligibility for different programs offered by New York State.

Some programs that may be considered for eligibility include the Home and Community Based Waiver Program which offers such services as respite care and residential habilitation or the Traumatic Brain Injury Program which offers such services as independent living skills training, and community integration counseling, among others.

After the consumer's eligibility/enrollment process is completed, the service coordinator secures benefits and entitlements for the consumers under the programs. In order to accomplish this, they must navigate the systems and services of Social Security, Medicaid, food stamps, and housing subsidy programs. So.....a service coordinator is a professional who is creative, compassionate, and resourceful with a strong commitment to helping individuals with disabilities. They play an important role in the life of the consumer. Partnering with various other service providers, the service coordinator ensures that the consumer has what is necessary to live a rewarding life.

ESSNY has over 8 service coordinators on staff. Each has a strong commitment to the people s/he serves.

# Consumer Advisory Council

The Consumer Advisory Council of the Epilepsy Society of Southern NY was established in 1997 by a group of individuals whose lives had been impacted by epilepsy in some way; whether directly or as a parent, spouse, or friend. The CAC's mission is to seek and adapt methods of advocating for individuals with epilepsy and their families through community and individual education and to promote quality care and quality of life through personal empowerment.

Sound intriguing? The members of the CAC provide valuable insight and feedback on consumer needs to us here at ESSNY. The CAC also helps to plan volunteer programs, activities, fundraisers, and special projects when meeting a few times a year. In these uncertain times a strong Consumer Advisory Council's help is vital. If you would like more information about the great work the CAC can do, please contact Susanne Finn at (845) 627-0627 ext. 148 and take a look at our website offerings too!



## SDP Happenings!

Our Structured Day Program has been up to all sorts of exciting activities lately. The entire office looks forward to sampling treats from their weekly cooking lesson– their homemade chicken soup was a big hit during this cold winter! The SDP group worked on a communication project utilizing a PowerPoint program as well as using the computers to check e-mail, navigate the internet, and look up the latest current events to discuss. Sign language lessons have begun here by learning to sign the alphabet. It's not all work and no play though– the Nintendo Wii and assorted board and card games also remain popular choices when the group plans their schedule.

The SDP group has been traveling to different places around Rockland County such as a local farmer's market, the movies, and to the mall and Wal-Mart to purchase supplies for a horticulture activity. They've even headed into NYC for one of 'Victoria's Famous Tours', lead by staffer Victoria Maher. Not only were historical buildings and streets observed, but the group got to visit Washington Square Park and see where the Cosby Show was filmed. This trip provided an excellent opportunity to navigate the subway system and buy Metro cards. Contact Victoria Maher at (845) 627-0627 ext. 127 for more information about the Structured Day Program.



### 'Bounce Out The Stigma' with "Mighty Mike" Simmel

You and your family are invited to our free event at Dominican College on Sunday, April 25th, from 11:30 am to 3 pm.

Children will enjoy working with basketball player Mike Simmel and his counselors for a fun filled time on the courts building self-confidence and motor skills. This clinic is a short version of what kids can look forward to at the Mighty Mike Summer Basketball Camps, where the empowering motto is "Limits do not define you, You define your limits".

Parents will be treated to educational workshops on the latest trends and concerns for families from a variety of experienced professionals. Our own Professional Advisory Board President, Dr. Laurence Hirsch, will be presenting on Sports and Epilepsy. Other topics include nutrition, wellness, and more!

To register or find more information please visit [www.bounceoutthestigma.com](http://www.bounceoutthestigma.com) or contact us here at (845) 627-0627. Check [www.learnaboutepilepsy.com](http://www.learnaboutepilepsy.com) as well for more news and special events.

### Find the Answers To These Questions & More On Our Website

1. The college tips pamphlet can be found \_\_\_\_\_.
2. How many medication charts are available?
3. When is the Rockland Bowl– A-Thon?
4. List three ways we encourage people to help get involved?
5. Where can the NEW article 'Generic vs. Brand Name Drugs' be found?



Come Join Our Rockland Adult



Epilepsy Support Group

Which continues at the Palisades Center Mall on the third Monday of each month from 7:00 - 8:30 PM in the Community Rooms.

This West Nyack location is easily accessible via public transportation. Contact [education3@essny.com](mailto:education3@essny.com) for more information and to be registered on our mailing list.

#### Privacy Notice

Consumer Privacy is important to us. You can get a copy of our Privacy Policy on our website or by contacting us directly.