

# 2018 **Annual Report**



Center for   
Disability Services

*Where people get better at life™*

## A letter from our CEO

As we approach our 78th year in this community, we say thank you and happy retirement to our outgoing President and CEO, Alan Krafchin. Alan retired at the end of December after 43 years of distinguished service in human services field, and was a pioneer in providing services in our field. Alan was a leader, advocate, and mentor. Please join me in thanking and congratulating Alan on an outstanding career, and many people benefited from Alan's leadership.

As part of the transition in leadership of the Center, we embarked on a strategic planning process involving our staff, management, and Board of Directors. We designed this process to assure consistency with our agency mission, and uniformity in our approach to managing growth and change. This strategic plan has been our guiding light the last half of 2018, as it will be in the immediate future, highlighting key areas of service delivery, healthcare, integrated employment, community affiliations, collaboration, and technology.

This past year, the Center embraced new regulatory changes in the field of care coordination by partnering with Upstate Cerebral Palsy in Utica

as founding members in creating LIFEPlan Care Coordination Organization. LIFEPlan will allow the Center, through statewide partnerships, to assure we maintain access to services for the individuals we support and their families. This transition is the first step in a long journey of transitioning all services to a managed care model. Be assured, the Center for Disability Services will support you and your family through these changes, and the services you have come to expect from the Center will always be available.

We've included two major program spotlights in this report, for Center Health Care and the Life Quality Solutions Incubator, and encourage you to read about the exciting developments for both over the past year, along with details about our other major programs as well.

Lastly, our Foundation Department continued its hard work raising awareness and funds for our programs and services throughout 2018. Former New York Yankee Nick Swisher joined us at our Aficionado Experience at the Shaker Heritage Society, presented by Northwestern Mutual. In July, we hosted our 25th Annual Newton Plaza and Marini Homes Siro's Cup with over 1,000 participants in

attendance under the tent at Siro's Restaurant to open the Saratoga Social and Racing Season. In October, we hosted our inaugural Lake George Aficionado at the Lake George Club with Bucky Dent as the special guest.

The Center's success doesn't hinge on one person or event. Staff, board members, family, and the community collectively contribute to assure needs are identified, and services are delivered. I am honored to have been chosen to lead this organization into the future, learning from those before me, and those here today. The Center continues to bring hope to individuals and their families. Thank you for believing in, and supporting, the Center for Disability Services, the place **Where People Get Better at Life**.



**Gregory J. Sorrentino**  
President/Chief Executive Officer



## A letter from our Chairperson

I'd like to join Greg Sorrentino in recognizing the incredible contributions that Alan Krafchin has made over the last 43 years. Alan was indeed a champion for individuals with disabilities and their families, and we want to applaud the conclusion of his leadership as the Center's President and Chief Executive Officer.

I'd also like to warmly congratulate Greg as the Center's new President and Chief Executive Officer. Greg previously served as the Center's Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer. He is superbly qualified to lead us today and in the years ahead, as we embrace a new era of healthcare in general, and specialized and improved services for individuals with disabilities.

Healthcare is ever-evolving, with changes in care coordination,

regulation, and technology's role in helping us provide support to individuals and their families.

As Greg highlights in his letter, the Center is well-prepared for these changes thanks to our recently completed comprehensive Strategic Plan. The pillars of our new Strategic Plan address how we will mobilize new alliances, benefit from technology, and innovate in all areas of services for the individuals we support and their families.

As the healthcare market continues to evolve, one thing that will never change is the Center's steadfast commitment to our core mission: "to enable and empower people, primarily those with disabilities, to lead healthy and enriched lives." This mission will continue every day in our residences, classrooms, Center Health Care, St. Margaret's Center,



and every aspect of our work. Everything we accomplish is due to the incredible passion, skill, and dedication of our staff, so please join me in thanking them.

I am humbled and honored to be a part of the Center for Disability Services team, as we all do everything in our power to make the Center the place **Where People Get Better at Life**.

*Jeffrey M. Killeen*  
**Jeffrey Killeen**  
Chairperson of the Board

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# Our Programs & Services

## Adult Day Programs

The Center for Disability Services' Adult Day Programs help adults with disabilities lead healthy and enriched lives through programming geared at development, skills, and community inclusion.

### Programs include:

- Supported Employment
- Day Habilitation
- Respite Services

## Clover Patch Preschool (Albany, Glenville, Queensbury)

Children ages 3 to 5 receive services in self-contained and integrated preschool classrooms in Albany and Glenville. Our special education teachers use technology, mobility equipment and innovative techniques to teach students academics and life skills. Services are also delivered through community-based schools, in childcare settings or at home.

## Kevin G. Langan School (Albany) Langan School at Prospect Center (Queensbury)

The Center for Disability Services provides a wide range of educational services for children with disability diagnoses. Our programs (accredited by the New York State Education Department), do more than teach your child skills; they build a foundation of self-confidence and positivity so they can become successful life-long learners.

### Educational program highlights include:

- Common Core learning standards
- Development goal empowerment
- Services to over 200 students from 58 districts in the Capital District region
- Programs for grade K-12 students with multiple disabilities, autism, and traumatic brain injuries.
- Use of M.O.V.E. program equipment to assist children in developing basic motor skills through a top-down curriculum.

Our school programs, accredited by the New York State Education Department, are operated by New York State certified teachers and staff.



# Spotlight: Center Health Care (Albany)

Center Health Care made significant strides in both promoting excellence in care and in improving financial performance in 2018 led by Maria Kansas MD, Chief Medical Officer and John Mazzariello, Senior Director of Practice Operations.

Identifying a need for improved screening and treatment of Diabetes in our under-served population has resulted in addition of Point of Care testing for the first time in Primary Care. We are performing in-house HgbA1c testing, urine screening for diabetes related kidney disease and Retina-Vue retina scanning for early detection of ophthalmologic complications of diabetes. Eye screening is a special challenge for many of the patients we support, so bringing in-house screening has been particularly important. This device was purchased using grant funding and is expected to greatly improve our quality of care.

Grant funding also enabled the purchase of a Spot Vision screener to detect visual

abnormalities and refractive errors in patients who are unable to participate in typical eye glass fitting and visual screening. We have used this device for screening at St Margaret's Center and our students at Langan School.

Center Health Care's Primary Care practice was the first in the region to achieve NYS Patient Centered Medical Home, a NCQA accreditation with New York State additional requirements that acknowledges to goals of access, patient centered care and excellence in service and quality care. We were acknowledged as high achievers in BHNNY DSRIP program, a state funded program to help improve health screening and overall care and access for Medicaid recipients with the overall goal to decrease expenses, hospitalizations and Emergency Room utilization.

Primary Care has embedded a part-time Psychologist

to improve overall care and access for psychiatric needs and to improve behavioral health and primary care collaboration. Psychiatry, Social Work and psychology continue to work collaboratively for all patients who receive services from both primary care and behavioral health to promote optimal outcomes.

Other Grant funding has allowed purchase of a digital spirometer in Primary care for better asthma assessment, new dental equipment and a new podiatry chair.



## Our Programs & Services (continued)

### Clover Patch Camp and Camp Spectacular

Our summer camps give children the opportunity to have fun while continuing development, improving social skills, and increasing inclusion opportunities. Clover Patch Camp provides support to children with disabilities. Camp Spectacular is optimized for children with autism spectrum disorders, including Asperger's Syndrome and PDD NOS.

- Camp is surrounded by nature with fully accessible trails, wooded glades and the Alplaus Creek with an accessible dock.
- A variety of structured activities are offered including arts and crafts, music and drama, sports, swimming, and camp fires
- Outreach programs such as pet therapy, clowns, magicians and musicians are planned weekly to enhance the camper's experience
- Swimming is offered to all campers in a heated fully accessible pool

### Residential Services

The Center's residential services are a key component in helping others pursue goals of independent living. At the Center, we want every adult with disabilities to have a variety of options when it comes to independence, and to feel successful making their own choices.

The Center for Disability Services is the largest provider of residential services for individuals with

disabilities in upstate New York. We prepare individuals and families for the transition to independence through:

- Supervised Living
- Supportive Living
- In-home Behavioral Support Services
- Respite Care

### Down Syndrome Aim High Resource Center

The Down Syndrome Aim High Resource Center provides parent-to-parent and professional services and support to individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

We offer support programs, educational services, social events, community events and up-to-date news and resources for families, professionals and individuals. We also work to educate the greater community about Down syndrome and to help individuals become self-advocates.

From even before a child is born, throughout childhood and adolescence and into adulthood, Down Syndrome Aim High is here to help each family and individual achieve their goals. We want every person with Down syndrome to reach their fullest potential and to become fully included members of their communities.



"I couldn't have hand-picked a better home, a better group of young men that he is with, and above all, a better staff. I can rest easy knowing that he is taken care of, happy, safe, secure, and having a blast."

—Lauren Calautti

Parent of a resident at the Baker Avenue Residence

## Our Affiliates

### St. Margaret's Center Pediatric & Young Adult Skilled Nursing Facility (Albany)

The Center's skilled nursing facility, St. Margaret's Center, offers cutting-edge, 24-hour long-term intensive skilled nursing to chronically ill children and young adults who have disabilities.

St. Margaret's is a place where infants, children and young adults can learn and grow as they face unique obstacles. We're focused on creating a rich experience for every patient. Daily life includes activities, school, family and friends in a warm atmosphere that feels like home. We see our patients as people, not conditions.

At St. Margaret's, children, young adults and families have access to:

- Compassionate, caring and experienced staff
- 24-Hour skilled nursing care
- Convenient location less than one mile to Albany Medical Center
- A wide range of services and therapies tailored to the needs of long-term pediatric care

### Prospect Center (Queensbury)

Located in Queensbury, NY, Prospect Center offers multi-faceted services for at-risk and developmentally disabled individuals in our community. It hosts several of the Center's educational services for the northern part of our service area, such as the Langan School, Clover Patch Preschool at Prospect Center, and the Prospect Center nursery school.

Services are provided to adults, children, and families. Our programs are designed to accommodate the needs and goals of each person we support, from preschool forward throughout life. These include:

- Medical and therapeutic services
- Multidisciplinary evaluations starting at age 3
- Family support, with a highly individualized approach
- Health home care management



St. Margaret's, our pediatric skilled nursing facility, transitioned 10 children either home or to a community setting in 2018. We have transitioned over 70 kids to the community since 2010.



A community resource for 77 years.



80 locations throughout the 15 county Capital and Saratoga/Lake George region.



The Center provides specialized healthcare, not only to individuals with disabilities, but to anyone in the community.



Annual budget of \$134 million.



Supporting 12,000 people of all ages who have disabilities, and their families.



One of upstate New York's largest providers of programs and services for individuals who have disabilities.

**Leading the way in the field of disabilities.**

## Success Story: Hard Work and Determination Pay Off

Robert "Bob" Klock has worked at the Center's Commercial Services since 2017. His job is important—he's the last person to run quality control before thousands of pieces of mail leave the building. If the job isn't handled correctly, time-sensitive paperwork can be delayed. With Bob on the job, however, the deliveries are ready and waiting for the post office without fail.

According to Director of Operations Chris Schelin, "Bob is one of, if not the, hardest worker we have had in my time at Commercial Services." There's a running joke that when Bob asks to take a break, you can usually find him at one of the work tables putting together mailings. His commitment to his job is truly unmatched.

Bob lives in Cohoes in a residence operated by the Center for Disability Services. He's proud of his home and enjoys spending time with his friends and has also integrated into the community through volunteering and recreational activities.

Through hard work and determination, Bob is attaining new levels of independence and personal and professional growth. His commitment to accuracy, precision, teamwork, and ability to engage himself in any job task has led to him to be a noteworthy part of the Commercial Services team, with a bright future.



# The Life Quality Solutions Incubator

## Engineering a Better Tomorrow for the Center and Beyond

2018 saw the realization of a goal the Center for Disability Services set four years ago—the launch of a research and development arm to help improve the lives of those we support. The Life Quality Solutions Incubator (LQSI) works under the umbrella of the Center to develop a broad range of new products ranging from adaptability equipment to caregiver tools.

With oversight by Eric H. Ledet, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, who serves in a volunteer capacity as its Senior Technical Advisor, LQSI was started to fill a void. The Center and Dr. Ledet saw a lack of modern research and development in the areas of disability support.

### Turning research into new life-changing products

Located in a 5,000 square-foot facility in Watervliet, LQSI researches and develops medical products that address challenges for those with disabilities and

other conditions that affect mobility and quality of life. While the Incubator is entirely separate from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the foundation of the program grew from efforts in the institute's Biomedical Engineering program. In the past, undergraduate students had worked on developing assistive and other medical products, but these projects primarily served an educational function. Projects would get attention from September to May, but there were no resources to move research and development forward.

With the creation of LQSI, the Center can draw from engineering and other technical talents from several area institutions in addition to those at Rensselaer, including Union College, the University at Albany, SUNY Polytechnic, and others. Post-graduate students manage these projects, which allows for greater continuity and advancement for projects with potential. According to Dr. Ledet, "the Capital Region is very unique in that it has a large pool of talent from various local educational institutions."

### Encouraging better oral hygiene, and enabling better overall health

The LQSI is currently working on four major projects, two of which are considered "mature" or close to the point of mass production and introduction into the marketplace. One of these mature projects involves relieving the significant problem of pressure ulcers, which are body sores that develop in individuals who are long-term wheelchair users or those on extended bed rest. LQSI has developed a revolutionary dynamic seating interface that modulates between high and low pressure to prevent the formation of pressure ulcers.

There are over 70 million long-term wheelchair users in the world, and pressure ulcer formation is a common complication that impacts quality of life. This project is just one example of how LQSI has the potential to not only improve the lives of the Center's consumers but also impact a much broader audience.

### Encouraging better oral hygiene, and enabling better overall health

The second project that is near completion also has broad applications as it addresses oral hygiene challenges for caregivers of those with disabilities, and others, such as dementia patients. Oral health is a significant component of overall wellness, and the optimized apparatus for caregiver assisted oral hygiene developed by LQSI enables tooth brushing by caregivers. Unlike existing solutions, such as manual

toothbrushes and oral swabs which are challenging to use and create an unpleasant experience for consumers, this new product rewards and motivates consumers to cooperate and provides a cleaning system that is specifically designed for a caregiver. With over 12 million people in the United States requiring assistance for daily living activities, the impact of LQSI's novel approach to dental hygiene is wide-reaching.

In addition to students and Dr. Ledet, LQSI has a staff that includes an operations manager and technical advisor. The Incubator is looking at opportunities and needs in various populations, including the growing "aging in place" trend that seeks to provide older adults more lifestyle and independence options.

According to Dr. Ledet, LQSI's mission—"to improve the quality of life of those with disabilities through products"—mirrors the overall goals of the Center. And, the future looks quite promising, with patents pending on several projects and younger projects advancing in areas of caregiving and services to those with disability diagnoses.



Certified by the New York State Department of Transportation, our fleet of buses travel nearly two million miles per year, transporting individuals with disabilities to Center programs and residences, community locations, and more throughout the Capital Region.



## Success Story: Inspiration From Octavius “the Fighter” and His Supportive Family

The day-to-day work at the Center for Disability Services is rewarding, but on occasion, we witness something uplifting. This could be a child’s first step facilitated by aquatic therapy, an adult striking a new path to independence through job placement, or one of the other many triumphs witnessed in our programs and services. One such story is the incredibly heartwarming tale of Octavius, a young boy born with several obstacles before him, but none stronger than hope and determination.

Octavius—or “Octo” as he is affectionately called—is a three-year-old patient at St. Margaret’s Center. He was born with achondrogenesis, a rare and severe genetic disorder that affects skeletal and other development. It is a form of dwarfism with life-threatening conditions. Sadly, many infants born with achondrogenesis die shortly after birth due to respiratory failure. Those who live are often faced with an uphill battle—and living their childhood in a hospital setting.

### A Young Life, Lived Entirely In Hospitals

Octavius’s story started the same as others with his condition. He was born at Crouse Hospital in December 2015 and remained admitted until November 2016, when we entered the care of St. Margaret’s. Since then, Octavius has shown his resilience and determination to fight the constraints of achondrogenesis.

“Octo came to us fully ventilator-dependant. He’s been able to make great progress, and is completely off the ventilator today,” noted Maria Mastroianni, Social Worker at St. Margaret’s. “This little guy has defied all of the odds.”

His progress away from the ventilator is cause for celebration, but the bigger news is what followed. After spending his entire life in a hospital or skilled nursing setting, Octo went home for the very first time. In June 2019, Octo got to start his new life, at home with

his grandmother in Endicott. And, in addition to the boy’s strength and determination, his grandmother’s persistence helped make this day possible.

### The Strong Impact of Family Support

Ever since the day Octo became a patient at St. Margaret’s, his grandmother has been a strong presence. She visited her grandson weekly without exception—a five-hour round trip by cab. Her weekly presence helped solidify the family support necessary for Octo’s transition to at-home care. And since day one, Octo’s grandmother asked, “what do we need to do to get this boy home?” She was determined to see that Octo had a life beyond his condition.

Octo’s challenges are, of course, not over. He will require services at home, and medical specialists as part of this schooling. But, the ability to live at home is a massive step for the child—one that promises to guide him in overcoming more hurdles. At home, he’ll be able to enjoy some of his favorite activities, such as playing “head, shoulders, knees, and toes,” having fun with his turtle toy, and watching movies and shows on his mini-DVD player—and he’ll get to explore more fun with his new step towards greater independence. And, he’s still just three! Imagine the world ahead of this young inspiration!

Some of the services from St. Margaret’s that helped Octo in his journey included occupational therapy and respiratory treatments, but the family-centered culture and staff determination may be what helped the most. At St. Margaret’s, staff never give up hope. Octo’s story is inspiring for the care team and the community. It is an example of how a child with even the bleakest outlook can fight and win. Octo has shown that every victory counts and that the determination of patients, staff, and family can make an incredible impact.



“We’ve always said since day one the Center is like a second family...they take a lot of pressure off of you as a family because you know she’s in a safe environment where she’s well care for, and I truly believe that the staff have love in their heart for every single child that they touch.”

**Michelle Canaday, Parent of a Langan School Student**



# Center for Disability Services

Our wide range of services under a single umbrella allows us to provide a seamless continuum of care as the people we support age or as their needs change.



Whether you need us for the weekend, a week, or a lifetime, whether it's in your home or ours, the Center for Disability Services is here to support you and your family.

Prospect Center  
An Affiliate of Center for Disability Services

St. Margaret's Center  
An Affiliate of Center for Disability Services

Kevin G. Langan School  
At the Center for Disability Services

Down Syndrome Aim High Resource Center  
At the Center for Disability Services

Clover Patch Camp  
At the Center for Disability Services

Camp Spectacular  
At the Center for Disability Services

Clover Patch Preschool  
At the Center for Disability Services



## Financial Summary

Thank you to our supporters for their generosity.



80+ Locations



- 89% Program Expenses
- 8% Management/General Expenses
- 3% Other



12,000+ Supported Annually

For additional information of our Audited 2018 Financial Statement, please visit our website [cfdnsny.org](http://cfdnsny.org)

## Please join us and make the Center part of your personal philanthropy and legacy

For over 75 years, the Center for Disability Services has been one of upstate New York's largest providers of programs and services for individuals who have disabilities. The Center for Disability Services is the place *where people get better at life*, but we need your support. Help us in our mission to support others, and make a difference today.

### Ways to Give



Your financial contributions help us support the community.



Make a planned gift and join the Guardian Circle.



Help us provide ongoing services by including the Center in your planned giving efforts.



Donations also accepted directly at [cfdnsny.org/giving](http://cfdnsny.org/giving)

Since your support is so essential to our mission, we have made it easy to help us provide ongoing services and make a positive impact on more lives. Whether you are interested in sending a single one-time donation, or if you'd like to make the Center a part of your recurring charitable giving, we provide numerous options.

Please call 518-944-2121 to learn how you can support our mission.



Center for   
Disability Services

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*Where people get better at life™*

[cfdnsny.org](http://cfdnsny.org)