Upstate Cerebral Palsy Inc., under the leadership of Executive Director Geno DeCondo, has recently entered into an agreement to lease new office space spanning over 30,000 square feet in the Utica Business Park. The newly renovated workplace, located at 125 Business Park Drive, will unite the agency's administrative headquarters. “This is an exciting step for our agency,” commented DeCondo, continuing, “Our support departments, many of which are currently located at separate sites throughout the area, including the current administrative office on Mary Street, are quickly outgrowing their spaces and will benefit from being centralized under one roof, streamlining operations and creating work flow and cost efficiencies.” The move is slated to begin summer 2019, following completion of building renovations.

In addition, Upstate Cerebral Palsy will retain ownership of the former administrative building on Mary Street, which now, thanks to a Capital Grant of $314,000, will be renovated to house a newly restructured mental health clinic under the direction of Community Health and Behavioral Services. This new location will make behavioral health care even more accessible for clients, consolidating services offered at Upstate Cerebral Palsy clinics at 326 Catherine Street, as well as at 1427 and 1500 Genesee Street, in Utica.

The E. John Gavras Center in Auburn, New York is nearing the end of its $1.5 million capital campaign to upgrade and expand its preschool classroom space to serve up to 128 children, as well as adding a conference and training room for staff and a new, stimulating motor therapy space for students. Changes have also been made to the exterior of the building with the addition of the Gavras tree logo and name, helping the building to stand out, generating excitement within the community. According to Danielle Wright, E. John Gavras Center Executive Director, “Our new sign is generating a buzz, we have had many people from the community drop in to see what we do here. We have been doing business at this location since 1974, so it is amazing what a little paint and a new sign can do!”
Message from Louis B. Tehan
President and CEO

New York State budget negotiations are particularly troubling this year as both the Governor and legislature are predicting significant shortfalls of $2.3 billion plus.

Most of the publicity you will hear generally focuses on the Governor’s proposed cuts and their impact on hospitals and school systems, as both the dollar amount of cuts and the statewide combined expenditures of these institutions are significantly greater than other human service providers, particularly the ID/DD field. Nevertheless, the cuts suggested by the Governor as of this writing are dramatic and will seriously impact our ability to provide the full array of life enriching services to thousands of people and families.

The proposed budget does not include the following:

- bFair2DirectCare funding for phase III and IV of the living wage funding
- 2.9% COLA for OPWDD and other human services/programs
- Funding for 4410 (New Discoveries Preschool/Promise) and 853 (CRPs) school staff recruitment and retention
- Significant Health Home reductions in reimbursement in intensive care management over an extended period, which many in the field consider the most effective strategy in working with those individuals with significant and persistent mental health issues.

Unfortunately, the above illustrations of budget cuts, while still being negotiated, does not represent the entire negative impact to our field. Now more than ever, it is critical that all members of the Caring Partnership, the people we support, families, staff and community, contact the following decision makers in whatever format you are most comfortable, to explain the personal impact these cuts will have on you, your loved ones and our community:

Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224
1 (518) 474-8390

Ms. Marianne Buttenschon
NYS Assemblyperson
LOB 528
Albany, NY 12248
1 (518) 455-3454
buttenschonm@nyassembly.gov

Mr. Joseph Griffo
New York State Senator
207 Genesee Street, Room 408
Utica, NY 13501
1 (315) 455-3334
griffo@nysenate.gov

Mr. Robert Smullen
NYS Assemblyperson
LOB 527
Albany, NY 12248
1 (518) 455-3193
smullenr@nyassembly.gov

Mr. James L. Seward
New York State Senator
Room 414, Capitol
Albany, NY 12247
1 (518) 455-3131
seward@nysenate.gov

The Kelberman Center was recently awarded a three-year, $750,000 grant from the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC). This grant funding allows The Kelberman Center to expand its successful clinical and recreation programs to new areas across the State, with the aim of empowering people with autism and related ID/DD in underserved counties to confidently seek out and participate in inclusive social opportunities. The project takes a “Learn and Practice” approach to build a network of community partners poised to host inclusive social opportunity activities for years to come.

The grant period begins in July 2019, focusing initially within Otsego county and then expanding to additional locations for years two and three. Potential community partners will see calls for mini-grants announced later this Fall!
Upstate Cerebral Palsy received a $3,975 grant from the Women’s Fund of Herkimer and Oneida Counties for a social group for young women with disabilities. The “Girls’ Night Out” program, funded in part by The Women’s Fund of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, is designed to foster relationships, build self-esteem and confidence, and promote self-advocacy to a group of 12 women with disabilities in rural Oneida County. Funding will be used to cover many group activities that take place over the next year. According to Geno DeCondo, Upstate Cerebral Palsy Executive Director, “Funding from the Women’s Fund of Herkimer & Oneida Counties, Inc. will allow the “Girls’ Night Out” program to meet twice monthly, offering activities that have been financially out of reach for many of the women in the group, in addition to opening up opportunities for new women to join the group. Making these social activities available to the people we support has been life-changing to many of the participants, who are now able to learn and grow in a supportive and engaging environment. This funding will help to further empower these women through enhanced social and recreational activities, and we thank the Women’s Fund of Herkimer and Oneida Counties for your generous support.”

Upstate Employment Associates, an employment program of Upstate Cerebral Palsy that connects people with meaningful work opportunities within the community, was recently presented with the Rome Community Partner of the Year award through the YMCA. Bruce Hairston, Multi-Team Leader from YMCA of the Greater Tri-Valley presented Dawn Gentile and Tito Seoane from Upstate Employment Associates with the award at the YMCA’s awards dinner in January. There are many benefits of hiring an employee through Upstate Employment Associates, including Federal and/or State tax credits and community recognition. If you are a business owner interested in recruiting talented Upstate Cerebral Palsy employees, contact Dawn Gentile at 315.725.2181 or dawn.gentile@upstatecp.org.

Watch for information on “Root & Grow with Us” Memberships Coming Soon!

Visit rootfarm.org
Please visit upstatecp.org to find out how you can make a difference in the lives of those we support through participating in our events, becoming a volunteer or making a donation. Together, we can help create everyday miracles in the lives of people with differing abilities.