



**Center for Independence
of the Disabled, NY**



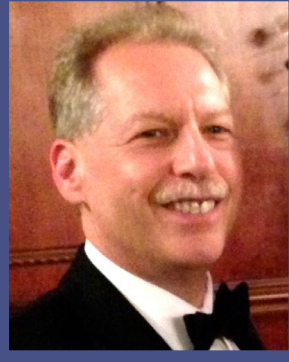
CID-NY



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**Center for Independence
of the Disabled, New York**

Biannual Report 2017-2018



President's Message Martin Eichel

President,
CIDNY Board of Directors

I'm delighted to share the highlights of our work through our 40th year. We value your investment in improving the lives of people with disabilities and are honored to have you as a partner in our work. **I can't thank you enough for your commitment.**

CIDNY achieves significant outcomes that make a difference in people's lives:

- Our counselors used their knowledge, skills, and experiences in work with **91,987 individuals** over the last two years to help them achieve their goals;
- Helping people with disabilities enroll in programs that reduced their healthcare costs, improved their living situation, and led to meaningful employment **saved \$26.4 million in government spending**;
- 673 people **volunteered their time** with us;
- Our outreach and education program improved knowledge of resources and increased the ability of individuals to self-advocate, reaching **35,303 participants**;
- 299 people with disabilities went home from nursing facilities with our help, **saving taxpayers \$13.2 million**;
- Our team of trained advocates and our policy and advocacy staff helped achieve **42 changes to law, regulation, and policy**.
- We reached an audience of **87.3 million people** who were educated by our appearances in traditional media, social media, and on digital platforms. We were featured 59 times in national and local newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and new media stories.

We know that the years ahead will bring new challenges as we continue to remove barriers and improve lives. We are committed to reaching and engaging more New Yorkers with disabilities. Your support makes our work possible. **Thank you.**

"From its start four decades ago, CIDNY has passionately advocated for civil rights and a strong safety net of benefits and services, while ensuring that the concerns of people with disabilities are heard whenever and wherever issues affecting their lives are being decided. Additionally, it advises government officials on ways to make public services like transportation, health insurance, education, and entitlements work better; monitors public and private initiatives that affect people with disabilities and offers constructive solutions to problems; and conducts a wide range of training and technical assistance activities to public officials, health care workers, and other service providers on disability awareness and disability-related issues."

— NYC Council proclamation acknowledging our 40th anniversary



About

CENTER FOR INDEPENDENCE OF THE DISABLED, NY

Founded in 1978, the Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY (CIDNY) helps people with disabilities achieve goals that will improve their lives, equip them with skills, and involve them in advocacy to bring about greater inclusion in our society. CIDNY’s purpose is to ensure full integration, independence, and equal opportunity for all people with any kind of disability by removing barriers to the social, economic, cultural, and civic life of the community. CIDNY is led and staffed by a dedicated team, the majority of whom have disabilities themselves.

We are part of the independent living movement, which began in 1972 and was rooted in civil rights and social justice movements. At the time that the movement arose, people with disabilities were living in segregated settings; taught in segregated schools; had few, segregated work opportunities; and unequal access to communication, housing, transportation, health care, food, civic life, and social opportunities available to people with no disability. While much has changed, many of the original struggles to achieve equality persist.

We support people with disabilities to live the lives that they want and to envision the future they seek for themselves. We help with the day-to-day things that improve their lives. We bring a disability lens to new partners and the public and protect the civil rights of people with disabilities. We advocate to remove barriers and change systems that limit the participation of people with disabilities.



WHAT WE DO

- We help
- find income or other supports including healthcare, housing, transportation, education, and food that make people’s lives better.
 - New Yorkers with disabilities understand how to look for housing and use the rental support programs that can make renting possible.

- individuals transition from institutions to living in the community as they choose and without barriers.
- people we work with understand how moving into the world of work will affect their lives.
- individuals navigate complicated systems and solve difficult problems to get the services they need.
- people register to vote.

PROGRAMS DIRECT SERVICES

Education

- We teach
- people with disabilities life and work readiness skills, about their rights, and about how housing, health care, and transportation programs work.
 - businesses, the courts, government agencies, and the public about disability literacy and disability rights.
 - policymakers about the status of people with disabilities and the issues affecting them by collaborating with university based researchers to develop reports.
 - the public about the lives of people with disabilities through stories about daily life in both mainstream and digital media.

Research

- We research
- conditions in the community for people with disabilities—poverty, access to voting, education, employment, income, health, transportation, food, and the built environment.
 - disability status in comparison to people with no disabilities, together with the University of New Hampshire’s Institute on Disability.

Advocacy

- We organize
- a network of advocates who can respond quickly to policy developments that affect them, speaking out, demonstrating, educating policymakers, and sharing stories with the media to educate the public.
 - with people with disabilities to advocate for their own rights and teach them the skills they need to make a difference.
 - with individuals to tell their stories about barriers to health care, voting, emergency services, transportation, and other topics to fight for change.

Policy

- We engage
- with lawmakers by providing relevant research and individual stories and sharing thoughts on how proposed policies will affect people with disabilities.
 - in coalitions to bring together disparate groups to improve law, regulation, and public policy.
 - with the legal process when our civil rights are being violated.

WHO WE ARE AND WHO WE SERVE



We speak many different languages, including American Sign Language, Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Edo, English, Farsi, French, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Loma, Mandarin, Nepali, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Tibetan, Urdu, Uzbeki, and Yiddish.

We are part of and reflect the diverse identities of the disability community in NYC. 64% of CIDNY staff are people with disabilities ourselves. In addition, some of us are caregivers to a partner, parent, or child with disabilities. We have different racial and ethnic identities, different educational and work backgrounds, belong to different faith communities, and are LGBTQ. Thirty-eight percent of our staff are Black, 26 percent are Hispanic/Latinx, 22 percent are White, and 13 percent are Asian American¹. We serve individuals with disabilities of every racial and ethnic group citywide. We serve New Yorkers with disabilities who are poor and often have less educational and employment attainment than people without disabilities. We reach newcomers to our area and people who have not historically been represented in our society, including people with mental health disabilities and multiple disabilities. We help people with the greatest struggles to achieve independence and their personal goals.

¹ The American Communities Survey refers to "Hispanic," but we recognize that most of our community self-identify as "Latino/a".

64% of CIDNY staff are people with disabilities ourselves



OUR PROGRAMS

DIRECT SERVICES

HOW WE HELP

Benefits

We conduct comprehensive benefit screenings for health care, SNAP (formerly food stamps), heating assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), tax benefits, veterans benefits, housing subsidies, Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE), Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE), various waiver programs, prescription assistance, unemployment insurance, and subsidized transit, among others. We provide information on these programs, help with applications, explain the appeals process, and make referrals to the appropriate agencies.



EMPLOYMENT

We help youth with disabilities learn job readiness skills and direct people with disabilities to resources for training, employment, and vocational rehabilitation services.



FOOD ACCESS

We assist with enrolling in food assistance programs including SNAP, school breakfast, and summer meal programs, and in obtaining Meals on Wheels.



HEALTH CARE

We enroll people in all kinds of health coverage, including private insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, and ADAP. We advise people who rely on Medicare regarding Medicaid payments for their out-of-pocket costs and premiums. We help individuals select a health plan that best meets their needs. We help people understand their health coverage and navigate their plans to get the care they need. We help people solve problems that arise with each kind of coverage.



HOUSING

We help people learn how to search for housing and about the different housing subsidies they may qualify for. We help people apply for housing, including waiting lists, lotteries, and subsidies. We help people with disabilities in nursing homes apply for a housing subsidy to help them transition out of institutions. We advise people on their housing search and on ways to stretch their housing budget and to avoid eviction. We educate and assist people with their rights for accommodations and modifications under the Fair Housing Act.



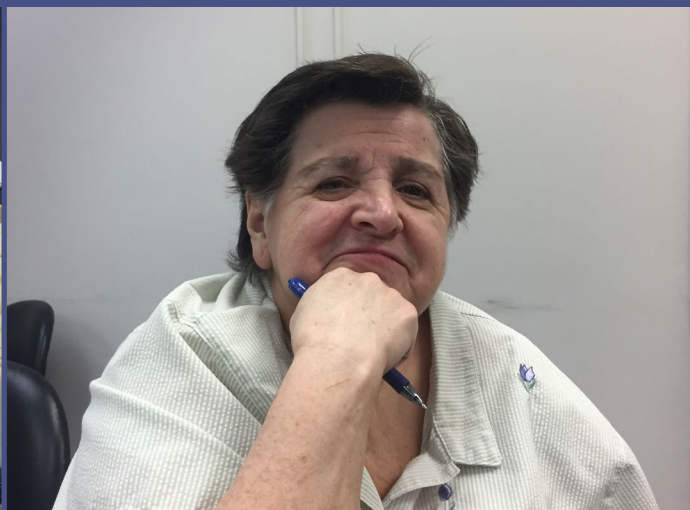
INDEPENDENT LIVING

We advocate for individuals and to change the systems that affect them for the better. We provide peer counseling—using our own experiences as people with disabilities to help others. We provide educational information, workshops, and make referrals to community resources. We help people develop their independent living skills, learn about their rights for reasonable accommodations, and teach them advocacy skills. We help youth transition into adulthood with job readiness skills or planning for further education, including college. We prevent institutionalization by helping people stabilize in the community and get access to additional resources and benefits. We bring people home from nursing homes to live full and longer lives in the community.



LONG TERM CARE

We educate, empower, and advocate for long term care residents in nursing facilities and assisted living. We help people with disabilities leave institutions to live independently in the community. We provide individualized support to transition home, including one-on-one guidance by peers who share their experiences of living in the community and can discuss ways to make their goal of returning home a reality.



The top issues that we assist people with are housing and health care. With a lack of accessible housing and high rent burdens, most of the people we work with are squeezed financially.

COMMUNICATIONS & EDUCATION

MEDIA

Whether the subject is accessible housing, transportation, health care, voting rights, institutionalization, or homelessness, when journalists want to know how these issues affect New Yorkers with disabilities, they know they can rely on us for perspectives from the disability community. Our strategic communications efforts educate the public and people with disabilities on issues that affect us, promote the solutions and services that CIDNY offers, influence decision makers, change public perceptions and raise awareness, gather new supporters and allies, and attract new donors.

We reached over **87.3 million people** through **59 media placements and digital communications** on a host of issues.

During this time, we reached over 87.3 million people through 59 media placements and digital communications on a host of issues. We were featured in the mainstream press including the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, the *New Yorker*, *New York Daily News*, and *amNewYork*. We appeared on television and radio including Fox 5 News, News 12 Bronx, Pix 11, NY1, and WBAI. We were quoted or named on blogs like City Limits, Grist, Gothamist, and POLITICO Pro; on hyperlocal news sites like DNA Info, Kings County Politics, and the Tribeca Trib; on podcasts; and on other new media (a complete list with links is available on our website). Many of our stories were also translated into Spanish. We also worked with journalism students from all of the major universities and graduate programs in the area, mentoring new writers on appropriate language and issues affecting people with disabilities, and coached our advocates on working with the press.

Digital

We continue to engage our followers and grow our audiences on social media and through our email program. We communicate with our online community on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. We also promote earned media, organizing campaigns, health information, cultural events, and other subjects of interest to the disability community on social media. Our emails include a monthly newsletter (available in multiple formats), and action and policy alerts.

“Great information! Very clearly stated.”

“I feel privileged to receive your newsletter. Just reading it makes me feel empowered. You guys are doing tremendous things! It was your example that made me fight [and win].”



Website Redesign

Our new website launched in September 2017 with significant improvements to our site navigation, content, accessibility, ease of use, and ability to capture donations. The dynamic site is updated regularly with new images, social media feeds, blog posts, and action alerts, providing new ways for our audience to participate and engage with us.

Subway Accessibility Maps

We worked with GIS mapping expert Mike Amodeo to illustrate the locations of accessible subway stations in New York City. Accessible subway station information was overlaid with population and disability data and disabled population in poverty data by zip code and in full color, the first map of its kind showing who is impacted by inaccessible subways and in which neighborhoods.

International Delegations

CIDNY was invited to address Members of the European Parliament responsible for human rights and social affairs who visited New York for a meeting of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. In addition, we hosted visits with representatives working with people with disabilities from the People’s Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and South Korea, among others.

CIDNY's Seventh Sense Program Educates the Public about Disabilities

Our disability literacy training, the Seventh Sense, provides tailored trainings on the ADA and disability literacy plus experiential components that help staff of corporations, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations work respectfully and effectively with people with disabilities. CIDNY's Seventh Sense paired once again with our Fair Housing project in 2017 to present a training on housing law and disability literacy to a senior housing complex.

Seventh Sense developed training for administrative and management staff at Callen Lorde, a health facility in New York City that specializes in providing health care to LGBTQ community. We continue to offer training to help with orientation for new peer counselors volunteering in New York State's Open Door program and for the Long Term Ombudsman program, which CIDNY administers in NYC. Seventh Sense is now a regular part of training and orientation for Roundabout Theater and Signature Theatre staff, helping them to develop strategies to assist patrons needing accommodations and enhance the ability of people with disabilities to take part in our city's rich cultural offerings.

Social Activities

People with disabilities joined CIDNY for a variety of social and educational activities, including workshops, recreational opportunities, disability awareness training, coalition and advocacy meetings, and outreach. Our educational workshops included presentations on budgeting, debt and personal finances, civil rights, housing, and using services like Access-a-Ride; they were offered online and were taped so that participants could review material in the workshops and learn at their own pace. A workshop on All of Us, an ambitious, long term health study that includes people with disabilities, was shown on Facebook Live. Our recreational activities included the ever-popular Writer's Workshop and Movie Nights.

"The Callen-Lorde Community Health Center was looking for some assistance in furthering our cultural competency around disability issues, prompted by two Advisory Board members with disabilities. I reached out to several entities for training and found CIDNY to be the most responsive to our needs. CIDNY conducted two trainings around disability rights to our management team. The training was clearly created with the feedback we had given and tailored to our agency. The participants found the training to be helpful, informative, and expressed that they felt better able to serve our patients with disabilities. We were very pleased with CIDNY's trainings and plan to use them again in the future as we further develop our internal training program."

—Finn Brigham, Callen-Lorde Community Health Center

"IL-NET, the National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Centers for Independent Living and Statewide Independent Living Councils, has over the past couple of years greatly benefitted from CIDNY's expertise as Susan Dooha has provided instruction nationwide to increase the knowledge and skills of CILs on Disability, Diversity, and Intersectionality. CIDNY's accomplishments have blazed a trail that others can follow and shown leadership that inspires and supports independent living peers everywhere."

—Darrell Lynn Jones, Independent Living Research Utilization



POLICY & ADVOCACY



Organizing for Change

Our advocacy efforts include coaching people with disabilities on self-advocacy as well as working for systems change at the city, state, and federal level. The peer advocates of our long-standing CIDNY Action Network (CAN) attend meetings and town halls, participate in educational visits to policymakers and protests with allied groups, and provide testimony and share their stories with elected officials and other decision makers.

Focus Groups on Health Plan Networks

We worked with partners to conduct listening sessions around the state with a wide range of health care consumers whose valuable information will guide our recommendations to New York State to improve health plan network adequacy and the quality of healthcare people receive.

Litigation

When we hear about an issue that impacts people with disabilities that could be improved by a legal remedy or a change in policy, we work with our legal partners to pursue a solution.

“I found my voice as a CIDNY Peer Advocate. Whether it was by voice or paper, I expressed my concern and felt a sense of satisfaction in seeing some changes made.”

—Tashia Lerebours

CIDNY educates State and local elected officials and policy makers on the issues important to New Yorkers with disabilities. We participate in legislative advocacy days with people with disabilities who are part of our advocacy network and staff, provide testimony, and join and lead coalitions that can advocate on common concerns. We draft recommendations and testify on behalf of our coalitions. People with disabilities that we work with come to legislative appointments to talk about their experiences and describe how proposed legislation might affect them. Our policy work ensures that legislation that protects the civil rights of people with disabilities, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, New York State Human Rights Law, and New York City Human Rights Law are enforced in our community. When advocacy and negotiation do not resolve an issue, we provide comprehensive research, testimony, and story collection to support litigation, as well as acting as plaintiffs in cases that affect the rights of people with disabilities.



Homeless Shelter Victory

In 2017, New York City agreed to a settlement that requires them to make homeless shelters accessible and to provide disability-related accommodations—a big victory for people with disabilities and for CIDNY advocates who have been working on the issues of homeless people with disabilities since 1979.

According to the New York City Human Resources Administration’s statistics, approximately 60 percent of the homeless population are people with disabilities. While it is well known that some people who have mental health disabilities end up in shelters, it is often overlooked that people with physical disabilities, people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, people who are blind or low vision, people with cognitive and intellectual disabilities or learning disabilities, and people with other disabilities also wind up in shelters because of high rent burdens, lack of stable, affordable, and accessible housing, and high poverty rates.

Our involvement began in 2014, as a result of the complaints received from individuals with disabilities in homeless shelters. We tried to resolve these individually, however realized that we needed further action. CIDNY, with its allies, sent a demand letter to the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS). It described how New Yorkers were deprived of their civil rights in specific ways, based on a review of the experiences of people with disabilities who work with us. We entered into settlement talks together with HRA and our partners, the Legal Aid Society and Coalition for the Homeless to ensure that there are accessible shelters and that people can get the help they need as a result of their disabilities.

Polling Site Access on Election Day

Voting is a fundamental right in our electoral democracy and the means by which voters can communicate their concerns to their government. Three and a half years after a federal judge ruled that the NYC Board of Elections was not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, based upon evidence supplied by CIDNY’s polling site surveys, we still see access problems at polling sites. With over 900,000 people with disabilities living in New York City, the NYC BOE must resolve the issues and impediments that confront voters with disabilities. Failing to do so disenfranchises a significant part of our community and discourages voters with disabilities from being active participants in their government.

Crossing the Street in Safety—Curb Cuts

After years of advocacy, conducting surveys, and educating lawmakers about the lack of accessible curb cuts (or curb ramps), we joined with other organizations to object to a proposed settlement on curb cuts. CIDNY, among other organizations, had objected to the settlement because it did not require the City to establish and meet deadlines, did not provide specific direction on complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and did not provide any monitoring or consequences to ensure that the City met the terms of any settlement and the ADA. We provided testimony to the court to object to the settlement, and provided our surveys and our participants’ statements of concern. In August 2017, an expert appointed by the judge delivered his assessment and recommendations from his review of the proposed settlement on curb cuts, which echoed our demands.



Avoiding an Involuntary Shelter Discharge

"My brother, a white man with bipolar disorder and a lifelong NYC resident, was at a nursing home for over 2 years. I need help to ensure that my brother gets the treatment he needs. I live out of state and support my brother from a distance. If I hadn't been able to get him assistance from NHTD and LTCOP, I believe my brother would have been discharged to a shelter and would have suffered severe health setbacks.

Prior to the current administration at the nursing home, my brother made significant health-related improvements and last year with my assistance, enrolled in the Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Program (NHTD). The NHTD waiver provides alternatives to nursing home placement for people with disabilities and seniors by assisting them with safe, accessible, and affordable housing and home care services that meet their needs.

But before we could get it in place, the facility served my brother with a Notice of Discharge to the Bellevue Shelter. I appealed the Notice and a hearing was scheduled at the facility with an Administrative Law Judge. My brother and I also solicited the help of the Ombudsman Program at CIDNY.

Without the help of the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP), I doubt that my brother's case would have been settled in his favor. LTCOP representatives attended the hearing and delivered unyielding support during the hearing and bimonthly conference calls with the Judge in the 4 months that followed. Their attendance provided the support I needed to defend my brother's situation. Because of LTCOPs powerful statements and knowledge of my brothers' rights and the regulations and laws that defend them, the Judge ruled in my brother's favor. She ruled that the facility did not provide sufficient evidence to prove that my brother's health had improved sufficiently so that he no longer needed the services of the facility and that the shelter was an appropriate and safe discharge location for him.

The rapid response, guidance, and support I received from the Ombudsman Program made a profound difference in my brother's life and care. Through their dedication and wisdom, we succeeded in winning a difficult appeal that safeguarded my brother from an inappropriate discharge and unsafe environment."



"The American Association on Health and Disability is pleased to have worked with CIDNY on several of our [social media] outreach projects. As a national organization, we rely on our relationship with organizations who have direct contact with the disability population in order to reach people with disabilities for our public health initiatives. We also value diversity in our outreach projects – both racial/ethnic and geographical. Being in New York City, CIDNY allows us to do outreach in an urban setting and in a very multicultural environment. Additionally, the feedback provided by CIDNY, given the diverse population with which they work, has been invaluable. We are delighted to call CIDNY one of our trusted partners."

—Karl D. Cooper, American Association on Health and Disability

Making New York City Subways Accessible for All

CIDNY became the lead plaintiff in a lawsuit to improve subway elevator access after many years of advocating and collecting stories about the impact on people with disabilities, particularly as a barrier to employment. Frequent outages and delays for repairs are another concern. One of our suits, filed in New York State court, is the first case to ever challenge the fact that over 75 percent of New York City's subway stations are unusable by people who can't traverse stairs, making it the least accessible subway system in the nation. This affects hundreds of thousands of New York City residents and visitors such as those using wheelchairs, with arthritis, or having certain heart or lung conditions or other disabilities. It also affects parents with children in strollers and visitors to the City who are carrying suitcases. It alleges that the MTA's failure to install elevators in stations throughout the city is in flagrant violation of the New York City Human Rights Law. The second suit, filed in federal court, accuses the MTA of not maintaining the few elevators that do exist, leading to frequent breakdowns.



NEW PROGRAMS AT CIDNY IN 2017-2018



“We are proud to provide customized data about disability to CIDNY to support their advocacy work. CIDNY is leading the way in translating data into policy action.”

– Debra L. Brucker,
MPA, PhD, Institute on
Disability, University of
New Hampshire

NEW YORK CONNECTS

CIDNY’s NY Connects program links New Yorkers with disabilities to resources to help them meet their long term care needs and assists them with understanding available community supports and their long term care options. The program is a trusted service that provides information about the range of supports that can help a person with disabilities remain independent in their own home and solve problems in nursing homes or other residential settings.

Through a comprehensive screening process, benefits counselors provide personalized counseling and can help participants make informed decisions. They assist in accessing available services and support options as well as with applying for public benefits and programs that meet existing or future long term needs.

In one case, when Justin from the Wakefield neighborhood in the Bronx called a NY Connects counselor for information on housing, after talking about how we could work together to solve his housing problems, Justin and his counselor did a full benefits assessment to see if there are other ways to improve

his situation. Through peer counseling, we learned that Justin had transportation issues and he was also looking for a job. We assisted him with the submission of an Access-A-Ride application and we helped him submit a public housing application. Our counselor referred Justin to an agency where he was placed in a work experience training program. Now he has a paid internship and is developing his skills. Justin also currently enjoys the full benefits of Access-A-Ride and the AAR On-Demand pilot for travel to work, errands, and social engagements.

The New York Connects team has 22 staff members. Team members speak 12 languages other than English and they identify as having disabilities, including learning disabilities, visual, hearing, and physical disabilities.

CIDNY’s NY Connects program partners with Bronx Independent Living Services, Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled, and Community Health Action of New York to secure borough-specific resources and referrals and so that we can have a physical presence in every borough. Since the program began in September 2017, NY Connects has helped 1,796 participants seeking services through 2,768 phone calls, home visits, and appointments (including walk-ins). Of those participants helped, 1,552 needed options counseling including application assistance.



ACCESS-A-RIDE REFORM GROUP (AARRG!)

For years, we heard of problems with Access-A-Ride, a paratransit program for people with disabilities, from our staff and the people with disabilities who come to CIDNY. They told stories of long tours of the boroughs to arrive at their destination, no-shows, lateness, and missed appointments and opportunities.

Through a generous grant from the New York Community Trust, CIDNY joined with other community leaders to change the broken system of paratransit. We collaborated with Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled, Mobilization for Justice, and New York Lawyers for the Public Interest to create AARRG!, the Access-A-Ride Reform Group. AARRG!’s mission is to make systemic changes to Access-A-Ride. We interview users about their experiences, collect testimony, and help people navigate problems with the service. We bring new and seasoned advocates to MTA board meetings and rallies and work with them to share their stories with public officials and the press.

The disability advocates who worked with us were instrumental in the implementation of the On-Demand pilot program, which is an app where people can get real-time cab service for the first time. Our consistent presence and participant testimonies at monthly MTA board meetings and extensive press and social media engagement led to greater public awareness of the problems with Access-A-Ride and possible solutions.



Through **51** workshops,
we reached **1,206** people with disabilities,
318 landlords, management companies,
and architects as well as
165 community organizations that house
people with disabilities.

FAIR HOUSING ACT EDUCATION PROGRAM

As part of a Federal Court settlement agreement in a housing discrimination case, CIDNY was awarded funding by the Court. We were asked to educate and raise awareness among New Yorkers with disabilities about their rights under the Fair Housing Act.

We understood from working directly with people on housing issues that they needed to know more about their rights and that landlords needed to be reminded of their obligations. We educated housing management companies, landlords, and architects about the rights of people with disabilities under housing law.

Although CIDNY was only asked to do workshops on the Fair Housing Act, we covered New York State and New York City Human Rights Law as they afford more rights for tenants with disabilities. We conducted trainings, shared messages in local papers and on social media, and assisted people seek reasonable accommodations and home modifications. Through 51 workshops, we reached 1,206 people with disabilities, 318 landlords, management companies, and architects as well as 165 community organizations that house people with disabilities.

HOME-BASED DISABILITY APPLICATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Through our Home-based Application Support Services (HASS) program, we serve individuals referred to us by the New York City Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services (HRA/DSS) and determined to be Home Visit Need/Homebound by helping them complete and submit an SSI/SSD application. We serve individuals in all 5 boroughs. Since its inception in October 2016, we submitted 248 applications on behalf of homebound New Yorkers with disabilities.



ALL OF US

The American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD) chose CIDNY as its national urban partner in a project to promote the National Institutes of Health’s All of Us research project. We also partnered with AAHD on smaller projects to promote Open Enrollment and Medicaid on social media.

All of Us is the largest long term health research project ever attempted by the NIH. It will survey people with disabilities over many years and collect health information to create a data set to be used by researchers to make new advances in precision medicine. They aim to include people who have historically been excluded from health research, such as people with disabilities, and we are using digital and print communications to educate the public about this project and speaking about it when we are out in the community for outreach events.

WHERE WE LIVE

CIDNY partnered with New York City Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to bring people with disabilities into a community conversation about housing issues.

CIDNY convened the groups and led the discussion. The project, “Where We Live NYC,” was intended to bring the voices of the disability community to the agency. We had 6 workshops with individuals with different disabilities and we asked them to describe the housing issues they face. Participants mentioned affordability, accessibility, and safety. HPD intends to incorporate responses to the issues raised by people with disabilities during these conversations in framing future policies, regulations, and laws.



“I have had Traumatic Brain Injury since 1979 due to an automobile accident. I felt a need to be productive and volunteering at CIDNY has been a positive experience. I have done general office work as well as making calls to participants notifying them of upcoming events and meetings. I have also assisted in the preparation for our trips to Albany, making appointments with our elected representatives, and notifying our peer advocacy network members of the details.

Volunteering at CIDNY has been a very rewarding experience. Due to my disability, I have difficulty remembering things, and everyone at CIDNY has always been very respectful and considerate. I have never felt talked down [to], or ridiculed when I need a reminder, which I greatly appreciate.”

— Barbara F.

LEGISLATIVE POLICY AND ADVOCACY WINS



“I found my voice as a CIDNY Peer Advocate. Whether it was by voice or paper, I expressed my concern and felt a sense of satisfaction in seeing some changes made.”
—Tashia Lerebours

We see the need for improvements to laws and policies every day in our work. People with disabilities come to us with stories of barriers in their way, of getting lost or forgotten in complicated systems, and of the hard won successes that they achieve. We learn from these lived experiences and bring people together to help find solutions. Your donor dollars enable us to invest in creating long term policy solutions, building advocacy campaigns, and mentoring the next generation of disability advocates.

For people with disabilities in particular, there is more than one way to be an advocate. Our digital efforts help people contribute by raising awareness through social media and action alerts, texting elected officials, sending emails, and amplifying key issues. We educate the public and government officials about the available research and people’s stories, report on trends, and help them understand the policy solutions that are within our reach. We testify at hearings and comment on how people with disabilities will be affected by proposed changes to law, regulation, and policy. We bring groups together around common concerns and work to create lasting change. When education and negotiation fail and civil rights are violated, we seek remedies in court.

Many of these efforts are years in the making. But our persistence and hard work ultimately pays off. Here are some of our advocacy wins over this two year period.



HEALTH CARE

Advocates won an increase in funding for the Community Health Advocates Program, which helps people understand, use, and keep their health insurance.

We helped pass a budget that preserves protections for people with disabilities in Medicaid law so that husbands and wives and families with children don’t lose the health care that the person with a disability must have if they stay together.

Some people with disabilities want to stay at home but need nursing home level of care to do so. We helped preserve the current assessment tool for Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) in Medicaid law to protect the additional benefits of care coordination and person-centered service plans.

Physical therapy helps people properly recover from surgery or injury and saves money in the long term, but Medicaid users weren’t given enough visits in a year to meet some treatment needs. We won an increase in the 20 visit annual limit on physical therapy for Medicaid to 40 visits a year.

Our advocates advised the New York State Legislature to pass a budget that preserves “prescriber prevails” provisions of Medicaid law, which allows doctors to make changes to medications preferred by a health plan when it is necessary to protect the patient’s health.

We argued for a new law making it easier for New Yorkers with disabilities to access their own health records, which can cost hundreds of dollars in per-page printing fees. The law prohibits providers and facilities from charging fees for copies of or access to records needed by a patient for an application, claim, or appeal for a government benefit or program.





People don't always know if they qualify for programs that will save them money. We fought for a law requiring written notice explaining to people who might be eligible for Medicaid with a "spend down" and how they could qualify by participating in a pooled trust. This helps people maintain eligibility while protecting their savings.

People who take cutting edge biologic drugs were not able to save money by substituting biosimilar products, much like conventional medications can be cheaper as generic drugs. We advocated for an update to New York pharmacy substitution laws to allow for the substitution.

HOUSING

People with disabilities comprise 60 percent of the homeless shelter population. Preventing homelessness is a priority for CIDNY. We have heard from many people who were on the verge of eviction (a leading cause of homelessness) and who couldn't afford to defend themselves against wealthy landlords and management companies.

The Right to Counsel law requires access to legal representation to tenants whose incomes are under 200 percent of the poverty line, including people with disabilities. CIDNY is a member of a group of advocates, tenants, academics, and legal services providers that organized and advocated for the passage of this bill. The bill extends the right to tenants who would otherwise not be eligible for legal representation because they were above the income requirement to be represented in housing court. It is being rolled out across the City and will be citywide by 2022.

Affordable, accessible, and integrated housing is hard to come by in NYC. CIDNY successfully advocated that the state legislature passed a law giving people with mobility disabilities priority for first floor apartments in vacant NYCHA housing, known as the Right of First Option.

TRANSPORTATION

Our ongoing campaign for fully accessible and on-demand transit for people with disabilities in NYC includes work on curb cuts, subway elevator access, improvements to Access-A-Ride (or paratransit) service, and accessible taxis. Our efforts resulted in two pilot programs for Access-A-Ride that allow users to book real-time rides with accessible cabs for the first time.

VOTING RIGHTS

CIDNY conducted poll site surveys for the 2017 General Elections. The survey findings showed many of the same problems identified in previous years and that people with disabilities still find that they can't vote privately and independently on Election Day. We shared our survey results with the lawyers working to implement the Federal Court decision on polling site accessibility, and they shared them with the Judge.

The November 2017 surveys show that 75 percent of polling sites still exhibit barriers that render New York City polling sites non-ADA compliant and inaccessible to New York City voters with disabilities. Some of the barriers identified relate to same-day set up and can be immediately addressed, such as insufficient interior/exterior signage and unclear directional signs. Items blocking access to entryways and pathways can be removed. The surveys continue to document barriers blocking access to voting for people with disabilities after 5 years of court-ordered remedies and several years of surveying and reporting on the situation at New York City polling sites.



OUR STORIES

Easing Financial Strain

Hai,* a 68 year old Chinese-American man with a physical disability, was newly retired and had previously worked with us for assistance with applying for and obtaining SCRIE, a rent subsidy for seniors. He explained that he wanted to have his rent stabilized because he is now living on a fixed Social Security income of \$1,102 and a pension of \$446 monthly.

After reviewing and completing an assessment of his case, we learned that Hai and his wife did not have Medicare Part B (medical) coverage. We contacted his private insurance company and were informed that his insurance was going to expire at the end of the month. He was no longer eligible because he had retired and if he wanted medical coverage, he would have to apply for COBRA. Hai was not aware of the impending discontinuation of his coverage.

We informed him that he could apply for Medicare Part B without a penalty and that with his income, he could apply for the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) with Extra Help to assist him with out-of-pocket costs for his premium.

He returned with the necessary documents to complete his application. Hai and his wife now both have medical coverage and receive assistance with monthly premium and drug costs—saving them more than \$3,000 annually.

Finding New Housing

Maria* is a Latina Deaf woman who wanted to transfer to a different HUD building for over 5 years. She had to keep the heat low or off due to high bills and was tired of always feeling cold at home. She felt her neighborhood was inaccessible because trains, shops, doctors, and other supports in her life were too far away. We assisted her with understanding how to call for applications and update her NY Housing Connects application online. We also helped her fill out new applications and call to check on the status of old ones.

Maria was invited for an interview for a new apartment building in Jamaica, Queens. She was accepted and moved to her new home in April with all the amenities she needs nearby.

Leaving an Institution to Die at Home with Dignity

Joe* is a white man who had Alzheimer's disease and needs assistance with bathing, dressing, toileting, and all other activities of daily living, including overnight assistance. He was living with his partner, James*, who would enter his room in the morning and find soiled pull-ups left on the bed and the floor. Joe's condition was progressively deteriorating and his 84 hours per week of personal care were no longer sufficient to maintain his safety, so his partner requested an increase for care around the clock.

Joe's MLTC plan denied this request on the grounds that his partner was merely requesting non-covered "safety monitoring." We worked with him to prepare for an administrative hearing, called a fair hearing. While it was pending, Joe had a stroke and entered a rehabilitation facility. Forging ahead, we obtained descriptive, moving letters from his doctors explaining his need for more assistance in the community. James also testified regarding his need for overnight assistance at the hearing. The fair hearing was successful, with the Commissioner ordering the plan to authorize 24-hour live-in care.

Joe was able to return home from a sterile institution to be with his family and friends. Months later, James informed us that Joe passed away peacefully at home while receiving hospice care, and due to "the loving care of his caregivers, [was] able to interact with and recognize us until the end." It was a pleasure to assist him with getting the care he needed to live safely at home.

*Names have been changed.

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We are accountable for ensuring that the funds we receive go to the benefit of people with disabilities. At CIDNY, 90 cents of every dollar received supports our programs. Only a dime of every dollar is spent on administration and development costs.

Thank you for your continued support of our work.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

| Assets | June 30, 2018 | June 30, 2017 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Current Assets | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 116,257 | 459,408 |
| Investments | 740,621 | 736,467 |
| Pledges receivable | 126,815 | 20,611 |
| Government grants receivable | 1,860,550 | 1,068,338 |
| Prepaid expenses and other assets | 32,783 | 21,446 |
| Total Current Assets | \$2,877,026 | \$2,306,270 |
| Non-current Assets | | |
| Security deposits | 108,506 | 85,754 |
| Fixed assets, net of accumulated depreciation | 292,321 | 17,274 |
| Total non-current assets | 400,827 | 103,028 |
| Total Assets | \$3,277,853 | \$2,409,298 |
| Liabilities and Net Assets | | |
| Current Liabilities | | |
| Accounts payable and accrued expenses | 355,870 | 212,363 |
| Government grant advances | 138,979 | 578,671 |
| Lines of credit | 790,388 | 0 |
| Total Current Liabilities | \$1,285,237 | \$791,034 |
| Non-Current Liabilities | | |
| Deferred rent | 117,029 | 113,034 |
| Total Liabilities | \$1,402,266 | \$904,068 |
| Net Assets | | |
| Unrestricted | 1,709,230 | 1,290,811 |
| Temporarily restricted | 166,357 | 214,419 |
| Total Net Assets | \$1,875,587 | \$1,505,230 |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets | \$3,277,853 | \$2,409,298 |



| | Total June 30, 2018 | Total June 30, 2017 |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|
| Support and Revenue | | |
| <u>Grants and Contributions</u> | | |
| Government contracts | 6,335,222 | 3,677,670 |
| Foundation and institutional grants | 130,402 | 142,402 |
| Individual contributions | 400,538 | 314,076 |
| Fee income | 70,313 | 45,315 |
| In-kind contributions | 15,000 | 100,000 |
| Interest income | 6,084 | 2,570 |
| Unrealized gain on investments | (1,331) | (480) |
| <u>Net assets released from restrictions</u> | | |
| Satisfaction of program restrictions | 0 | 0 |
| Total Support and Revenue | \$6,956,228 | \$4,281,553 |
| Expenses | | |
| Program services | 5,861,865 | 3,642,710 |
| Supporting Services | | |
| Management and general | 692,573 | 398,891 |
| Fundraising | 31,433 | 22,150 |
| Total Supporting Services | \$724,006 | \$421,041 |
| Total Expenses | \$6,585,871 | \$4,063,751 |
| Change in Net Assets | 370,357 | 217,802 |
| Net assets – beginning of year | 1,505,230 | 1,287,428 |
| Net assets – End of Year | \$1,875,587 | \$1,505,230 |

*For the year ended June 30, 2018 (with comparative totals for the year ended June 30, 2017). Audited financial statements are available upon request.

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**Center for Independence
of the Disabled, New York**

Manhattan

841 Broadway, Suite 301
New York, NY 10003
212/674-2300 (tel)
646/350-2681 (VP)

Queens

80-02 Kew Gardens Rd, Suite 400
Kew Gardens, NY 11415
646/442-1520 (tel)
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Design and layout
Carolyn Casey
ckcdesign@mac.com