

SEPTEMBER 2025

RCAL's Vision in Action: Programs That Change Lives

At 9 a.m. each morning, the phones at RCAL begin to ring. On the other end are neighbors, parents, caregivers, and individuals from across Ulster County, all seeking help, guidance, and support. With school back in session, one of the most frequent requests comes from parents in need of educational advocacy. They turn to our Special Education Advocate, Renee Falanga-Brenner, who works tirelessly to ensure children with disabilities receive the services and supports they are entitled to. From early intervention through high school and transition planning, Renee helps parents interpret test results, navigate the complexities of IEPs and 504 plans, and work collaboratively with schools to secure individualized, meaningful educational opportunities.



SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, and Medicare. To expand access, we've begun offering on-site Benefits Advisement at the Trudy Resnick Farber Center each month and at the Broadway Bubble in Kingston on the first Wednesday.

Of course, educational advocacy is just one piece of what RCAL does. Our Benefits Advisement team—now with two advisors, Debbie Denise and Todd Martin—works daily to help individuals navigate the complex world of benefits including

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WE ARE HIRING

Become a Board Member

Be Our Sponsor!

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YOUR INDEPENDENCE IS OUR MISSION



SEPTEMBER 2025

Our Medical Loan Closet is another lifeline for the community. One of RCAL's busiest programs, it provides durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, and shower chairs—ensuring that no one has to go without the tools they need to live safely and independently.

For individuals who need help managing their money, RCAL offers a Representative Payee program, ensuring that Social Security benefits are handled responsibly and that essential expenses like rent and utilities are covered.

Accessibility starts at home and in our community spaces. That's why our Architectural Modification Consulting program helps identify and plan changes—such as ramps, bathroom modifications, and accessible entrances—that make living spaces safer and more inclusive.

Families also rely on RCAL's Community Habilitation and Respite services, which provide crucial supports for daily living and give caregivers a much-needed break, knowing their loved ones are in capable hands.



RCAL's Architectural Modification Specialist can advise on the best ways to keep your home safe and accessible!

And at the core of everything we do is Information and Referral. Ulster County is fortunate to have a wealth of services—from food pantries and physical therapy to legal and housing resources—but knowing where to start can be overwhelming. RCAL staff connect individuals with the right programs and supports, helping them achieve an enhanced quality of life.

RCAL is proud to serve as Ulster County's Independent Living Center, one of 41 centers across New York State. Independent Living Centers (ILCs) are community-based, non-residential, nonprofit organizations that are run by and for people with disabilities. They provide peer support, advocacy, and resources that empower people to live independently and participate fully in their communities.

Our vision is simple yet powerful: to live in a fully accessible, integrated community without barriers for people with disabilities. Everything we do aims to fulfill this mission. Call us today at 845-331-0541 or visit rcal.org to learn more about how we can assist you or your loved one.

SEPTEMBER 2025

A Letter From the Director

Another summer comes to an end, it happens so fast nowadays. But we here at RCAL had a lot of fun. We had a parade, we participated in the children's day parade and even did the soap box derby without getting hurt. Hopefully you follow us on Facebook and Instagram and see all the fun things we are doing. Please come out and join us.

On another note, I visited 15 Independent Living Centers this summer around the state and saw some amazing things. The center we visited in the Finger Lakes (FLIC) has such a beautiful front facing mural that it was nominated for an international award. Really Cool.

Please come to our Disability Resource Fair on September 20th at St. James United Methodist Church in Kingston, and I hope to see you at our Friendraiser event on November 5th.

With Love and Gratitude
Anthony Mignone, CEO



An award-winning mural done by Deaf artist Nico Cathcart at the Fingers Lakes Independent Living Center.



RCAL's Leah Gherardi, Qiwan Hylton, and Board Member Alex Stier at the Sept. UC Chamber of Commerce Mixer.



RESOURCE CENTER FOR ACCESSIBLE LIVING

FOURTH ANNUAL



FRIENDRAISER

In collaboration with the Ulster County Chamber of
Commerce, we invite you for a cocktail party
featuring hors d'oeuvres, pasta station, music, and a
silent auction!

NOVEMBER 5, 2025 | 5:30PM

Stonehedge Restaurant

1694 Rte 9W, West Park, NY 12493



Purchase tickets at
rcal.org/friendraiser



SEPTEMBER 2025

INDEPENDENTLY LIVING IT UP AT NYAIL 2025



RCAL CEO Anthony Mignone, who also serves as the Chair of the NYAIL Executive Committee.

Sessions focused on leadership, advocacy, and innovation—empowering communities and advancing real change for people with disabilities throughout New York.

RCAL was also proud to support the New York State Independent Living Council (NYSILC), which hosted the evening's Disability Rights Hall of Fame Dinner and Awards Ceremony. This powerful celebration honored the legacy, leadership, and impact of trailblazers who continue to inspire progress in disability rights.

RCAL was proud to join Independent Living advocates from across New York State at the 2025 New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL) Conference in Albany. Representing RCAL were CEO Anthony Mignone—who also serves as Chair of the NYAIL Executive Committee—and Director of Vocational & OPWDD Services Leah Gherardi, attending alongside hundreds of colleagues united by a shared mission.

This year's theme, "Leading the Way," reflected the values of diversity, equity, intersectionality, and accessibility that remain at the core of the Independent Living movement.



Anthony and Leah Gherardi, RCAL's Director of Vocational & OPWDD Services.

SMALL DONATIONS, BIG IMPACT

SUPPORT RCAL TODAY

RCAL's Loan Closet has been busier than ever, providing community members with essential medical equipment like wheelchairs, walkers, and shower chairs. While we are proud to keep this service running, our usually well-stocked shelves have been running low—especially on wheelchairs. If you have gently used equipment you no longer need, please consider donating it to help your neighbors stay mobile and independent.

In addition, our Needs Closet—where we provide everyday essentials such as toothpaste, shampoo, and deodorant free of charge—is also in need. Right now, we are especially short on deodorant. These items may seem small, but they make a big difference for individuals and families facing financial hardship.

Donations can be dropped off between 10a - 3p at RCAL, 727 Ulster Ave., Kingston, NY. Thank you for supporting your community and helping us carry forward our mission of independence and dignity for all.



CALL RCAL TODAY
845-331-0541

SEPTEMBER 2025



The poster features a central white cloud-like shape with a dotted border, containing text. The background is decorated with Halloween motifs: a spiderweb in the top left, a bat in the top left, a witch's hat and broom in the top right, a pumpkin in the bottom left, and a black background with orange polka dots at the bottom. The text is in various colors: purple for the presenter, orange for the event name, and black for the date and location.



**Ulster County Office for the Aging
NY Connects & UC Dept. of Social Services
Present**

**2025 Human Services Expo
“Trunk or Treat”**

**Wednesday October 8th, 2025
11:00am-2:00pm
(Rain date Thursday, October 9th)**

**Kingston Plaza, 151 Plaza Rd., Kingston
(Hannaford/Ball field Parking Lot)**

****Get Connected****

**Services for Children, Adults
& Seniors**

**Local Service Providers & Area Agencies
available to discuss their services and answer
any questions. Attendees will park their vehicles and
visit each provider for a Halloween Treat & to learn about
services available to county residents.**

 **NY Connects**
Your Link to Long Term
Services and Supports

Ulster County Office for the Aging
(800) 342-9871 (845) 334-5307



INDEPENDENT

SEPTEMBER 2025

Become an RCAL Board Member

Do you have 5-8 hours a month? Do you have a commitment to living independently in the community regardless of disability?

Please consider becoming a part of our Oversight board. Call Robert at 845-331-0541 ext. 12 and he will arrange for you to come down and have a tour and meet and greet with our CEO Anthony. He will explain all of our programs and about our agency.

Without an oversight board, a non-for-profit cannot function. Don't worry, this is not a management board. You do not have to direct staff or manage programs on a day-to-day basis. Our meetings are hybrid so if you can't drive in the evening or if getting around is an issue, you can still participate. Give us a call for more information!

**BE OUR
SPONSOR
AND MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**

**RCAL IS ALWAYS SEEKING NEW BUSINESS SPONSORS.
CONTACT US TODAY TO LEARN HOW YOU CAN HELP!
845-331-0541 EXT. 12**

JOIN OUR TEAM

RCAL is seeking a talented individual for the following job opening:

Community Habilitation Support (PT): RCAL is seeking a compassionate and dedicated individual to join our team as Part-Time Community Habilitation Support Staff to specifically serve the Marlboro and Modena, NY areas. In this role, you will provide direct assistance and support to individuals with developmental disabilities to help them achieve their goals, enhance their independence, and participate more fully in their communities. The Community Habilitation Support Staff will work closely with clients, their families, and other members of the support team to implement individualized plans and promote meaningful engagement and skill development. This role is for 10-20 hours per week.

Requirements:

- Previous experience working with individuals with disabilities or in a similar role preferred
- Knowledge of resident rights and the ability to advocate for individuals' needs
- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation to transport individuals as needed
- Ability to lift and transfer individuals as required
- Strong communication skills, both verbal and written
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and respect for individual privacy

Pay: \$16.50 - \$18.50 per hour

- Benefits: Flexible schedule; mileage reimbursement; paid orientation; paid training.

If you have any questions about the position call Leah Gherardi at 845-331-0541 ext. 27. Email resume to lgherardi@rcal.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

**CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!
WE NEED YOUR HELP!**



RCAL is looking for dedicated individuals to join us in our mission to make a positive impact in our community. We are seeking someone to help answer phones and emails, as well as assist members of the public in our Medical Loan Closet.

If you are interested, please email rmiraldi@rcal.org or call 845-331-0541 x12

**MHV PROUDLY
SUPPORTS
OUR COMMUNITY
PARTNER:
RCAL!**

**GUIDING
YOUR FINANCIAL
JOURNEY
across THE
HUDSON VALLEY.**



Federally Insured by NCUA

EVERY. BODY. WITHOUT. LIMITS.



Bodies in motion tend to stay in motion.

Mobility and accessibility exist on a grander scale here. Expand your horizons and exercise your right to explore the wilderness of Ulster County.

**ULSTER
COUNTY**

NEW YORK

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INDEPENDENT

SEPTEMBER 2025

R C A L A n g e l S p o n s o r



C o m m u n i t y C o n t r i b u t o r s



Ulster



Savings



Ulster Federal
C R E D I T U N I O N



INDEPENDENT

SEPTEMBER 2025

Disability Advocates



Alex Stier
Real Estate Associate Broker
518.281.8700 (C)
845.765.3900 (O)
astier@kw.com

KW HUDSON VALLEY NORTH
KELLERWILLIAMS REALTY

15 Taylor Street, Kingston, NY 12401
Each office is independently owned and operated



Anthony Mignone & Matthew Coumbes

RCAL Board Members Kathy McMahon & Jack Ruddick

RCAL Board Members Sheila Kilpatrick and Jeffrey Galinson

Joanna & Peter Mignone



INDEPENDENT

SEPTEMBER 2025

Disability Advocates Continued

KINGSTON
Fine Jewelry



SUNY RECONNECT

FREE TUITION, FEES, BOOKS, & SUPPLIES FOR ADULTS 25-55 PURSUING AN ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE IN:

- Advanced Manufacturing AOS
- Computer Science AS
- Education: Adolescence Education 7-12 AA
 - Mathematics
 - Biology
- Education: Early Childhood Education B-6 AA
 - Biology
 - Earth Science
 - Mathematics
- Engineering AS
- Environmental Studies AS
- Green Building Maintenance & Management
- Network Administrator AAS
- Nursing AS

AAS

ZOOM INFO SESSIONS:

Tuesday, September 30
4 p.m.

Wednesday, October 1
12 p.m.

Wednesday, October 15
12 p.m.

Thursday, October 16
4 p.m.

Wednesday, November 12
12 p.m.

Tuesday, November 18
12 p.m.



REGISTER
NOW!

sunyUlster

Start Here. Go Free!

Friends of RCAL

FRANCIS PFLYNN
certified public accountant



WILLIAMS
Lumber & Home Centers



NEW YORK
ASSOCIATION ON

INDEPENDENT LIVING

RCAL Board Member
Sheila Kilpatrick