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America's Vet Dogs Serving Those Who Served

America's VetDogs has a simple mission: to help those who have served our country honorably to live with dignity and independence whether they are blind or visually impaired or have other special needs, by using guide dogs, service dogs, and innovative technology.

VetDogs is a subsidiary of the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, which has been serving veterans since its founding in 1946. The Foundation realized that as veterans age, and as wounded soldiers return home from the global war on terrorism, there would be a greater need for guide dogs and specialized service dogs to help maintain and enhance their mobility and independence.

VetDogs consolidates the organization's outreach to disabled veterans to address these increased needs. By building cooperative relationships with the military and the Department of Veterans Affairs, and by forging strategic partnerships with other guide and service dog schools, VetDogs will ensure that disabled veterans receive all the benefits they need to live in dignity and independence.

All services through America's VetDogs are provided at no cost to the veteran.



Jose Ramos lost his left arm and suffered severe back and leg injuries in 2004 while serving in Iraq. In January 2007, he was teamed with service dog Stryker. Stryker has been trained to help Jose with balance, as well as fetch and retrieve.

Photo courtesy of America's VetDogs

For more information, please visit the VetDogs' Web site at www.VetDogs.org or call the Consumer Services Department at 1-866-282-8047.

New York State CBVH

The New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH) provides rehabilitation services to residents of New York State who are legally blind. Our services include:

1. [Training for Employment](#)
2. [Business Enterprise Program](#)
3. [Programs for Older Adults](#)
4. [Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Transition Age Youth \(14-21\)](#)
5. [Programs for Children](#)

Services are coordinated by counselors and children's consultants. The Buffalo Regional Office, located in the Ellicott Square Building, encompasses a 16 county area, stretching from the Pennsylvania line to past Rochester. We do have a satellite office located in Rochester for the convenience of our consumers who are closer to that area.

A vocational rehabilitation counselor can assist you in obtaining your first job, returning to work or keeping your present job. Your counselor can assist you to develop an employment plan which may include education or training. This plan will be reviewed and adjusted as needed until the goals are reached. Your counselor can also assist you with job placement.

Services are also available for those interested in learning skills for independent home management. If you are not seeking employment, or are 55 years of age or older, there are programs available to teach the skills needed to maintain an independent lifestyle. This includes kitchen safety, management of household tasks, and traveling safely in and around the home. Additionally, social concerns may be addressed in order to remain involved with family, friends, and community activities and interests.



US Citizens who are legally blind may be eligible to operate newsstands, snack bars, and cafeterias in government buildings. Management and skill training, as well as start up and equipment assistance may be provided, along with on going support to program participants.

A parent or guardian can apply for services on behalf of a child who is legally blind. A children's consultant can work with the family to develop a plan to meet the child's needs.

If you are interested, think you may be eligible for services or know someone who may be eligible, please contact our office at either location below.

CBVH Buffalo Office
295 Main St. Room 545
Buffalo, NY 14203
(716) 847-3516

CBVH Rochester Office
259 Monroe Ave. Room 303
Rochester, NY 14607
(585) 238-8110



The National Statler Center for Careers in Hospitality Services is excited to announce a new training program called STEP.

Many companies need good entry-level workers for their customer contact centers. They want to hire people with disabilities. We listened to them and went to work! A banking industry leader, M & T Bank developed a course with Statler to train people with visual and physical disabilities in the field of telephone banking.

Training topics include Business Math; Oral, Written, and Telephone Communications; Computers and Technology; and company-specific information. Our Computer and Technology course will be taught by the Olmsted Institute of Business and Technology (OIBT).

The Statler Center has a 9-year history of successfully training people with visual and/or physical disabilities. More than 80% of our graduates are working in hospitality or customer service. We are developing training for other companies and expect to announce new training soon. The new 6-week class begins January 2008.

For more information about this exciting training program, please contact:
Mary Ellen Mest at 716-882-5690, ext 232, or mrest@statlercenter.org.

Meals on Wheels for Western New York, Inc. is a private non-profit organization founded in 1969. Each weekday, hot lunches and cold suppers are delivered by our volunteers to 1,600 individuals. Behind this service are teams of registered dietitians and social workers who work closely with meal recipients, their doctors, and their families to develop an individualized program that best meets their nutritional needs. The people we serve are primarily elderly or disabled individuals who are homebound or who have a limited ability to prepare meals for themselves. Our mission is to enable them to continue living in the place they are most comfortable, their own homes. In addition to the nutritional meals we offer, our program participants receive something that they may otherwise lack in their lives – caring human contact.

Who can volunteer? Anyone with a warm heart and 60 minutes to spare. Access to a car, a valid driver's license and proof of current auto insurance is required only for those who prefer to serve as a driver. No car? No problem. Meals on Wheels for Western New York offers a pick-up service for those individuals who may wish to deliver meals and reside within the Buffalo city limits.

To join the 2,000 active Meals on Wheels volunteers throughout western New York, call 822-2002 or go to the website at www.mealsonwheelswny.org.

New York State VESID Program

The Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), is part of the New York State Education Department, and assists people with disabilities prepare for employment, find work and stay on the job. These services are available to those individuals who are found eligible for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services

VESID serves consumers with many different types of disabling conditions. To be eligible for VESID services, your disability must be serious and present a substantial impediment to work. VESID helps determine whether you are eligible for services, or helps you develop and reach an appropriate employment goal. VESID is all about employment.

The Buffalo District VESID office is located in downtown Buffalo, and VESID counselors also travel throughout all eight counties of western New York. Each consumer works with their VESID counselor to identify an employment goal and to develop an individualized plan for service; based on their particular needs and interests.

To learn more about VESID, call (716) 848-8001 or visit the website at: www.nysed.gov, and click on "Individuals with Disabilities."



Aspire's Assistive Technology Network

For people with developmental disabilities, technology such as computers, adaptive equipment and switches can literally remove hurdles and provide unprecedented connection to the world.

Aspire provides the gateway to technology solutions through its Assistive Technology Network (ATN).

The ATN's comprehensive array of services is delivered by therapists and staff who lead the region in expertise and training. The team, which includes five Assistive Technology Practitioners (ATPs), has been providing services in a personalized manner for over 20 years.

Aspire has created a network where traditional therapists are coupled with technology specialists, vision experts and even vocational specialists. A specific "team" is assigned to work with each



Peggy Ross has used a communication device to speak since 1994.

individual based on the person's unique challenges and goals that they are seeking to achieve through technology.

Services are available to toddlers, students, teachers, disabled adults, families and advocates in Erie, Niagara and Genesee counties. For more information, call 505-5280 or 505-5636, or visit www.aspirewny.org.

Erie County Office for the Disabled
95 Franklin Street
Buffalo, New York 14202

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED