

# LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS



Welcome to “Lexington Happenings,” a collection of things to do and see and experience at Lexington!

FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 2020

## MESSAGE FROM SHALONI



Dear Lexington staff member,

I hope each of you is doing well, as are your families.

### COVID-19 at Lexington

We have had a few concerns as of late. We have a house on COVID-19 precautions due to an employee testing positive. Thankfully that employee is doing well, and after initial tests, none of the individuals living there nor the other staff at the home were positive. We firmly believe that the prevention of the spread is due to staff’s diligent use of masks and other PPE on a consistent basis.

Three employees and one person we support were exposed to the coronavirus at a medical office. Again, thankfully none of these members of the Lexington family tested positive and it again speaks to the excellent preventative practices that we use in public, as we continue to open up our programs carefully and mindfully and start going out into the community.

In the past month, we have had three employees in our Albany homes test positive. They are all doing well and we are extremely grateful that there has been no further transmission to our homes.

### COVID-19 in our Communities

As of August 18 the numbers in Albany and Fulton Counties are as follows:

Albany – 2,661 – an increase of 137 since August 7

Fulton – 305 – an increase of 42 since August 7

In Albany, the increase was smaller than the previous two weeks, but in Fulton the increase was substantial in the past two weeks. As previously reported, new cases are on the rise because of community exposure.

Everyone needs to remain diligent and that is the key to everyone’s safety at Lexington. Although New York as a whole still maintains a relatively low rate of infection (below 1%) when compared to other states across the nation, the experiences of these other states show that COVID-19 positive numbers can

### MANAGERS:

Please post/share this information with your staff.

Does your program have an event/information you’d like listed here?

Please send all information to Megan Balser

([balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@thearclexington.org))

at least two weeks in advance of the event. For community events in Fulton or Albany Counties, please visit the links below.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

#### FULTON COUNTY:

[fultonmontgomeryny.org](http://fultonmontgomeryny.org)  
[44lakes.com](http://44lakes.com)

#### ALBANY COUNTY:

[albany.com/events/](http://albany.com/events/)  
[events.timesunion.com](http://events.timesunion.com)

rise without warning if we are not careful. Looking back on our initial communications regarding preventative measures to keep COVID-19 from the Lexington family, we think it bears reminding that the following need to be maintained at all times, when you are at work, at home and in the community. Here are the preventative measures outlined by Dr. Kevin Cope in the April 10 issue of this newsletter:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Wear a mask or face covering when you are in public.
- Use good handwashing and hygiene techniques.
- Maintain social distancing. Stay at least six feet away from others.
- When you're sick, stay home.

Let's not take for granted everything we have learned about this pandemic and virus. We need to keep moving forward and #RisingTogether, and to continue our re-opening efforts, rather than stepping backward in our efforts to limit our exposure to COVID-19.

Please note: We have heard of a scam where people are receiving calls from persons indicating they are a contact tracer following up in regard to an exposure to COVID-19. The caller is requesting information such as a social security number and also credit card information for a COVID-19 test. These are not questions that will be asked by a real contact tracer. They may ask your name, address, and date of birth as well as where you have been, who you have been with, if you have any symptoms etc. But never will ask for a social security number or credit card info. Also any testing that is performed by Lexington Nursing is fully covered by Lexington.

#### Merger with Schoharie

I am pleased to announce that OPWDD has provided preliminary approval for our merger with Schoharie Arc to proceed. There is a tremendous amount of work that will need to be completed to make the merger final by the expected date of 10/1/20. You will begin seeing members of the Schoharie Arc team at our meetings. We are also offering many of Lexington's vacancies in our homes to the residents at Schoharie Arc. This will help both agencies. For Schoharie, it will downsize their homes to a level that can be managed within their staffing as they currently have about a 40% vacancy rate among their direct support positions. For Lexington, it will be a tremendous financial help. OPWDD has announced that as of 10/1/20, they will no longer fund any vacant beds in the IRA program. This will result in a funding loss of approximately \$1.5 million to Lexington if we do not fill our currently vacant beds. By offering these opportunities to residents from Schoharie Arc, not only will be able to recoup those financial losses, we will be filling the vacancies with people we know and are supporting, rather than people being referred by the State who often have very complex needs. Please welcome Schoharie Arc to our family

#### Employee Appreciation Event

We are happy to announce an Employee Appreciation Event, scheduled for Friday, September 4 from 1pm-5pm at the Nigra Arts Center that will feature a performance by Flame and a socially-distanced ice cream social. Ice cream and toppings have been graciously provided by Stewarts Shops for the event. All Lexington and Schoharie staff and their immediate family members are invited to attend. Watch for more details on Workplace.

Dan and I were so happy to see so many of you in the last couple of weeks as we traveled around Fulton and Schoharie to our residences to treat our staff and individuals to some cool ice cream treats. What impressed us most of all at the over 20 houses we visited was seeing the relationships between you and the individuals you support and how much you all truly care for each other. It was incredible to see how each of you involved each person in selecting and enjoying their ice cream even if their way of communication was through their eyes or a barely noticeable gesture. Thank you for all you do to continue to keep the people we support, and your co-workers at Lexington safe, healthy and happy. Your efforts never go unnoticed. We will continue our ice cream and bubbles visits into September and if we haven't seen you, we are looking forward to seeing you soon!

Please take care of yourselves and your families,

*Shaloni*

## #RISINGTOGETHER AT LEXINGTON!



Things have been busy these past couple of weeks at Lexington! Here is a selection of what's new and what people have been up to lately:

- The men at Mecos recently have been volunteering their time to do community cleanup at local parks throughout the county! Thanks to them and their staff for doing their part to keep our community looking great!
- Last week, the Northampton team made tie dye towels! They all had a blast personalizing their towels and mixing the colors into a unique work of art—all while spending time outside on a beautiful day!
- People we support all around Lexington have been so excited to start going back to day hab in small, “family unit” groups! Last week, Room 114 made some beautiful wall art with an inspirational message. Pictured are Carly Glover and Terrie Wasson showing off Carly's new sign. Thank you to all the staff who are working hard to make the return to day hab go safely and smoothly, and to coordinate fun, creative and productive activities for everyone!
- Woody Lane needed better access to their greenhouse. One person in particular uses this greenhouse daily. Dave Richardson and Dan Keck, along with the help of the Woody Lane team, collaborated to come up with a stable path and new ramp and shelf in the greenhouse to help with safety and stability. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard on this project—because of their efforts, everyone at Woody Lane will be able to enjoy their greenhouse even more!
- July was National Ice Cream Month and to help celebrate, Dan and Shaloni have been travelling to our homes and day programs to share some ice cream, bubbles and fun with everyone! They will continue to do this into September.

## HOME EXTERIORS BEAUTIFICATION CONTEST

Let's have some fun while adding positivity to our local communities! From now until **September 4**, upgrade the outside of a Lexington residence and submit before and after pictures to your Director to enter our Beautification Contest. Five winners will be selected—one per region and one Schoharie site! Here are the rules:

- Extra points will be given to the homes that have higher levels of engagement by the people we support.
- Extra points will be given to the homes that get creative and reuse or repurpose items. Check out your storage areas for items you may already have that can be repurposed, and browse Pinterest for inspiration!
- Extra points for making improvements without spending a penny!
- Residence managers are to complete any shopping needs with prior Assistant Director budget approval. Be creative and use outside pick-up locations (Walmart, Tractor Supply)! Must stay within RM spending limit.
- Remember your porch areas, yard and front and back landscaped areas. You can make beautiful modifications just by cleaning up, weeding, replanting and repurposing other items for outdoor décor!
- Pictures must be sent to your Director. Remember to take before and after pictures to show the improvements! Pictures must be submitted no later than September 4 in order to be entered.
- Contact Rachael Salvione if you have any questions or need further information at [salvior@thearclexington.org](mailto:salvior@thearclexington.org).



## EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION EVENT! FLAME CONCERT AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Friday, September 4, Nigra Arts Center—1pm to 5pm



For employees and their immediate families—drive in, have some ice cream and enjoy some cool music by Flame! The event is free of charge. Watch Workplace for details and more information. Thank you to Stewart's Shops for sponsoring the ice cream and toppings!

## CLINICAL SUPPORT TO RESIDENTIAL TEAMS

The Clinical Department is offering a series of classes and activities to the people we support throughout the month! Activities include music, nail painting, basketball, woodworking and Bingo. To view the full calendar of events, please visit <https://bit.ly/2E33Gik>. To sign up, email Maria Betts at [bettsm@thearclexington.org](mailto:bettsm@thearclexington.org) no later than noon on the Friday before the scheduled activity.

## DRAMA GAME CLUB

Sometimes adults need to have fun, too! Join the Clinical Department for creative drama games every Friday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.! This club includes activities designed to help people use their imaginations while communicating and having fun together. Participants explore using their senses, pretending, role-playing, taking turns and using facial expressions and body language. Some activities use "props" that are common items easily found in any home. It's all about making it up, and there is no right or wrong way to participate. We hope to be a little silly, have some fun and make time to laugh together. Hope you can join in! This group is led by Vickey Morrison, SLP, and Gillian Aluin-Kemp, SLP. Anyone can join. To participate, please click <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81459832459>.

## INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT GROUPS ON ZOOM

The Clinical Department is still offering Zoom support groups to the people we support! Anyone can join to talk, ask questions, share stories and spend time together with friends! Groups meet on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m. They are facilitated by Sue Murray, Heidi Van Deusen and Darren Brown. Join by calling 1-646-558-8556 and entering Meeting ID 917 3144 1641 or by clicking <https://zoom.us/j/91731441641>.

## HR NEWS AND INFORMATION

### EARN A BONUS FOR RECOMMENDING EMPLOYEES!

The Employee Referral Bonus recognizes your efforts to help Lexington hire the best new employees.

If you know of great people who are looking for jobs, have them apply at Lexington! If we hire a person you referred, you could earn up to a \$500 bonus. Give an application to a friend or family member or have them apply online at [www.lexingtoncenter.org](http://www.lexingtoncenter.org). Make sure they list your name as the referral source!

### HERE ARE SOME EMPLOYEES WHO REFERRED NEW HIRES IN JULY:

<b>Karri Atkins</b>	<b>Rebecca Hansen</b>	<b>David Hazzard</b>	<b>Kerrie Sander</b>	<b>Tamika Williams</b>
<b>Elizabeth Dudar</b>	<b>Sophia Hayes</b>	<b>Janet Kretser</b>	<b>Brittany VanHorn</b>	

### NEW RN/LPN REFERRAL BONUS PROGRAM!

The Human Resources Department has added a new bonus program for employees who refer RNs/LPNs who are subsequently hired by Lexington! You can earn up to \$750 in bonuses through this new program. For more information, please [click here](#) or contact Heidi Smith at [smithhei@thearclexington.org](mailto:smithhei@thearclexington.org) or (518) 775-5439.

### THE ARC NY SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS IN I/DD FIELDS

The Arc NY presents annual scholarships to students seeking degrees in fields related to intellectual or developmental disabilities, including special education, physical or occupational therapy, and more! Applications are open now through **January 11, 2021**. Each \$3,000 scholarship is paid in two installments of \$1,500 per semester and must be claimed within four years of being awarded. For more information and to apply, please visit [www.thearcny.org/about/scholarship-awards](http://www.thearcny.org/about/scholarship-awards) or click the scholarship name. For questions, email [scholarships@thearcny.org](mailto:scholarships@thearcny.org).

<u>ARTHUR W. PENSE SCHOLARSHIP</u>	<u>JAMES F. REVILLE SCHOLARSHIP</u>	<u>JONATHAN WEINGOLD SCHOLARSHIP</u>	<u>JOSEPH T. WEINGOLD SCHOLARSHIP</u>
For physical or occupational therapy degree program students. One presented annually.	For full-time college students in a program related to I/DD, such as behavioral sciences, social work, healthcare administration and management, psychology or nursing. Two presented annually.	Presented annually to four full-time Arc Chapter employees who wish to further their education with the intention of contributing to the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities.	For students enrolled in a New York degree program leading to a special education certification. Two presented annually.

### EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES (1, 5 & 10+ YEARS)

#### AUGUST 21 TO SEPTEMBER 3 | CONGRATULATIONS!

<b>Penny Ropeter-Webber</b> , Day Hab, 9/2, 25 years	<b>Ann Hadden</b> , Residential, 9/3, 1 year
<b>Antoinette Calderwood</b> , Administration, 8/21, 20 years	<b>Dasheema Maeweather</b> , Residential, 8/26, 1 year
<b>Kayla Marie Fishbough</b> , Residential, 8/30, 10 years	<b>Joseph Morrison</b> , Residential, 9/3, 1 year
<b>Vicki Lawrence</b> , Residential, 8/30, 10 years	<b>Marlyse Nana</b> , Residential, 8/27, 1 year
<b>Richard Little</b> , Residential, 8/30, 10 years	<b>Kimberly Ross</b> , Kitchen, 9/3, 1 year
<b>Kayla Moyer</b> , Residential, 8/30, 10 years	<b>Uriah Williams</b> , Residential, 8/26, 1 year
<b>Nicole Davis</b> , Residential, 8/26, 1 year	<b>Hannah Winchell</b> , Residential, 9/3, 1 year

## NURTURING ENVIRONMENT IN-PERSON MEETINGS AT THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER

After conferring with our Medical Director, Dr. Cope, and Fulton County's Public Health Department, we are planning our first in-person Nurturing Environment meetings since the COVID-19 shutdown. These meetings will take place under a tent on the Nigra Arts Center grounds. We will be following all CDC and NYS guidelines similar to what restaurants follow for outside dining. Safety screenings, social distancing and masks (when not seated) will be required. Please know that there is a maximum of 50 people allowed at each meeting for proper social distancing. RSVP is required to attend these meetings—please contact Terry Williams ([williat@thearclexington.org](mailto:williat@thearclexington.org)) or Rene Craig ([craigr@thearclexington.org](mailto:craigr@thearclexington.org)) or call them at (518) 773-7931.

**MONDAY, AUGUST 31**

1pm—3pm

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2**

7am—9am

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1**

10am—12pm

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3**

3pm—5pm



## BROOKS CHICKEN BBQ FUNDRAISER FOR THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 from 3pm until we sell out!**

127 E. State Street, Gloversville

\$8 Chicken Halves | \$12 Dinners

Dinners include 1/2 chicken, potato, coleslaw, roll, water & cookie.

Pre-sale tickets available at the Arts Center, or on Eventbrite at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/brooks-bbq-fundraiser-tickets-115129625810>

Questions? Please call the Arts Center at (518) 661-9932.

## RECOGNIZING OUR EMPLOYEES

### DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS EXTENDED TO SEPTEMBER 15

It's that time of the year again! Lets recognize all of the wonderful employees we have! Do you know a staff member who truly exemplifies the goal of our Nurturing Environment program? If so, please nominate him or her for recognition!

Recognizing our employees gives you the opportunity to recognize the actions of Lexington employees, to enhance the supports we provide and improve our environment. Please complete the form, found by [clicking here](#), for the employee you would like to nominate and return completed nomination form to Terry Williams at the Gloversville Day Hab building by **September 15, 2020**. If you have any questions, please contact Terry at [williat@thearclexington.org](mailto:williat@thearclexington.org) or (518) 775-5382.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any staff member who goes beyond the expectations of their job and demonstrates excellence in creating, building and maintaining a nurturing environment is eligible to be nominated. A staff who champions the vision of the Nurturing Environment program, with language and actions that demonstrate enthusiasm, may be nominated.

#### WHO CAN NOMINATE?

Anyone who receives services from Lexington, their family, and/or any Lexington staff member can nominate someone for recognition.

#### REWARDING EXCELLENCE

All nominations will be recognized at a special meeting in late September. Employees who stand out will be selected for an award. Last year, 200 employees received recognition awards of \$10 to \$250, plus a Certificate of Appreciation and a gift card to the Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts, totaling over \$7,000.

Please take this opportunity to nominate and recognize Lexington employees who go above and beyond every day!

## SUPPORT LEXINGTON BY BECOMING A MEMBER! LAST CALL FOR 2020-2021!

Lexington memberships are crucial to providing the best possible support to individuals with disabilities and their families, and to being the best possible employer to you! In a difficult time like this, memberships are crucial to financially supporting us to provide enough personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies to keep you and the people we support safe and healthy every day. Memberships are also crucial for education and advocacy purposes, as the more members we have, the stronger our representation is with The Arc New York. Your support in membership gives us a stronger voice on behalf of the people we support and you, our employees.

As a Chapter of our statewide organization, The Arc New York, and a member of the national organization, The Arc, we are working together closer than ever on advocacy for services and funding as state and federal financial crises unfold. By becoming a member, you help us show strength and provide resources to keep our advocacy efforts working.

Lexington is a strong organization and we are confident we will be even stronger as we come out of this, but not without your support. **Annual memberships are only \$3 for Lexington employees.** You can purchase a membership for a family member at your same address for \$5, and additional family members for \$3. You can also sponsor someone we support to be a member for \$1. To learn more about membership and sign up, please visit [thearclexington.org/membership](http://thearclexington.org/membership) or contact Lynette May at (518) 661-9932 or [mayl@thearclexington.org](mailto:mayl@thearclexington.org). Thank you for your support!

### COVID SAFETY PRECAUTIONS—NEW YORK STATE TRAVEL ADVISORY

Effective June 25, New York State issued travel restrictions addressing any travel to states currently experiencing higher COVID-19 infection rates. Please review the list of states below where these restrictions apply as of this week:

Alabama	Florida	Iowa	Mississippi	North Dakota	Texas
<b>Alaska**</b>	Georgia	Kansas	Missouri	Oklahoma	Utah
Arizona	Hawaii	Kentucky	Montana	Puerto Rico	Virginia
Arkansas	Idaho	Louisiana	Nebraska	South Carolina	Virgin Islands
California	Illinois	Maryland	Nevada	South Dakota	Wisconsin
<b>Delaware**</b>	Indiana	Minnesota	North Carolina	Tennessee	<b>**added 8/18</b>

If you have traveled from and spent more than 24 hours in one of these states, you must comply with the following:

- Report this travel to your supervisor and, as needed, ask them for guidance.
- Seek diagnostic testing for COVID-19 as soon as possible upon arrival back in New York (within 24 hours) to ensure you are not positive. Failure to get tested in a timely manner upon your return will require you to quarantine as noted below.
- You must furnish your negative test result prior to returning to work. For any shifts missed while test results are pending, available vacation and/or personal time will be used or time will be unpaid if none is available.
- You will need to be retested approximately 7 days after your first test, and again furnish a copy of the test result upon receipt.
- It is possible that your work assignment may need to be temporarily adjusted while awaiting the results of the second test, depending on the circumstances of your responsibilities.
- You will need to monitor temperature and signs of symptoms, wear a face covering when in public, maintain social distancing, and clean and disinfect workspaces for a minimum of 14 days.
- To the extent possible, you are required to avoid extended periods in public, contact with strangers and large congregate settings for a period of at least 7 days.

Should you choose not to comply with the above requirements, you must remain out of work in self-quarantine for at least 14 days. During this time, your vacation and personal time will be charged for your unscheduled hours. If you do not have vacation and/or personal time to cover these hours, your time away from work will be unpaid.

## PAUL NIGRA CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS

Lexington employees get a 10% discount at the Nigra Arts Center! Just enter the code **LEXEMPLOYEE** at checkout to redeem. We offer free classes to the people we support. If your house, program or someone you know wants to take a class, please call (518) 661-9932 or contact Maria Nestle at [nestlem@thearclexington.org](mailto:nestlem@thearclexington.org) to sign them up. The center is located at 2736 State Highway 30 in Gloversville. For full listings of the classes and events offered, visit [www.pncreativeartscenter.org](http://www.pncreativeartscenter.org).



### VIRTUAL CLASSES AT THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER

The Nigra Arts Center is offering free, interactive arts classes and other social activities both through Zoom and in person! Some in-person adaptive arts classes will be offered throughout the month for homes to participate in as a single “family unit,” with only one house participating at a time. Registration is on a first come, first served basis. Weekend activities are also available to household units. To see the full August calendar, please visit <https://thearclexington.org/s/August-2020-Nigra-Arts-Center-Calendar.pdf>. Pre-registration is required. To sign up, please call (518) 661-9932 or email [lozierh@thearclexington.org](mailto:lozierh@thearclexington.org).

### THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER IS OPEN!

The Nigra Arts Center is once again open to the people we support! Come enjoy the grounds, view our new art show and check out our gift shop! There are also in-person classes available. There have been some changes in protocol to keep everyone safe and healthy in our new normal. To see a video outlining the new procedures and showing you what to expect at your visit, please go to <https://bit.ly/3jLFbGO>. We can't wait to see you again!

### COME SEE OUR NEW ART SHOW!

The Nigra Arts Center's 2020 New York State Summer Art Show is open! The show includes a huge display of work from artists across New York State, a special exhibition from featured artists Cheryl Horowitz and Terry Van Genderen, and a showcase of award-winning photographers featured in *Adirondack Life* magazine. All are welcome to come see the show M-F 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. until September 25!

### CHECK OUT OUR NEW VIRTUAL ART SHOWS!

The New York State Summer Art Show and *Adirondack Life* Show are now both available online! Check them out here: <https://www.pncreativeartscenter.org/art-shows> or on the Nigra Arts Center Facebook page.

### RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Previous resources can be found at [thearclexington.org/wellness](http://thearclexington.org/wellness) or [thearclexington.org/family-connections](http://thearclexington.org/family-connections).

- **United Concierge Medicine: The Virtual ER**—Lexington's Telemedicine provider (1-844-484-7362).
- **Aware Mindfulness Channel**—From the **Lexington Activity & Resource Center**: Click the link for free 10-minute audio mindfulness exercises that can help you focus, release tension and reset for improved wellbeing!

### LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS DIGITAL ARCHIVE

The online digital archive of Lexington Happenings, which includes active links to all the resources and documents highlighted, can be found at [thearclexington.org/lexington-happenings](http://thearclexington.org/lexington-happenings)! If you have questions or would like to submit information for a future newsletter, please contact Megan Balsler at [balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@thearclexington.org) or (518) 661-9932.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Megan Balsler | [balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@thearclexington.org)  
Lexington, Chapter of The Arc New York  
2736 State Highway 30, Gloversville



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