

LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS



SPECIAL BULLETIN: COVID-19 UPDATES

THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 2021

#RISINGTOGETHER AT LEXINGTON!



The theme of summer at Lexington has been getting out of the house and doing new things outside or with people we haven't seen in a while!

- The Flame Recording Studio at the Nigra Arts Center has been dedicated to our own Harry Steven thanks to a generous donation from him and his family! Flame hosted a private ribbon-cutting event with Harry and his family on June 3, where band members Michelle and Andrew performed two songs with Harry accompanying them on bongos. Thanks to Harry and his family for their support of Flame and the Arts Center!
- Lexington took part in the Memorial Day Parade in Schoharie! The Fair Street team worked hard to create a float, decorate vans, make goody bags and form a caravan to march down Main St. Everyone had a blast representing Lexington and encouraging new people to join the family!
- Lexington's Golf Tournament benefiting the Nigra Arts Center took place on June 11! It was a great day, with 16 teams joining us to support Lexington and enjoy golf, raffles, games and more. Thanks to all the volunteers who made the day possible, including Doug and Carly, pictured!
- The weather has been perfect for outdoor fun! Pictured are some of the Pinewood family having a picnic at Tawasentha Park in Altamont.
- The Grove Street family planted a garden in honor of their friend Joe D'Arpa, who recently passed away. Josie and Danielle also made a memory board, and they all have ordered a granite plaque to be placed by a rose bush—Joe's favorite. Thank you to Nikki Gordon and everyone else who has supported the Grove Street family through this difficult time and helped them remember Joe in such a meaningful way!
- Summer weather has made it possible for people to participate in adaptive sports again! Jeff, Kristen, Danny and Cody all tried out archery for the first time last week with the help of Sherry Passero. Thanks to Sherry and everyone else who helped them all have this cool new experience!
- Jeanette was recently reunited with her sister after almost a year and half apart due to COVID to celebrate their shared birthday! They were so excited to exchange gifts and share brunch at Denny's. Thank you to Sharon Gifford for doing so much to make this heartfelt reunion possible!
- Schoharie Community Supports' Horticulture Room received a donation of 12 flats of vegetable plants and sunflowers from a local high schooler and her family farm, Fox Creek Farm! This special gift will help jumpstart their on-site garden. The Horticulture Room team has been hard at work getting the garden started and taking care of the indoor plants with the help of the Schoharie staff, especially Maria Roe and Rebecca Hill!

MESSAGE FROM SHALONI



Dear Lexington staff members,

I hope you are all well as are your families.

Earlier this week, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that in New York State, 70% of adult New Yorkers have received the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine – and he has lifted the last of the COVID-19 restrictions across commercial settings for our state. However, schools, public transit, correctional facilities, nursing homes and health care settings like ours must still adhere to existing COVID-19 health protocols per CDC and, in our case, OPWDD guidelines. It's great news for our state, and as I reported last week, we have great recent news at Lexington as we have reached our goal of 70% immunity between people we support and our staff. Congratulations not only to the Lexington family, but to the state of New York for reaching our goals to keep everyone safe and healthy!

At Lexington, we are thankful to have no current cases of COVID-19 and no homes on quarantine. More good news for Lexington is that the people we support in homes are almost all vaccinated. The COVID-19 vaccines have been shown to be very effective for our agency, because we have had no people we support or employees become positive after the two shots of Moderna or Pfizer and only two people within two weeks of the Johnson & Johnson vaccines. We continue to encourage those not vaccinated to get the vaccines – there is information on how to do that in the following pages of this newsletter.

With the warmer weather finally upon us and as we can now more safely gather outdoors, we are pleased to announce the following Nurturing Environment meetings for all of our staff under tents at the Arts Center and in Schoharie! We hope as many of you can join us as possible – the tents will be decorated in a summer theme and there will be surprises for everyone! These Nurturing Environment meetings are for staff only; we will be having Celebrating Abilities meetings for people we support during the same weeks. As we are still mindful of our COVID-19 and social distancing protocols, the tents are limited as to the number of attendees we can have at each meeting, so RSVP is required to Rene Craig, craigr@thearclexington.org:

PAUL NIGRA CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS

Tuesday, June 22	9:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.
Thursday, June 24	11:00 a.m.
Monday, June 28	3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, June 29	9:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday, June 30	11:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, July 1	9:30 a.m.

SCHOHARIE – 121 Opportunity Drive

Tuesday, July 13	1:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m.
Thursday, July 15	9:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. 2:00 p.m.

I want to again thank you for all you have done and sacrificed in the past year to ensure that the people we support were safe and healthy and continuing to work toward their life goals – even during everything that was changing every day. And these changes were not only taking place at Lexington, but with your families, in schools, in our communities and more. We hope you read on Friday the email announcing a \$1,000 bonus for all employees who are actively employed full-time as of September 22, 2021, and have worked at the agency for a year or longer. You will receive a pro-rated amount if you are a relief, part-time or per-diem employee and/or have been with Lexington for less than a year. We appreciate the opportunity to recognize the current members of our staff who continue to do amazing things.

We hope you know how each one of you is appreciated, not only through this pandemic, staffing shortages and more, but for the amazing work each of you does every single day. Thank you.

Best,

Shaloni

SUMMER RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Lexington, as are most companies, is struggling to recruit and retain qualified staff. Our field has been especially hit in the area of direct support positions, resulting in serious coverage challenges in our residential, day and community supports programs. At Lexington, we are faced with the highest level of direct support vacancies we have ever experienced and are asking for everyone's help with the coverage needs within our programs.

In the past two weeks, we have announced several Summer Recognition Programs to acknowledge staff who are going above and beyond to work overtime and additional shifts to ensure the people we support receive the care and quality they deserve. While we work hard to recruit new direct support staff to Lexington, we want to show our greatest appreciation to the current members of our staff family who are filling these critical needs:

DIRECT SUPPORT RECOGNITION PROGRAM

(Previously referred to as the "RESIDENTIAL DIRECT SUPPORT RECOGNITION")

- Eligible employees: direct support staff from the IRA, Day Hab, and Community Supports Programs
- Recognition time periods: individual pay periods between 5/23/2021 and 9/11/2021
- Qualifiers: no unscheduled absences of any kind (call outs, late arrival to shift, early departure from shift); can only use up to 2 days/shifts of pre-approved benefit time within a given pay period to qualify
- Recognition: If employee qualifies at end of pay period, they will earn \$100
⇒ Total financial potential per employee: \$800 over 8 pay periods

OVERTIME RECOGNITION PROGRAM FOR DIRECT SUPPORT

- Eligible employees - Direct Support staff from the IRA, Day Hab, and Community Supports Programs
- Recognition time periods - individual pay periods between 5/23/2021 and 9/11/2021
- Qualifiers & Recognition:
⇒ If a Direct Support Staff works 24 hours or more of overtime in a pay period at any IRA residence – they will earn \$100
- Direct Support Staff can increase this recognition from \$100 to \$150, if they work 24 hours or more of overtime in a pay period, with at least 12 hours worked:
⇒ between 11pm Friday and 7am Monday at any IRA residence
OR
⇒ on any shifts at the 9 Fulton western IRA's (Rockwood, Wohlgemuth, Cromer, Bacon Brook, Murray Hill, Sweet Hill, Keyser Lake, Stahl Road, and Stratford)
OR
⇒ on any shifts at IRA's in Schoharie county (Supportive Apartments excluded)
⇒ Total financial potential per employee - \$1200 over 8 pay periods

LEXINGTON FAMILY RECOGNITION PROGRAM FOR NON DIRECT SUPPORT STAFF

- Eligible employees: employees from departments other than IRA, Day Hab, or Community Supports who have primary or secondary job title of DSS/DSP
- Recognition time periods: individual pay periods between 5/23/2021 and 9/11/2021
- Qualifiers & Recognition:
⇒ If employee commits to, and works, a minimum of two 8-hour shifts on the weekends (between 11pm Friday and 7am Monday) within a 2-week pay period at any IRA, they will earn an additional \$100
⇒ Total financial potential per employee - \$800 over 8 pay periods
⇒ Please also note that employees working under primary or secondary job as DSS, also earn the \$1.40/hour weekend add-on

If you have any questions or need further information about these programs, please reach out to Rachael Salvione (salvio@thearclexington.org), Jim Yanno (yannoj@thearclexington.org), Penny Rivenburg (rivenbp@thearclexington.org), Steve Cirillo (cirills@thearclexington.org) or Pat Dowd (dowdp@thearclexington.org).

MEMBERSHIP WITH THE ARC LEXINGTON

Lexington and The Arc NY are in the midst of our annual Membership Drives! Membership in Lexington matters – the more members we have, the stronger our voice at the local, state and national levels of government. It also provides opportunities for more of our citizens with IDD and their families to have access to programs and services and a say in advocacy efforts. In addition, members provide awareness, the first step in creating society-wide acceptance of people with disabilities.

For our employees, this year we are asking you to become a member of Lexington by filling out an opt-in form found at <https://bit.ly/3gBW8Td>. This is a one-time use document, which will make you a member of Lexington for as long as you work here – and Lexington will pay for all employees who become members. Simply print out the form, fill it out and sign, and return it via inter-office mail to the Nigra Arts Center c/o Membership. You can also return the form when you attend one of our upcoming Nurturing Environment meetings. Have any questions? Contact Wally Hart at (518) 661-9932 or hartw@thearclexington.org.

LEXINGTON GOLF TOURNAMENT IN SCHOHARIE COUNTY

The second of Lexington's two golf tournaments in June is coming up this week! All are welcome to participate in this fun fundraiser for Legacy of Love—Schoharie.

OPPORTUNI-TEE GOLF TOURNAMENT | FRIDAY, JUNE 18 | COBLESKILL GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB, COBLESKILL

Play for cash prizes in a variety of contests, including Closest to the Pin, Longest Drive, Putting and Top Two Teams! Registration includes greens fees, cart, contests, lunch, dinner, snacks on the course and a golfer gift.

- Single golfer fee: \$125; foursome fee: \$400
- Registration begins 10:30 a.m.; lunch at 11:30 a.m.; Shotgun Start at 12:30 p.m.
- Format: four-person scramble
- For more info, to sponsor or to register, contact Tammy Ruise at (518) 295-8130, ext. 256 or ruiset@thearclexington.org.

REMEMBER TO PLACE YOUR CO-OP ORDERS!

If you placed an order with [Tri-City Foods](#) for June delivery, please remember to pick up your items at the dates and locations below! Orders are now open for July delivery as well. You can order online at tricityfoods.com or obtain an order form from Lynette May (for Oppenheim or Johnstown) at mayl@thearclexington.org or Tammy Ruise (for Schoharie) at ruiset@thearclexington.org.

The deadline to place orders for July pickup is **Monday, June 21**. The pickup dates and times in June and July will be as follows:

- **SCHOHARIE**—Friday, July 9 | 3:30-4:15 p.m., 121 Opportunity Drive, Schoharie
- **OPPENHEIM DAY HAB**—Thursday, June 17 or Tuesday, July 20 | 3:10-3:30 p.m., 405 Co. Hwy 114, St. Johnsville
- **JOHNSTOWN DAY HAB**—Thursday, June 17 or Thursday, July 15 | 3:30-4:30 p.m., 465 N. Perry St., Johnstown (by gas tanks)

THE EXPERIENCE: EVENTS FOR THE PEOPLE WE SUPPORT

If you and the people you support are looking for some fun new things to do, please join us for a series of special experiential events at 465 N. Perry Street, Bishop Burke and 121 Opportunity Drive! Houses are invited to come enjoy movies, games and food in private family-unit rooms. If you are interested in signing your house up, please call (518) 661-9932 to reserve a slot.

OUTDOOR BBQ PICNIC | RESCHEDULING FOR JULY—DETAILS TO FOLLOW

Celebrate the beginning of summer with a delicious outdoor BBQ dinner! Enjoy burgers, hot dogs, classic BBQ sides and a tournament of lawn games.

LEXINGTON'S FALL 2021 APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITY IS HERE!

All Lexington employees are invited to apply to our Apprenticeship program for the fall semester now until **Wednesday, June 23!** This program is a great opportunity to pursue higher education and enhance your career as a direct support professional for free! The Apprenticeship is a two-year, NYS-approved program for DSPs to become certified through Fulton-Montgomery Community College, sponsored by Lexington and the NYS Department of Labor. Apprentices will earn a certificate in Individual Studies through the SUNY system as well as 35 college credits toward an associate or bachelor's degree. You will receive on-the-job training and there will be no out-of-pocket expenses for books, tuition or childcare! For more information or to sign up for the program, please contact Courtney Mickels at (518) 775-5422, (518) 295-8130 ext. 262 or mickelc@thearclexington.org.

LEXINGTON ACTIVITY AND RESOURCE CENTER

COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION SHEETS

To help employees make an informed decision about the COVID-19 vaccine, we have created an information sheet that contains links to credible medical and scientific resources, links to videos and information from the CDC, the WHO and our Public Health Departments. You can access the sheet at <http://bit.ly/2NGINzf>. We have also added fact sheets about the Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccines to the Vaccine Information page on our website at <https://thearclexington.org/vaccine>.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GETTING THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

New York State has opened the vaccines to anyone 16 and older. Vaccines are available at pharmacies, hospitals, local public health departments at different locations and Federally Qualified Health Centers statewide (like the SUNY Albany site and the Utica site at SUNY Polytechnic). If you want to get a vaccine, here are some of the ways to do it:

- To make an appointment at any of the state-run sites throughout New York State, visit <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov> or call the New York State COVID-19 Vaccination Hotline at 1-833-697-4829.
- Many pharmacies are offering COVID-19 vaccinations. You can schedule a vaccine at CVS or Walgreens through the stores' apps, available in the Google Play Store or iPhone App Store, or you can contact individual stores/pharmacies for information.
- Contact your county's Public Health Department or monitor their Facebook pages for vaccine information:
 - **Fulton:** (518) 736-5720 | fultoncountyny.gov/public-health
 - **Albany:** (518) 447-4580 | www.albanycounty.com/departments/health
 - **Schoharie:** (518) 295-8365 | www4.schohariecounty-ny.gov/departments/public-health
- You can also continue to contact our #LexVaxChamps for help finding a vaccine:
 - **Albany:** Teresa Wands, (518) 332-5674
 - **Fulton:** Kelly Green, (518) 736-4193
 - **Schoharie:** Liz Weingarten, (518) 295-8130 ext. 230

WEBER GRILL RAFFLE TO BENEFIT THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER

All are welcome to enter the raffle to win a deluxe Weber Genesis II gas grill, just in time for summer barbecuing! Tickets will be on sale at the in-person tent meetings in June and July as well as at the Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts, 2736 State Highway 30, Gloversville. Tickets cost \$2.00 for one or \$10.00 for a sheet of six. You need not be present at the drawing to win! Thank you to Ruby & Quiri and Michael Hutcherson for generously donating this grill as a fundraiser for the Nigra Arts Center!

WELLNESS 2GETHER CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Wellness 2gether hosts Zoom activities between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. every weekday! There are games, karaoke, educational sessions and more. No registration required—just log into Zoom! See the June calendar and details at <https://bit.ly/3xmbaTR>.

VIRTUAL IN-HOUSE MUSIC

Virtual in-house music is available for any Lexington home! See the June performance schedule at <https://bit.ly/3vrIXLb>. If you would like to schedule music for your house, please contact Tammy Miles at (518) 775-5475 or milest@thearclexington.org.

ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED ZOOM ACTIVITY CALENDAR

The Engaged and Empowered day hab program offers daily social groups, activities, games, crafts, trivia, meetings and more to the people we support! See the full June calendar and participation information at <https://bit.ly/35I61iU>.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS ZOOM CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES

Creative Expressions offers a selection of art classes, games, puzzles, musical performances, virtual tours and other activities via Zoom every month! To view the June calendar of events and get the participation information, please visit <https://bit.ly/3ztLh7>.

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 to sign them up. The Arts Center is located at 2736 State Highway 30 in Gloversville. For full listings of the classes and events offered, visit www.pncreativeartscenter.org.



KID SUMMER CAMPS COMING BACK TO THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER!

The Nigra Arts Center is excited to bring back our popular summer camps for children ages 5-12! Camps promote fun and creativity through STEAM (science, tech, engineering, arts and math) learning. The program, sponsored by National Grid, begins the week of **July 5** and ends the week of **August 23**, running weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Discounts are available for Lexington employees, children from the same family and more! Spots are very limited. If you want to sign up your kids, please contact Lynette May at mayl@thearclexington.org or Maria Nestle at nestlem@thearclexington.org or call (518) 661-9932. For more details, a schedule of weekly themes and a parent information packet, please visit www.pncreativeartscenter.org/camps.

JUNE CLASSES AT THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER

Check out our adaptive arts class calendar at <https://www.pncreativeartscenter.org/adaptivearts>! The Nigra Arts Center offers adaptive arts classes and social activities through Zoom and in person. In-studio classes are offered for Lexington homes to participate in as a single “family unit,” with only one house participating at a time. All are welcome to participate in any Zoom class! Pre-registration is required – call (518) 661-9932 or email Hailey Lozier at lozierh@thearclexington.org to sign up.

COME SEE OUR CURRENT ART SHOW!

The Nigra Arts Center’s 2021 Regional Art Show will be on display until **July 8!** Plan to see the artwork from local artists and elementary, middle and high school students **weekdays 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. or Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** The show will also be displayed virtually at www.pncreativeartscenter.org/art-shows and www.facebook.com/PaulNigraCenter.

RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Resources can be found at thearclexington.org/wellness, thearclexington.org/family-connections or thearclexington.org/vaccine.

- **United Concierge Medicine: The Virtual ER**—Lexington’s Telemedicine provider (1-844-484-7362).
- **Project Connect Pandemic Helpline**—A 24-hour helpline to support people with disabilities, their families and members of their support teams. Click the link for details about what services are offered or call the helpline any time at **888-847-3209**.
- **Information on COVID-19**—News, information and resources regarding COVID-19 at coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home.
- **Schenectady County COVID-19 Vaccine PODs**—Schenectady County is holding free COVID-19 vaccine PODs (points of dispensing) four days a week in May and June, open to all, no appointment needed. Visit <https://bit.ly/3hMJz9M> for details.
- **What to Expect After Getting a Vaccine**—Visit <https://bit.ly/345yGrG> for info on what to do and expect after getting vaccinated.

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! If you have questions or would like to submit information for a future newsletter, please contact Megan Balsler at balserm@thearclexington.org or (518) 661-9932.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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