

# LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS



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

NOVEMBER 2025

## #RISINGTOGETHER AT LEXINGTON!



- Ny'isha represented Lexington at the 3rd Annual Advocacy Institute in Albany! She joined other new self-advocates from across New York for a program that featured keynote speaker Dr. Tammy Ellis Robinson of UAlbany, a panel discussion with self-advocates and parents led by Senator Pat Fahy and a focus on communication, understanding key issues in the disability community and strategies for engaging decision-makers.
- Flame was invited to perform at Mastercard's global headquarters for their National Disability Employment Awareness Month celebration! The band was part of a variety of events Mastercard held for its employees that highlighted diversity, equality and inclusion in the workplace. Flame showed everyone just how much people of all abilities can shine when given the chance to show off their talents!
- Happy Halloween! Everyone had a blast dressing up and dancing the night away with friends at Creative Expressions' Halloween dance! The Burke gym was packed for this fun annual tradition. Thank you to everyone who made this fun event happen!
- Lenny, Stephen and Gary had the unique opportunity to visit the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and tour the jail! They all made great connections with the officers, with Gary shaking everyone's hands and telling them about his dad and Lenny taking an interest in the vehicles.
- This summer, the Albany team gathered at The Crossings of Colonie for a day of food, fun and friendly competition! With delicious BBQ, a cornhole tournament, karaoke and a photo booth, this celebration was a huge success. Thanks to all who came out for the fun!
- Schoharie artists have been enjoying Art Club with instructor Jake! Not only is this weekly offering fun, it is also an opportunity to learn about art history and develop foundational skills in different types of painting, drawing and other art media. Thank you, Jake!
- Did you enjoy your chicken dinners? Lexington's leadership team gathered in Gloversville, Oppenheim and Schoharie in October to hand out complimentary meals from Winner's Circle as thanks to employees for all you do every day for the people we support. We appreciate you!
- OPWDD Commissioner Willow Baer and The Arc New York CEO Erik Geizer visited Lexington in September! They toured some of our houses and programs as well as attended a Nurturing Environment Program meeting, seeing firsthand the difference our program make in people's lives. Thank you to Willow and Erik for their leadership and support of Lexington and our sister chapters throughout the state!

## JOIN US AT OUR NEXT NURTURING ENVIRONMENT MEETINGS

The Nurturing Environment Program began in 2001 with the goal of continually striving toward creating a more nurturing, caring, supportive and safe environment for everyone—24 hours a day, seven days a week, in all Lexington locations—that, in addition to making Lexington an even better place for everyone, will eliminate the possibility of abuse.

One aspect of the program is having agency-wide meetings where we share ideas and suggestions on how to make Lexington an even better place for people we support and our staff members. Join us at one of the upcoming meetings to share best practices, stories, concerns and more!

- **FULTON: Wednesday, December 3** | 11:30 a.m. | Training Center, 465 N. Perry Street, Johnstown
- **ALBANY: Thursday, December 4** | 10:00 a.m. | 4 Executive Park, First Floor, Stuyvesant Plaza, Albany
- **SCHOHARIE: Friday, December 12** | 10:00 a.m. | TPI Event Space, 121 Opportunity Drive, Schoharie

Please note that Nurturing Environment Meetings are meant to be accessible to everyone and are considered “work time.” If you are unable to attend a meeting but would like to share input, you can:

1. Leave a message at the Nurturing Environment Hotline (1-800-831-5602)
2. Send an e-mail to [nurture@thearclexington.org](mailto:nurture@thearclexington.org)
3. Send a written note to Nurturing at Gloversville Day Hab

## ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED ZOOM ACTIVITY CALENDAR

The Engaged and Empowered day hab program offers daily social groups, activities, wellness exercises, games, crafts and more to the people we support. All are welcome! Find the November calendar and participation information at <https://bit.ly/3WvawC7>.



**Saturday, December 6 | 9 a.m.-12 p.m. | Sunday, December 7 | 10 a.m.-12 p.m. | 2736 NY-30, Gloversville**

**Saturday, December 6 | 9 a.m.-12 p.m. | TPI Event Space, 121 Opportunity Drive, Schoharie**

All employees are invited to bring their children and grandchildren for a morning of fun at Santa’s Workshop! Join us at a space transformed into an enchanting gingerbread village for breakfast, pictures with Santa, arts and crafts, holiday music, cookie decorating and lots more festive fun. All children will receive a gift to take home!

This festive event is free for all employees and their immediate family members, but pre-registration is required. Employees can choose to attend at the Nigra Arts Center on either Saturday or Sunday or attend at the event space in Schoharie on Saturday. To RSVP to the Gloversville event, please call (518) 661-9932. To RSVP to the Schoharie event, please call (518) 702-4515.

## LEXINGTON FAMILY CELEBRATED AT THE ARC NEW YORK ANNUAL AWARDS



Two members of the Lexington family were recognized for their accomplishments at The Arc New York’s annual Fall Awards Ceremony!

**Mario Diaz** received the Dr. John Kowalczyk Outstanding Citizenship Award in honor of his outstanding service, advocacy and community leadership. Mario is a champion for inclusion in his community, inspiring his peers and giving selflessly of his time to make the world a better and more compassionate place. Over the years, he has made himself a cornerstone of all his communities, serving as a Lexington Safety Ambassador, self-advocacy leader and volunteer at local churches and food pantries. Mario’s leadership has directly resulted in real change and the creation of a safer, more compassionate community for everyone.

**Bernadette Williams** received the Thomas A. Maul Direct Support Professional of the Year Award, recognizing her 25 years of dedicated service to the people she supports and leadership to her peers. As a direct support coordinator, Bernie has spent her career mentoring generations of staff to lead with empathy and purpose while helping people she supports grow, heal and thrive. She embodies the very heart of our mission with unwavering commitment and strength. Despite her undeniable impact on the Lexington community, Bernie credits her success not to herself, but to the mentors, peers and people she supports who have helped her along the way. “Without the people I support daily, I wouldn’t be standing here today,” Bernie said. “It is because of them that I can say that I absolutely love my job. They make me a better person.”

Congratulations to Mario and Bernie on their very well-deserved awards! They are pictured above with Lexington Board President Joe Magliocca, Lexington CEO Shaloni Winston, The Arc New York CEO Erik Geizer and Lexington COO Dan Richardson.

## LEXINGTON’S MISSION

We empower people with autism and developmental disabilities to live their best lives, every day, by partnering with their families, our employees and our community.

## FLU CLINICS FOR LEXINGTON EMPLOYEES

Help prevent the spread of the flu by getting your flu vaccine! Reducing the spread of respiratory illnesses like the flu protects the people we support, your family and you yourself. Please consider getting your vaccine at one of the below clinics! All employees are welcome at any session. For questions, please contact Stacy Peck at (518) 775-5391.

Date	Time	Site	Address
Thursday, November 13	10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.	Gymnasium, Burke	127 E. State Street, Gloversville
Thursday, November 13	2:00-4:00 p.m.	Large Conference Room, 465	465 N. Perry Street, Johnstown
Friday, November 14	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Conference Room, ODH	405 Co. Highway 114, St. Johnsville

**\*Employees who work in an Albany residence or 4 Executive Park Drive will have the opportunity to receive a flu vaccine from a nurse associated with their residence or location.**

## LEXINGTON HONORS NYSID, THE ARC NY'S EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR



NYSID, one of The Arc Lexington's top partners in employment, received The Arc New York's 2025 Employer of the Year Award! On September 4, Lexington CEO Shaloni Winston proudly presented them with the award and celebrated their achievements in a ceremony at the Transitions Albany campus.

The event featured an introduction by Transitions students Jordan and Damian as well as appearances by VIPs such as Senator Patricia A. Fahy, Assemblymen Angelo Santabarbara and John McDonald, NYS Chief Disability Officer Kim Hill, The Arc New York's CEO Erik Geizer and NYSID CEO Maureen O'Brien, who accepted the award on behalf of the organization.

The highlight of the event came when Transitions alum and NYSID employee Dylan Goomansingh took the stage to tell the story of his growth from a promising student to a full-time employee—the realization of a dream of independence that once seemed out of reach.

In her acceptance remarks, Maureen O'Brien summed up the accomplishment with some poignant words: "I look forward to the day awards like this are no longer needed—because employment for people with disabilities is simply expected. What we have here, a partnership between Transitions and NYSID can become a model that's replicated across the state and beyond."

Congratulations to NYSID and thank you to their continuous support for inclusive employment!



## 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 Balser at [balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@thearclexington.org) or (518) 661-9932.

# CELEBRATING INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT DURING NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH!

October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month! Every year, we take this opportunity to celebrate the amazing career achievements people we support have accomplished as well as highlight the community partners who employ people we support as well as offer internships and other career development opportunities. Please join us in thanking the following businesses who have dedicated themselves to inclusive employment, and enjoy some highlights from the careers of the people we support!

## THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

Applebee's	The Carrot Barn	Irving Sawmill	Noble Ace Hardware
Ashley Home Furniture	Greater Johnstown School District	Peck's Flowers	NYSID
Bob's Tree Farm	Hannaford	Johnstown Police Department	Price Chopper
Broadalbin-Perth Central School District	Studio Herbage Florist	Kentucky Fried Chicken	Fulton Montgomery County Regional Chamber of Commerce
Bullshead Inn	HFM BOCES	Keymark	Ruby & Quiri
Burger King	Holiday Inn of Johnstown/Gloversville	SUNY Cobleskill College CAS	Runnings
Centro Civico	Home Depot	Label Shopper	Schoharie Valley Farms
Century Linen & Uniform	James A. Brennan Humane Society	Town of Mohawk	Walgreens
Fulton County YMCA	Lowe's	McDonald's	Walmart
Gloversville Enlarged School District		Mohawk Harvest Co-Op	Wineshipping
		Mohawk Sign System	
		New Process Cleaners	



Rachel found a new career this year at the YMCA! Despite being new to the field, she quickly proved herself a capable and hardworking employee.



Nick started as an intern at Applebee's and this year was promoted to fry cook! He learned the role quickly and now manages his station skillfully.



Brooke celebrated 10 years with Walmart! Over the years, she has overcome challenges, learned many roles and become a valued teammate.



Emily took a new job as an enrollment agent at Identigo! She is eager to learn and grow, volunteering to help with new tasks whenever she can.



Brandy has been a production laborer at Irving Forest Product Company for five years! She excels at this hands-on role and continues to grow.



Crystal's 10-year cleaning career has taken her to Nathan Littauer Hospital, where she keeps the ER, lobby and waiting rooms clean and welcoming!

# CONGRATULATIONS TO LEXINGTON'S EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR!



Melissa Agne



Diane Bellamy



Marilyn Besong



Dan Brown



Justin Emery



Sandy Hyatt



Laura Kuss



Brittini Nestle



Betty Scott



Ekko Spano



Elizabeth Thompson



Nichole Varney



Felicia Vogle



Aysha Wade



Sandra Ward

# SCENES FROM DSP WEEK—THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!



## ANNUAL NIGHT OUT GALA DAZZLES WITH “JEWELS OF THE DESERT” THEME!

Thank you to everyone who came out to Lexington’s annual Night Out Gala in September, as well as to the donors, sponsors and volunteers who made it possible! It was a beautiful night of exotic fun as we celebrated the accomplishments of the people we support and our employees. With a Diamond Bar, henna tattoos, belly dancing, fire dancing, exotic animal photo ops, caricatures, themed games, live sitar music, Flame and exciting silent auction and raffle items, the fun kept going all night long!

During the event’s celebratory program, emceed by WTEN’s Christina Arangio, Lexington CEO Shaloni Winston recognized our Employees of the Year and other notable accomplishments throughout the agency, then presented Ben and Mary Elmore with the Transitions Founder’s Circle Award in recognition of their contributions to the Transitions program, which both of their sons have attended.

This magical event couldn’t have happened without the many things you do to change lives every day of the year. We are grateful to all of you, and we hope to celebrate with you again next year!



## THE 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. If your house, program or someone you know wants to take a class, please call (518) 661-9932 or contact Megan Balser at [balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@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](http://www.pncreativeartscenter.org).



### BUS TRIP TO NEW YORK CITY WITH BROWN COACH

**Buses Depart From: 465 N. Perry St., Johnstown, 6:30 a.m. | Crossgates Commons, Albany: 7:30 a.m.**

**Saturday, December 13 | Tickets: \$75 | Meeting Place: Bryant Park | Departure Time: 7:00 p.m.**

Join the Nigra Arts Center and Brown Coach on a holiday-season excursion to the Big Apple! We'll handle the transportation so you can focus on a fun day of shopping, sightseeing, food, entertainment and more. Discounts are available for people we support and Lexington employees. If you, your family and friends, or someone you support would like to sign up, call (518) 661-9932!

### CHICKEN AND BISCUIT FUNDRAISER DINNER TO BENEFIT THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER

**Wednesday, November 12 | 3:00-6:00 p.m. | Pick up or dine in | \$15 a meal**

Treat yourself to a delicious chicken and biscuit dinner with sides of mashed potatoes, glazed carrots and a cookie! Pre-orders are strongly recommended. To order meals for yourself, your house or your family, call (518) 661-9932 or visit <https://bit.ly/47fP8ac>.

### HOLIDAY KIDS' ART PROGRAM

**Monday, December 29 to Wednesday, December 31 | 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. | Ages 5-12**

**\$180 for full session | \$60 per day | Discounts for Lexington employees and additional kids from the same family**

Looking for fun, educational and creative things for your kids to do over the winter break? Then send them to the Nigra Arts Center for three days of winter-themed, STEAM-inspired fun, complete with art projects, games, activities, cooking lessons and more! Space in this program is very limited—for details and to sign up, please call (518) 661-9932 or visit <https://bit.ly/4nHWatf>.

### CLASSES AT THE NIGRA ARTS CENTER

See our monthly class calendars at [pncreativeartscenter.org/adaptivearts](http://pncreativeartscenter.org/adaptivearts)! If you or the people you support would like to take a class, you can register online at <https://bit.ly/PNCCAEvents>, call (518) 661-9932 or email [balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@thearclexington.org).

### UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS

**Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts, 2736 State Highway 30, Gloversville | 4:00-5:00 p.m. | Free!**

All people we support are invited to attend free social events at the Nigra Arts Center! We host a few a month that appeal to a variety of interests. Please RSVP by contacting Megan Balser at (518) 661-9932 or [balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@thearclexington.org).

**SPORTS CLUB: FOOTBALL: Wednesday, November 12** – Take part in sports-related fun as we watch last week's matchup!

**FRIENDSGIVING DINNER: Wednesday, November 19** – Bring a dish to share as we celebrate the season of friendship!

**BINGO: Mondays, November 24 and December 12**– Meet new friends and win great prizes while playing your favorite game!

**CRAFT CORNER: HOLIDAY CARDS: Wednesday, December 3** – Design your own handmade holiday cards to give to loved ones!

**SPORTS CLUB: REINDEER GAMES: Wednesday, December 10** – Compete in a tournament of holiday-themed indoor games!

**HOLIDAY GIFT EXCHANGE JUBILEE: Wednesday, December 17** – Bring a fun gift worth \$10 or less to trade with friends!

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Megan Balser | [balserm@thearclexington.org](mailto:balserm@thearclexington.org)

(518) 661-9932, ext. 34564 | 2736 NY-30, Gloversville

Tammy Ruise | [ruiset@thearclexington.org](mailto:ruiset@thearclexington.org)

(518) 295-8130, ext. 256 | 121 Opportunity Dr., Schoharie



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