We are pleased to announce that AURORA of CNY, Inc. received an increase in our allocation through the United Way of CNY for the 2011-2014 Funding Cycle. In these fiscally strapped times, we are more than grateful to the United Way and the contributing members of the community for this increase in funds.

Rest assured, we are putting these dollars to work in a number of ways!

In our Adaptive Technology Department we have hired part-time assistant, Deanna Pavlacka, who will focus on computer training for youth who are blind and visually impaired. A new component has been added to our Pre-Vocational Program to teach appropriate use of social networking, the computer and adaptive equipment to conduct career exploration and job search activities.

We have also hired Lise Mayo, M.S. CRC for the newly created position of Placement Coordinator. Lise has a master’s degree in Vocational Rehabilitation from Syracuse University and will be responsible for job development and placement for our consumers. She will also assist with other aspects of our vocational programming and contract management. She brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm with her.

We are also in the development phase for a pre-vocational program for youth who are Deaf and hard of hearing. This week-long program will launch next summer and include job shadowing, work ethic skill building, resume writing, career exploration and how to interview successfully. Akemee Capers and Kelley Cooper, Employment staff, will help youth to gain work habits and make valuable community contacts to ensure success in the world of work.

We are grateful to the United Ways of Central New York, Cayuga and Oswego counties for their continued support of our mission. This year’s campaign has already begun so please be generous, knowing that your contribution will change lives right here in our community!
During its discussion of William Martin’s “Harvard Yard” at its June meeting, the Senior Book Discussion Group took a break to celebrate the 100th birthday of one of its members, Ruth Kitney of Fulton. In April, local author Lou Iorizzo visited with his wife Marilee and talked about his latest book, “Italian Americans: Bridges to Italy, Bonds to America,” published in 2010.

“We’ve become creative in our approach to each session. As a result, although all of us started out as individual book lovers, we have ended up as wonderful book club friends,” said Laura Smith, president of Oswego County Visually Impaired (OCVI).

The book group is sponsored by OCVI and AURORA. It is hosted by Springside at Seneca Hill and funded by a grant from The John Ben Snow Foundation.

Laura and AURORA assistant director Anne Costa, who co-facilitate the group, work to make it fully accessible to people with vision loss. “We have a Library of Congress catalog of books on tape, and we make sure that the books the group chooses are available through the catalog. If necessary, we also take care of ordering these books for our members,” Anne said.

AURORA’s Summer Pre-vocational Program got off to a good start with brand-new computers made possible by a grant from the CNY Community Foundation. The students learned how to connect to WiFi and use the Internet to research careers and explore their interests through interest inventories. “They were discovering jobs and work environments that might be a good vocational match,” said program director Connie Cottrell. They also learned about online safety and appropriateness. “They learned to ask themselves, what does my Facebook profile look like to employers,” Connie noted.

Attending the June meeting of the Senior Book Discussion Group, standing from the left, are Beverly Breen; Laura Smith; Frank Warren; Audrey Smelsky; Beverly Goewey and Elaine Allard; seated are Clara Dial (left) and Ruth Kitney.
It’s not too late to join us for the 15th Annual ForeSIGHT Golf Classic to be held on Monday, September 12, 2011.

We are pleased to have Ted Pasinski, former CEO of St. Joseph’s Hospital, as Honorary Chairman and to welcome back Seneca as our Presenting Sponsor, along with Franciscan Companies, Anaren, Blue Ocean Strategic Capital, Kopp and Fust Charles Champers, LLP.

This year’s event will continue the tradition of fun, good food and great times to support our mission and will feature Marissa Cutrone as guest speaker. With a shotgun start at 12:20 and a captain and crew format, and lunch and dinner and appetizers provided by Outback we invite you to play the day away! Contact Diane LaBeff at (315)42-7263 to reserve your spot.

It’s Not Too Late!!!

If you haven’t renewed your membership or become a new member for the 2011 calendar year it is not too late! Please help us to continue our mission. We appreciate your support!
Welcome to our New Employees

AURORA welcomes the following new staff members:

Akemee Capers is our Deaf Services Department’s new full-time employment specialist, providing job-related services to our Deaf consumers. She knows AURORA inside-out, having been an AURORA consumer herself during high school. Akemee holds a bachelor of science degree in business administration from SUNY Oswego and lives in Manlius.

Deanna Pavlacka came on board as a part-time adaptive technology assistant, where she helps AURORA’s consumers with computer and keyboard training. She also does computer setup for workshops that are held at AURORA. Deanna has 15 years of experience as a job coach with the Liverpool School District and loves learning about new technology. She has a bachelor of arts degree in theology with a concentration in youth leadership training from Valparaiso University in Indiana, and serves as director of lay ministries at King of Kings Lutheran Church in Liverpool. She has three daughters (one of whom is blind), a son-in-law and a granddaughter and has been married for 36 years. Deanna enjoys scrapbooking, playing card and board games, and solving puzzles such as Sudoku, especially Sunday’s High Fives. She lives in Liverpool.

Leeandia Nunn is the new full-time scheduler in the Marjorie Clere Interpreter Referral Service, where she schedules interpreters for the Deaf community. Before coming to AURORA she was a certified medical assistant. Leeandia, who lives in Syracuse, says she works in human services because she loves working with people.

Kaitlyn McElwee is AURORA’s new social worker. She works part-time for our Blind Services Department, providing assessment services and counseling our consumers on adjustment and grief as they relate to vision loss. Kaitlyn holds a bachelor of arts degree in psychology and Spanish from St. Bonaventure University and an MSW from Syracuse University. “I love people and I love helping others,” she gives as the reason for her choice of career. She lives in Camillus.
“Become Deaf Savvy: Part III”

Friday September 16, 2011
2:00-4:00 p.m.
Gifford Community Room, 518 James St., Syracuse, Lower Level

In recognition of Deaf Awareness Week
Presented by
AURORA of Central New York, Inc.

A panel of members of the Deaf community will present on these important topics:

- Deaf Culture
- American Sign Language vs. Signed English
- Using Interpreter Services
- Impact of the 2011 economy on Deaf people compared to years past
- Challenges of living in a hearing world

Participants will hear personal stories and experiences of community members who are Deaf. Interactive question and answer session will help you become more Deaf Savvy!!

Participation is limited, so please pre-register by calling AURORA of CNY at 422-7263 voice/vp; 422-9746 tdd or e-mail aurorairs@auroraofcny.org These events will be interpreted. If you have special communication needs, please indicate when pre-registering.

♦ OPEN CAPTIONED TRIPLE FEATURE ♦

MOVIES UNDER THE STARS FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

First Show Starts at 8 pm
SEPTEMBER 23rd - SEPTEMBER 25th, 2011!

Movies to be Announced!!

The Midway Drive-In Movie Theatre in recognition of “Deaf Awareness Week” proudly presents the 8th annual Open Captioned Weekend. The theatre is located in the town of Minetto. For further information please visit their website at:

www.midwaydriveinoc.com or www.midwaydrivein.com
As the only non-profit agency in Central New York that works exclusively with people who are deaf, blind, visually impaired or hard of hearing, AURORA has seen the personal impact of sensory loss. That’s why the agency offers free vision screening and hearing aid cleaning. In the photos below, AURORA outreach director David DeFrancis does a vision screening for Marie Spinosa during a recent health fair at the Auburn YMCA, and shows Doris Britt how he cleans her hearing aid during a visit to Westminster Manor in Auburn. “I think this will make a big difference,” Doris said when David was finished.

A United Way Agency of Central New York, Oswego & Cayuga Counties
Contract Agency of Onondaga County Dept. of Aging and Youth

**Auburn Outreach**

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