



TO: The Honorable Members of the Board of Regents
FROM: Ceylane Meyers-Ruff *Ceylane Meyers-Ruff*
SUBJECT: Appointments to the New York State Independent Living Council, Inc.
DATE: November 30, 2023

AUTHORIZATION(S):

Betty M...

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent)

Should the Board of Regents approve the proposed appointments of members to New York State Independent Living Council, Inc. (NYSILC).

Reason for Consideration

The 1992 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act require the Board of Regents to appoint members to the New York State Independent Living Council, Inc.

Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the Full Board for action at its December 2023 meeting.

Procedural History

Each year, as vacancies occur, the Board of Regents approves recommendations to fill such vacancies.

Background Information

Information on the proposed appointees (Attachment A and Attachment B) and a list of the entire NYSILC (Attachment C) is attached.

Related Regent's Items

July 2023: [Appointments to the New York State Independent Living Council, Inc.](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/723brca1.pdf)
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/723brca1.pdf>)

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: that Mariah Sepulveda be appointed for a 1-year unexpired term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2024.

VOTED: that Lisa Ackerman be appointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Michele Juda be appointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Leanna Leroy be appointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Susan Ruff be appointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Jennifer Shippee be appointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Isabelle Alexander-Klaboe be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Brodie Enoch be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Jacqueline John be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Marcus Johnson be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Naomi Jones be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Louis Paniccioli be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Joseph Tedesco be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Yessenia Torres be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

VOTED: that Stephanie Woodward be reappointed for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

Timetable for Implementation

Upon approval by the Regents of the recommended candidate, the appointments will go into effect January 1, 2024.

**New York State Independent Living Council, Inc.
(New Appointment for term January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024)**

ACCES is recommending one new appointment, resulting from one vacancy on the council.

Mariah Sepulveda

- As a Transition Specialist at the Bronx Independent Living Services, Mariah helped people with disabilities/elderly out of institutions and back into the community.
- Worked with clients, families, social workers, and service providers to manage resource management for Social Security, SNAP benefits, Housing Subsidy Programs, and Home Health Aid.

**New York State Independent Living Council, Inc.
(New Appointment for term January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2026)**

ACCES is recommending five new appointments, resulting from five members terming off the council, as well as nine reappointments of existing members.

Lisa Ackerman

- As Emergency Preparedness Intern and MRC Volunteer, reviewed and updated the agency's emergency preparedness plans for responding to biological, chemical, radiological, or all-hazard events.
- Liaison between NYS DOH and the Nine Indian Nations.

Michele Juda

- As the Executive Director of Parent to Parent of NYS, implemented and assisted in the development of the strategic goals and objectives of the statewide organization.
- As the Director of Parent to Parent of NYS, coordinated feedback to OPWDD on implementation of the Front Door Initiative.

Leanna Leroy

- As Employment Counselor for Seneca Nation Employment and Training, assisted Native Americans with training and guidance to achieve gainful employment.
- Facilitated classes and instructed students within house trainings as well as sent them to outside agencies to gain certificates or diplomas, entered them into trade school.

Susan Ruff

- As the Advocacy Director of Statewide Systems Advocacy Network (SSAN) 2008-current for Southern Tier Independence Center (STIC), has planned, coordinated, presented, and/or served as a panelist for numerous workshops, conferences, government hearings and college classes.
- Affiliated with Decarcerating Disabilities Jail Coalition of NY.

Jennifer Shippee

- As Director of Support Services for Southern Adirondack Independent Living Center (SAIL), provided oversight of RRDC, Open Doors Transition Center and TRAIID Center.
- Certified Dementia Practitioner and Trainer.

Isabelle Alexander-Klaboe

- As the Executive Director of Living Independently is For Everyone (LIFE), supports community living and independence for people living with disabilities by providing tools, resources, and support.
- As a regional community relations manager, organized schedules, training, and goal setting with at-risk populations to assist transition to employment.

Brodie Enoch

- Has over 10 years of leadership and board membership experience including board member of the Central Harlem Senior Citizen Centers, Community Board 11 (NYC), and Addicts Rehabilitation Center.
- Has experience advocating for individuals with disabilities, including six years as founder and executive director of the 145th Street Alliance where he advocates for and improves services and accessibility for individuals with sight impairments.

Jacqueline John

- Has over 20 years of experience in helping professions including Vocational Rehabilitation, direct support, and Emergency Room Technician.
- Experience in, and with an appreciation of, working with individuals and families from Native American and other cultures.

Marcus Johnson

- Has over 8 years of experience working in various capacities as an advocate for people with disabilities.
- Is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC), Distance Credentialed Counselor, Board Certified Tele Mental Health Provider, and a Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) trainee.

Naomi Jones

- Has over 22 years of civil rights, human rights, and youth advocacy experience in both private and public employment capacities.
- As an independent contractor, works as an advisor and community organizer for public interests through government, social, and private entities.

Louis Paniccioli

- As an Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) Congressional Fellow, advised legislative team via legislative recommendations on various issues including but in not limited to Civil Rights, Healthcare, Education and Veteran's Affairs.
- As an intern at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, investigated, and drafted claims and investigative memorandums of employment discrimination cases involving the disability community.

Joseph Tedesco

- Over 18 years' experience employed at the New York State Education Department Adult Career and Continuing Education Services- Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), Senior VRC, Statewide Business Coordinator, and Manager of the Independent Living Unit.
- Strong knowledge of the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL), and state and federal fiscal and reporting guidelines.

Yessenia Torres

- Has held 6 leadership, advocacy, and lobbying positions in the areas of disability rights and transportation.
- Employment experience includes work to improve accessibility of Taxi and Limousine services, and outreach to people with disabilities, community boards and adult centers.

Stephanie Woodward

- Has over 7 years of experience working as an attorney and advocacy director focusing on disability rights, civil rights, human rights, community outreach and organizing.
- Extensive leadership and community involvement including the Monroe County Bar Assoc., Attorney Grievance Committee, National ADAPT, National Council on Independent Living, Rochester Spinal Assoc., and Portlight Inclusive Disaster Strategies.

**New York State Independent Living Council, Inc.
(Term Expirations)**

Representatives from Centers for Independent Living

- 2026 Jennifer Shippee, 28 Sherrick Drive, Lake George, NY 12845
- 2026 Isabelle Alexander-Klaboe, 131 Genesee Street, Utica, NY 13503
- 2025 Rasheta Bunting, 902 East 86th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11236
- 2025 Sonam Willow, 1626 Woolsey Street, Schenectady, N.Y. 12303

Advocate for Individuals with Disabilities

- 2026 Lisa Ackerman-Todt, 178 Currybush Road, Schenectady, NY 12306
- 2026 Susan Ruff, 6 Kolb Road, Binghamton, NY, 13905
- 2025 Vacant
- 2025 John Zick, 962 W. 1st Street, Elmira, NY 14905
- 2024 Michael Gilberg Esq, Post Office Box 26, Granite Springs, NY 10527
- 2024 Beata Karpinska-Prehn, 1143 Cumberland Ave, Syracuse. NY 13210

Representatives of Service Organizations for Individuals with Disabilities

- 2026 Leanna Leroy, 328 Milstrip Road, Irving, NY 14081
- 2026 Brodie Enoch, New York, NY 10039
- 2026 Marcus Johnson, 145 East 126th Street, 4D, New York, NY 10035
- 2025 Lindsay Miller, 155 Washington Avenue, Suite 208, Albany, NY 12210
- 2024 Mariah Sepulveda, Bronx, NY
- 2024 Keith Gurgui, 9 Corwin Place, Lake Katrine, NY 12449

Parent/Guardian of an Individual with a Disability

- 2026 Michele Juda, Ballston Spa, NY 12020

Other Appropriate Individuals

2026 Naomi Jones, New York, NY 10025

2026 Louis A Paniccioli, 44 President Street, Staten Island, NY 10314

2026 Yesenia Torres, 215 East 99th Street, Unit 509, New York, NY 10029

2026 Stephanie Woodward, 110 Wembly Road, Rochester, NY 14616

2025 Barbara Goldstein, 64 Elsmere Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054

2025 Cynthia Alcozer, 382 Meadow Road Kings Park, NY 11754

2024 Yaw Adu Appiadu, 922 Main Street. Unit 205, Peekskill NY 10566

American Indian/Indigenous Person Representative

2026 Jacqueline John, 313 Jamestown Street, Gowanda, NY 14070

Ex Officio (DSE)

2026 Joseph Tedesco - Manager, Independent Living Unit, New York State Education Department, ACCES-VR, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234,