

# 2025 IMPACT REPORT

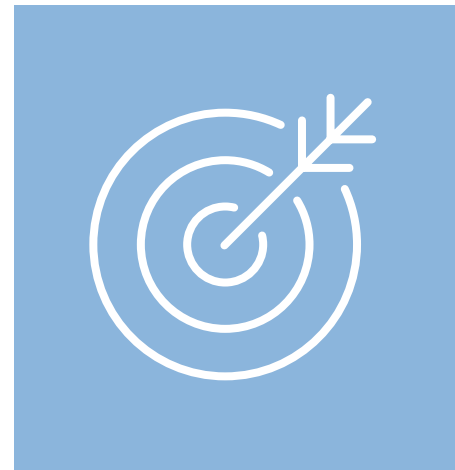
CHILD CARE RESOURCE NETWORK





**VISION**  
 All children have access to high-quality Child Care and support in reaching their full potential.

**MISSION**  
 Strengthen the Child Care landscape for the Western New York community through resources and education.



**VALUES**  
 Integrity  
 Empowerment  
 Collaboration



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## Glossary of Terms

**UPK** – Universal Pre-Kindergarten

**PD** – Professional Development

**TA** – Technical Assistance

**BTA** – Basic Technical Assistance

**ITA** – Intensive Technical Assistance

**ABLE** – AmeriCorps Builds Lives through Education

**OCFS** – Office of Children and Family Services

**FCCERS** – Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale

**ITERS** – Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale

**DSS** – Department of Social Services

**LDSS** – Local Department of Social Services

**FDC** – Family Day Care

**SACC** – School Age Credential

**ESFCCC** – Empire State Family Child Care Collaboration

**ASQ** – Ages and Stages Questionnaire



## A LETTER FROM THE CEO

KIMBERLY SUMINSKI, M.S. ED.



### Child Care Resource Network (CCRN)

exists to strengthen the Child Care landscape across Western New York through resources, education, and collaboration. Guided by our core values of integrity, empowerment, and collaboration, we live this mission every single day. We believe that every child in Western New York deserves high-quality Child Care, and that belief drives every conversation we have, every partnership we build, and every family we serve.

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with deep gratitude for what the CCRN team has accomplished together. We know that finding Child Care is hard, and that families often come to us navigating complex and overwhelming circumstances. Our commitment is simple: we meet families where they are and walk with them every step of the way.

To our generous supporters, thank you. To the families who trust us, the providers who show up each day, the partners who share our values, and the community members who believe that every child matters — none of this work happens without you.

Together, we are building a Western New York where every child can thrive. Our work improves the lives of young children throughout the region by supporting the adults who care for them, from birth through school age. CCRN promotes high-quality, affordable, and accessible care and learning for all children by empowering families, caregivers, and professionals through our direct connections to the early care community.

We maintain both formal and informal relationships across the region,

continually assessing needs and finding ways to show up where we are needed most. We advance advocacy efforts on behalf of young children and early childhood professionals, drawing on our experience and knowledge of the community to encourage growth and excellence throughout the field.

I am incredibly proud of each and every member of our team. We are a strong, dedicated, and deeply committed group of people, and this Impact Report offers just a glimpse of the work we do every day. There is so much more ahead of us, and we will continue to strengthen the Child Care community across Western New York.

Sincerely,  
Kimberly Suminski  
Chief Executive Officer  
Child Care Resource Network



# 2025 AT A GLANCE

IMPACT ACROSS EVERY DEPARTMENT

670

INFANT TODDLER ON-SITE COACHING HOURS



752

MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION HOURS



68

PROGRAMS SERVED BY INFANT TODDLER SPECIALISTS



802

PD PARTICIPANTS



900K+

MEALS & SNACKS SERVED



18,000

CHILDREN REACHED VIA CACFP



\$1.7M

REIMBURSED TO PROVIDERS



220+

PROVIDERS IN COMPLIANCE TRAINING



1,401+

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UNITS



687

INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED



1,585

BACKGROUND CHECK CLEARANCES



\$250K

STARTUP GRANTS SECURED



1,000+

LEGALLY EXEMPT PROVIDERS SUPPORTED



597

FAMILIES GIVEN CHILD CARE REFERRALS



170+

PROVIDERS ENGAGED VIA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



49

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STAFF TRAININGS





# EDUCATION & TRAINING DEPARTMENT

CREDENTIALS, COACHING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## The Education and Training Department

ensures the professional development needs of Child Care providers across Western New York are met — through credentialing, on-site coaching, health consultations, and a broad portfolio

of specialized programs. Our team of ten specialists serves providers across every modality, delivering individualized support that directly impacts the quality of care children receive.

## CREDENTIALS & COACHING

### Child Development Associate (CDA)

- 2–3 courses per year; 11 months, 120 hours of instruction per course
- 3–4 on-site coaching visits per candidate
- Children in CDA classrooms receive Ages and Stages Questionnaire

### School Age Care (SAC) Credential

- 1–2 courses per year; 7 months, 72 hours of instruction per course
- 6 coaching visits and 5 Endorsement Visits per candidate

### UPK Coaching

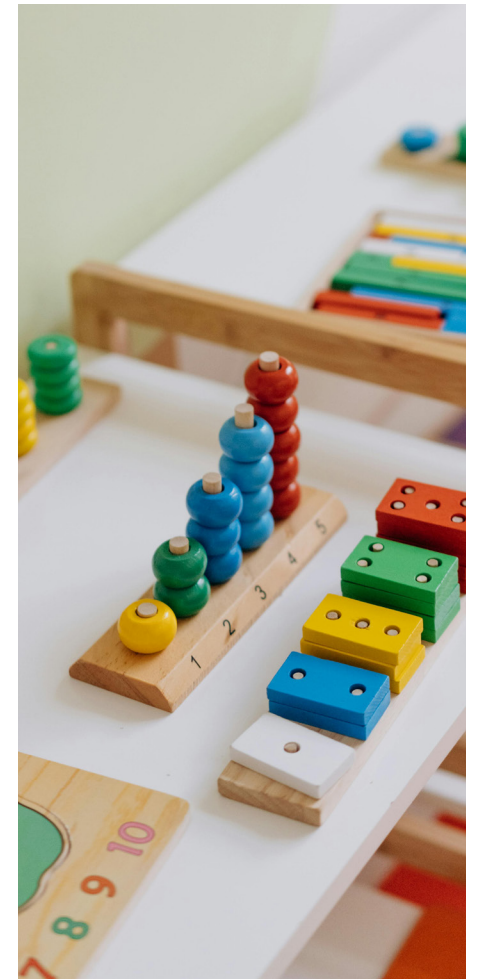
- Active contracts with Niagara Falls and Orchard Park School Districts
- Coaches UPK teachers on curriculum and Developmentally Appropriate Practice

### Directors as Leaders

- Specialist serves on the Steering Committee
- Provides professional development (PD), networking, and community engagement for area Directors

### Empire State Family Child Care Collaborative

- Coaches home-based providers on quality business practices
- 11 current members receiving ongoing services



## HEALTH, SAFETY & TA

### Technical Assistance

- Basic Technical Assistance (BTA): general information at no cost to any Child Care provider
- Intensive Technical Assistance (ITA): one-on-one coaching at no cost to any Child Care provider or programs

### Health Care Consultancy

- Contracted nursing professional completes Health Care Plan Initials, Site Visits, and Renewals at no cost to programs

### Health & Safety Training

- Director and Family/Group Family Health and Safety (H&S) offered bi-monthly on a rolling basis

### Medication Administration Training

- One training per quarter for Child Care program staff

### CPR/First Aid/AED

- Monthly blended course at CCRN; on-site contracting also available

### WNY Leadership Initiative

- Housed at CCRN; specialists collaborate on PD, outreach, and community engagement



## PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

### Fee-for-Service Contracts

- PD for Service Collaborative (ABLE) AmeriCorps members
- Contracted yearly for CPR/ First Aid/AED training with local summer camps, Child Care programs and Universal Pre K programs
- Implemented OCFS Corrective Action Plans and PD

- Empire State Campaign for Child Care (ESCCC)
- NYS Family Child Care Association
- Erie County Youth Advisory Board, Erie CC Early Childhood Advisory Board
- Youth Access Coalition

### Specialized PD

- Flip It®, Business Management Series
- Families and Educators Together
- NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice

### Community Engagement

- Live Well Erie, LiftOff, United Way Starting Line



**The CDA isn't just about passing an exam. It's about finding our voice as early childhood professionals. We are not just a teacher — we are the reason a child feels safe, seen, and loved when they're away from home.**

**MRS. CARRIE CAPPS, CDA GRADUATE**



# 15

CPR TRAININGS



# 10

PROFESSIONAL STAFF  
(UP FROM 8)



# 561

INTENSIVE TA HOURS



# INFANT TODDLER & MENTAL HEALTH

REGION 1 RESOURCE CENTER & IECMHC

## INFANT TODDLER SPECIALIST NETWORK

Established in 2002 and funded by NYS OCFS, our network is one of seven Regional Infant Toddler Resource Centers across New York State. Specialists provide resources, training, and advocacy ensuring infants and toddlers across Western New York have access to safe, nurturing, high-quality early care.

- 36.7% quality score increase in Family Day Care homes — from 4.18 ('Minimal') to 5.71 ('Good') on the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS).

- 15.3% improvement in Child Care Centers— 4.69 to 5.41 on the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS).
- 47 professional development sessions to 802 participants — nearly 100 hours of specialized instruction in the NYS Pyramid Model, trauma-informed safety, and developmentally appropriate pedagogy
- 670 hours of on-site coaching to 68 licensed and registered Child Care programs.



**This was a great program and helped me gain more insight, knowledge, and understanding of infants and toddlers. It definitely helped my professional development.**

**LEAH GUSTAFSON, JOYFUL CHILDCARE**



## INFANT & EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

Established in 2020, our Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) service partners mental health professionals with providers caring for children ages 0–5. The program builds teacher confidence, equips staff with emotional leadership tools, and fosters the supportive foundations children need to thrive long term.

- 752 hours of on-site mental health support to 30 licensed and registered Child Care programs across WNY.

- 57% improvement in average mental health climate score (0.79 to 1.24), with greatest gains in Social-Emotional Learning, Directions & Rules, and Individualized Developmentally Appropriate Practice.
- Children in improved environments showed measurably higher social-emotional resilience at end of program engagement.



**This program has been amazing at helping and supporting staff in the classroom. It helps to have input from 'the outside' — and gives me a different view and insight on staff members.**

**ALLIE ANDERSON, SMARTY PANTS CHILDCARE OP**

# 68

PROGRAMS SUPPORTED

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# 670

COACHING HOURS

# 30

PROGRAMS SUPPORTED

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# 752

CONSULTATION HOURS



**"It was so helpful to have Kelsey support not one but two new lead teachers in their new classrooms. It gave my staff the confidence to improve."**

**HEATHER TILLI, BRIGHTPATH EARLY LEARNING**



# BUSINESS SERVICES & CHILD CARE SUPPLY

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS & NEW PROGRAM SUPPORT

## Our Business Services team

bridges the workforce and the Child Care industry — helping companies attract and retain talent through employer-facing solutions, while

supporting aspiring Child Care entrepreneurs with the tools to launch and grow successful programs across Western New York.

## BUSINESS & CHILD CARE CONNECTOR

Formerly the Business Navigator Initiative, the Business Child Care Connector engages employers through local Chambers of Commerce, the WNY Regional Economic Development Council, and community organizations — delivering workforce solutions centered on Child Care access.

- Joined 5 Chambers of Commerce to network with local businesses and deliver Child Care resources directly to employers.
- Attended or presented at 12 outreach events focused on Child Care as a workforce issue.



**“As part of Governor Hochul’s Business Navigator Initiative, CCRN has been a trusted partner in helping Catholic Health associates access quality childcare. Since January 2023, we’ve referred 140 associates to CCRN. Of the 1,009 in our THRIVE program over two years, 130 received childcare support. These tools drive real impact for our associates and their families.”**

TERRY BIANCHI, THRIVE PROGRAM MANAGER, CATHOLIC HEALTH

## EMPIRE STATE CHILD CARE SHARE PILOT PROGRAM



A new pilot program in development designed to enroll businesses, employees, and providers in a model where the employer/business pays a portion, the parent pays a portion, and the grant pays a portion of the cost of Child Care — a meaningful step toward sustainable, employer-supported Child Care in Erie County.

### ERIE COUNTY START UP & EXPANSION GRANT

- \$250,000 secured from Erie County as startup grant funding for new and expanding in-home providers.
- 1 completed applicant opened 8 new slots; 3 additional applicants currently in process.

### MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The team actively promotes CCRN programs, professional development, and events through social media and email campaigns — including branded materials for Springtime in the City, a new professional development Catalog, and the upcoming Baby Café launch.

- 1,141 Instagram followers
- 2,808 Facebook followers
- Professional development schedule complete for January–April; May–August underway.

### BUSINESS SUPPORT & MEMBERSHIP

The Business Support Specialist provides resources, professional development, and grant assistance to Child Care providers of all modalities.

CCRN Membership benefits and quarterly events offer additional support and networking opportunities.

8

NEW FDC PROVIDERS SUPPORTED



4

NEW SACC PROGRAMS OPENED



# REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT

INSPECTIONS, COMPLIANCE & NEW PROGRAM OPENINGS

### The Registration Department

serves all registered Family Daycare and School Age Child Care programs in Erie County, overseeing 57 Family Daycare Programs and 122 School Age Child Care Programs. The department conducts quarterly inspections, completes background checks for all

program employees, and investigates complaints indicating illegal or non-compliant Child Care. Our registrars are often the first point of contact for providers entering the field — and a consistent resource throughout a program's life.



## 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- 687 total inspections conducted, including all required Q1 annual unannounced inspections.
- 4 new School Age Child Care programs and 8 new Family Daycare programs opened, creating approximately 242 new registered daycare slots.
- 18 potentially illegal daycare complaints investigated, resulting in 2 substantiated findings and closures.
- 1,585 comprehensive background check clearances completed for employees at School Age Child Care and Family Daycare programs.
- 3 FDC and 1 SACC applications currently in process; active collaboration with Business Services on Erie County Start Up Grant applicants.



Working with the CCRN team has been great. They are organized, very responsive, and patient in answering any questions. Opening my own licensed daycare was a clear and smooth process – they made what could have been a stressful experience feel very easy and reassuring.

**NATALIE MANN, FAMILY DAYCARE PROVIDER**



# 687

INSPECTIONS  
CONDUCTED



# 1,585

BACKGROUND  
CLEARANCES



# 12

NEW PROGRAMS  
OPENED



# 242

NEW DAYCARE  
SLOTS



In the beginning stages of opening our new SAC program, we encountered almost every obstacle imaginable. Throughout this journey, CCRN was right there guiding us each step of the way. Our registrar was always accessible and prompt. With her optimism and great knowledge of the registration process, we always felt supported – and we successfully obtained our registration by the deadline. We have now created a beloved program for the children and families in our community.

**ANNE GORMAN, CO-OWNER, REGISTERED SACC PROGRAM**



# CHILD & ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

NUTRITION, COMPLIANCE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

is a federally funded program of the USDA's Food and Nutrition Services. Its purpose is to help meet the nutritional needs of growing children in Child Care settings and establish healthy eating

habits for life. Participating providers receive reimbursement for meals and snacks that meet USDA standards, along with professional development, technical assistance, and ongoing support.

## 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- More than \$1.7 million reimbursed to Erie and Niagara County CACFP participating providers.
- Child Care providers served over 900,000 meals and snacks, building a foundation of healthy eating for 18,000 children.
- Over 200 Child Care providers received professional development on nutrition and healthy eating practices.
- 29 new and returning provider applications processed since October 2025, growing program participation.



The program helps ensure the children in my care receive nutritious, balanced meals. My monitor has always been professional, supportive, and encouraging. I truly appreciate the partnership and the positive impact it has on the families I serve.

**ALICIA JOHNSON, JOHNSON'S GROUP FAMILY DAYCARE INC.**



## COMPLIANCE & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Annual mandatory compliance professional development series facilitated for 220+ participating providers, focused on CACFP fundamental policies and operational procedures.
- Health and Safety Grants administered to prospective providers, lowering the barrier to entry for new in-home Child Care businesses.



My instructor has been amazing – going step by step with me. This program has made it easier to achieve my goal of becoming a licensed daycare provider.

**NOEMI GONZALEZ, CACFP PARTICIPANT**

900K+

MEALS & SNACKS SERVED



18,000

CHILDREN REACHED



\$1.7M

PROVIDER REIMBURSEMENTS



220+

IN COMPLIANCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



INTRODUCING: BABY CAFÉ

**CCRN launched Baby Café.**  
A free resource offering professional breastfeeding support, peer connection, and expert guidance from certified lactation counselors and an international board certified lactation consultant.

**Monthly In-person Sessions**  
Second Wednesday of each month

**Monthly Virtual Sessions**  
Fourth Monday of each month



# LEGALLY EXEMPT DEPARTMENT

SUPPORTING 1,000+ PROVIDERS ACROSS WESTERN NEW YORK

## The Legally Exempt Department

supports families and Child Care providers by facilitating accessible, high-quality care options across Erie County. The department assists providers through enrollment, training, and structured pathways that strengthen readiness for licensure or

registration. Through collaborative partnerships and community-centered outreach, the LE team ensures providers receive timely guidance, professional development opportunities, and comprehensive operational support.

## 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- Supported 900–1,020+ active or projected providers, with 64–171 applications pending, including several group programs preparing for summer camp services.
- Achieved the highest provider participation levels in recent years through program restructuring and expanded community outreach.
- Launched a Transitional Cohort to guide providers toward licensure/ registration; 6 providers have already become licensed or registered, with 5 additional interested in participating.
- Advanced toward the departmental goal of supporting 8 providers annually through a revolving licensing cohort model, supported by a strengthened, comprehensive licensing pathway.
- Expanded community engagement through events such as the Back to School Block Party, providing supplies to 30 children, and through ongoing information sessions and luncheons.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The department delivers professional development training in core areas including Child Development, Health & Safety, and Keeping in Compliance. Sessions are led by credentialed trainers who equip providers with practical strategies for safe, developmentally appropriate care environments.

- Trained more than 30 providers in year 1, supporting many in achieving enhanced rate compensation.
- Monthly in-person Health & Safety Training now available through credentialed trainers qualified via the Rockefeller Professional Development Program — streamlining access for providers utilizing CSEAVOICE funding.



## GRANT SUPPORT & SUPPLY

- More than 50 providers received curated supply grants, enabling them to expand services and improve care quality.
- \$1,000 grants provided to 500 providers to support childhood development programming.
- 150 grants developed for providers requiring Health & Safety materials.



## REGIONAL COLLABORATION

The department participates in a bimonthly support and relief network among CCRC LE Programs across the region, with the support of ECLC, to enhance care modalities for both staff and providers.

Active collaboration with DSS/LDSS continues to improve documentation accuracy, compliance, and workflow consistency.



**Thank you for the ongoing support and guidance. The resources and training provided have made a real difference in how I run my program and serve the families in my care.**

**CARMEN REINA, LEGALLY EXEMPT PROVIDER**

**1,000+**

ACTIVE PROVIDERS SUPPORTED



**30**

CHILDREN REACHED AT BLOCK PARTY



**6**

PROVIDERS TRANSITIONED TO REGISTERED STATUS





2025 BY THE NUMBERS

597

FAMILIES GIVEN CHILD CARE REFERRALS



276

FAMILIES IDENTIFIED AS INCOME-ELIGIBLE FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE



897

FAMILIES RECEIVED CCAP INFORMATION



8

COMMUNITY RESOURCE EVENTS ATTENDED



6

CHOOSING CHILD CARE PRESENTATIONS SHARED WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY PARTNERS



279

FAMILIES BELOW ERIE COUNTY POVERTY LEVEL SERVED



# CHILD CARE REFERRAL

CONNECTING FAMILIES TO CHILD CARE ACROSS ERIE COUNTY

## Child Care Referral Services

specializes in providing support for parents and the community in obtaining a current list of licensed and registered Child Care providers, giving information on applying for and obtaining Child Care Assistance, and helping families

understand the different types of Child Care available to them. This service meets families where they are — often at their most uncertain — and connects them with the resources and options they need.





### WHO WE SERVE

Referral services are available to any parent, grandparent, foster family, employer, or community organization navigating the Child Care landscape in Erie County. Our team works daily alongside caseworkers, social services agencies, homeless shelters, and school districts to ensure no family has to search for care alone.

Families are supported not only in finding licensed and registered programs, but in understanding the broader landscape of resources available to them — from basic needs support to mental health contacts, special needs care, and child protective services navigation.



**Thank you for reaching out so quickly. I appreciate your time explaining our options and for the resources you provided.**

CATHY C., GRANDPARENT



**The Referral Specialist was an amazing help! She returned my call promptly and answered all my questions efficiently. She provided a big list of Child Care Programs close to me and around my new job. I was able to find my daughter a Child Care Program that'll work well for her.**

LEAH M., MOTHER

### REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

The Child Care Referral team collaborates with many Erie County Department of Social Services departments, such as the Day Care Unit and Child Protective Services. Many Community Based Organizations such as; Parent Network, Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal, Every Person Influences Children (EPIC), and Child and Family Services Employee Assistance Program,

Many businesses such as; Catholic Health Systems Thrive program, Rosina Foods, Best Self Behavioral Health and Odoo.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LOCAL CONNECTION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Community Engagement

is considered essential to everything the agency does. This work is designed to ensure that staff is best equipped to support and encourage a community of diverse Child Care providers, children, and families — and to ensure that

providers always have access to quality education that aids in creating Child Care programs that welcome and support all kinds of children and their families.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- Hosted the agency’s first dedicated mini conference centered around disability accommodation — a landmark moment in deepening CCRN’s commitment to inclusive care.
- Engaged over 170 Child Care providers through professional development sessions and conference presentations.
- Hosted 49 different trainings and events for agency staff centered around community engagement principles and practice.
- Maintained consistent commitment to furthering community engagement across Western New York through multiple outreach events and partnerships with community organizations.



WHAT THIS WORK LOOKS LIKE

Community Engagement spans the full breadth of the agency — from socially impactful professional development and cultural observances to disability inclusion and provider outreach. In 2025, this work included:

- 8 different equity focused professional development opportunities offered to Child Care professionals, many at no cost and all qualifying for OCFS training credit.
- Through Community Engagement Initiatives our agency donated over 350 pounds of non-perishable food to Feedmore of Western New York
- Quarterly community engagement initiatives including book clubs, guided discussions, and hands-on activities designed to deepen communal understanding.
- Regional Collaborations with the Early Care and Learning Council, the Office of Children and Family Services, the Department of Social Services, the Workforce Development Institute, Erie County Community College, The United Way of Western New York, and other impactful organizations.

On average, roughly 50% of participants in Community Engagement events have been in the field of Child Care for more than 10 years — a clear signal that this need has long been felt, and that CCRN’s commitment to addressing it is resonating across every stage of a provider’s career.



There’s a lot that I’ll be bringing back to my program today, and a lot to think about. Accommodations can be simple, and even fun and they really do help some children.

PROVIDER QUOTE

FROM THE “ACCOMMODATING ACCOMODATIONS” COURSE



I truly believe this should be mandatory for everyone, not just Child Care workers. People need to learn there are ways to de-escalate hateful situations in a way that benefits everybody.

PROVIDER QUOTE

ON THE “COMBATTING BIAS IN PRACTICE” COURSE

170+

PROVIDERS PARTICIPATED



49

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS & EVENTS



1ST

LANDMARK DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION MINI CONFERENCE





1000 Hertel Ave, Buffalo, NY 14216

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