

Summer 2018

Achieving More Together

CP Rochester
Epilepsy-Pralid, Inc.
Medical Motor Service
National Multiple Sclerosis Society,
Upstate New York Chapter
Rochester Hearing
and Speech Center
Rochester Rehabilitation

Driving Independence

Helping People of All Ages and Abilities Take the Wheel

Russell is in his first year at Monroe Community College. He wants to become an aeronautic engineer someday, but first, driving lessons. For Russell, who is 18 and uses a wheelchair, driving brings greater independence.

For over 45 years, Rochester Rehabilitation's DriveOn program has been helping people of all ages and abilities learn to drive, return to driving, or remain driving safely and confidently. DriveOn is the only driving school of its kind in Upstate New York. Bryan Rogers, DriveOn Supervisor and one of the program's certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialists, travels across the state to help people with special needs and their families. Over one year, Russell participated in weekly driving lessons at DriveOn. He learned how to use hand controls for accelerating and braking, as well as steering. "I don't take no for an answer on a lot of things. I just like to be motivated," Russell said, of his decision to get his license, which he earned in 2017.

Russell's story is typical of how the staff at DriveOn creates plans to help people meet their unique goals. The staff provide driver evaluations, driver training, and vehicle modification recommendations to help both drivers and those seeking to ride safely as a passenger. Staff can also help drivers determine whether they are eligible for support from New York State programs like ACCES-VR, which promotes employment and independent living.

Travis, a program participant at CP Rochester, learned about the program through ACCES-VR. Like Russell, Travis is a college student. "When I found out about DriveOn," Travis said, "My goal was doing anything

possible to get a license. Being able to drive makes it easier for me to take part in a variety of activities, such as going to school, to therapies, power soccer, shopping and so many other things." Travis worked with instructor Pam Gabryel, first becoming comfortable driving in a parking lot setting before driving on roadways. "I had the best experience that a new driver could have," he said. "If you believe you can do something, you can. I first thought that I would not be able to drive myself, but after reaching out that thought was gone because the people at DriveOn are there for you."

For seniors and their families, DriveOn offers evaluations for individuals who have experienced vision issues, reduced strength or mobility, or other challenges. Sandra Wehner first learned about DriveOn when her mother passed away suddenly and her father, who had stopped driving after an injury many years before, turned to her for help. After DriveOn helped her father get re-certified as a driver, she remembered how profoundly the experience affected his sense of independence. "Sandy," she recalled him saying at the time, "I've got a whole new lease on life!"

DriveOn 

A division of Rochester Rehabilitation

To learn more about DriveOn, call **585.271.1894** or visit RochesterRehab.org.

We are grateful for the support provided by

