

# Audio file

[Independent Perspective #1836 \(Rafiq Sailm\).mp3](#)

## Transcript

00:00:00 Speaker 1

Welcome to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of Western New York Independent Living (WNYIL). Our guest today is Rafiq Salim, the customized employment specialist with the Independent Living Center.

00:00:14 Speaker 1

And I'm your host, Ernie Churchwell.

00:00:15 Speaker 1

Welcome to the program Rafiq.

00:00:18 Speaker 2

Thank you, Ernie. Glad to be here.

00:00:20 Speaker 1

And you're the knowledgeable person about a new aspect of our services which we share with a bunch of other Centers around the country called SWTCIE. Since you say it so well, could you tell us what that stands for?

00:00:37 Speaker 2

Well, SWTCIE stands for Subminimum Wage Through Competitive Integrated Employment.

00:00:44 Speaker 2

Let me explain.

00:00:45 Speaker 1

Please do.

00:00:47 Speaker 2

New York is one of 14 states that have received a SWTCIE grant with New York State Education Department's Adult Career & Continuing Education Services ACCES-VR.

00:00:59 Speaker 2

As a New York State grantee.

00:01:01 Speaker 2

New York State Access VR is collaborating with the New York Association of Independent Living Centers to implement SWTCIE.

00:01:09 Speaker 2

SWTCIE's goal is to reduce the number of people with disabilities.

00:01:14 Speaker 2

Working for sub minimum wages and increase the number of people who obtain competitive integrated employment.

00:01:21 Speaker 2

Competitive integrated employment means work in the community at a minimum of \$15.50 per hour or at the prevailing wage for the job. The same spaces as people without disabilities with the same employment related benefits as people without disabilities.

00:01:39 Speaker 2

SWTCIE services are open to individuals with disabilities in Nassau, Suffolk, Cortland, Wayne, Monroe and Erie County, who are currently working in sub minimum wage employment.

00:01:50 Speaker 2

And is open to those who are considering subminimum wage employment.

00:01:55 Speaker 2

Future SWTCIEs designed to assist both adults and transition age youth.

00:02:01 Speaker 2

That is youth 15 to 24 who are interested in exploring options beyond sheltered sub minimum wage employment.

00:02:10 Speaker 2

SWTCIE uses what's called a customized employment approach to job development, a process for achieving competitive integrated employment through a relationship between the job seeker and employer that is personalized to meet the needs of both.

00:02:24 Speaker 2

There's a strategy that benefits people, especially people with disabilities, who might not have found success through other employment strategies.

00:02:33 Speaker 2

SWTCIE participants also work with benefits advisors to ensure that they and their supports have all the information needed to protect.

00:02:43 Speaker 2

Essential benefits like SSI and Medicaid once they start working.

00:02:48 Speaker 2

ACCES-VR independent living staff work collaboratively with SWTCIE participants.

00:02:53 Speaker 2

Independent Living Centers are key partners in the SWTCIE program and will be involved in the hands-on delivery of services.

00:03:03 Speaker 2

Independent Living Centers are private, not-for-profit service and advocacy organizations governed and staffed primarily by people with disabilities.

00:03:11 Speaker 2

Their philosophy is to maximize opportunities for choices and growth through peer-driven supports and self-help. Independent Living Centers are the voice of people with disabilities and the disability rights movement in local communities across New York State.

00:03:27 Speaker 2

So why are Centers for independent living a part of SWTCIE demonstration projects across the country?

00:03:34 Speaker 2

Independent Living Centers have been a driving force in cultural ages that facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities into diverse communities.

00:03:43 Speaker 2

When you think deinstitutionalization, curb cuts, managed long term care programs, peer services, person centered planning, handicap parking signs and regulations,

wheelchair ramps, home modifications to allow people to get in and out of their homes, Universal Design and the entire and the menu of services offered by ACCES-VR that make it possible for people with disabilities to live and work in the community,

00:04:09 Speaker 2

reflect the work of the Independent Living movement. Centers for Independent Living work to provide people with disabilities that live or work within non-integrated settings, the opportunity to enjoy the rights and privileges of full citizenship.

00:04:24 Speaker 2

Including the right to equal pay for equal work at minimum wage or above.

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To connect with SWTCIE and simply call the statewide ACCES-VR at 315-428-4284.

00:04:35 Speaker 1

Boy, you made my job real easy today.

00:04:37 Speaker 1

We're totally out of time.

00:04:39 Speaker 1

You've already given a contact number, so I thank you very much for supplying the information.

00:04:44 Speaker 1

You have a good day.

00:04:45 Speaker 2

Thank you, Ernie.

00:04:46 Speaker 1

You've been listening to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of Western New York Independent Living (WNYIL).

00:04:52 Speaker 1

Our guest today has been Rafiq Salim, customized employment specialist with Independent Living Center, and I've been your host, Ernie Churchwell.