



SILO's 2026 Self-Advocacy Conference Agenda

8:00am-9:00am- Registration, Introduction, and Breakfast (*Sapphire Room*)

9:00am-9:45am- **Opening Keynote – Jim Hughes**, *Motivational Speaker (Sapphire Room)*

10:00am-10:45am- **Workshop Session I**
1. Self-Advocacy for Employment (*Emerald Room*)
2. Voting: Know Your Rights (*Opal Room*)

11:00am-11:45am- **Workshop Session II**
3. Disability Rights under Fair Housing Laws: *When "No" Is Not the Final Answer (Emerald Room)*
4. Traveling with a Disability (*Opal Room*)

12:00pm-12:45pm- Lunch (*Sapphire Room*)

12:10pm-12:45pm- **Afternoon Speakers - Paul and Hava**, *Disability Advocates (Sapphire Room)*

1:00pm-1:45pm- **Workshop Session III**
5. ADA Basics: *Know Your Rights, Everywhere You Go (Emerald Room)*
6. Strategies on How to Self-Advocate as a Veteran (*Opal Room*)

2:00pm-2:30pm- **Speaker and Comedian - Tugboat Manny** (*Sapphire Room*)

2:30pm- Conference Concludes

Self-Initiated Living Options, Inc. (SILO) has been providing programs and services to people with disabilities in Suffolk County since 1985. We have since expanded our range of services to include Nassau County. SILO is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, consumer controlled, non-residential, civil rights, mentoring and educational organization. SILO's philosophy is tied to the nationwide Independent Living Movement which asserts that people with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities, needs and desires, as their non-disabled peers.

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SILO's Self-Advocacy Conference 2026

Please join SILO, along with guest speakers, workshop facilitators, professionals, community members and their families, in sharing experiences on empowerment through self-advocacy for people with disabilities!

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6TH 2026

8:00AM-2:30PM

HOLIDAY INN - LONG ISLAND

1730 N OCEAN AVE,
HOLTSVILLE, NY 11742

WWW.SILOINC.ORG/SELFADVOCACYCONFERENCE

There is to be no soliciting unless you are a paid sponsor. Photographs are permitted, however, videotaping during the conference is prohibited.

SILO
Self-Initiated Living Options, Inc.
Suffolk County's Center for
Independent Living and Disability Rights
education - advocacy - empowerment

SILO
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Medford, New York 11763
(631) 880-7929 www.siloinc.org

SPEAKERS

Jim Hughes

Motivational Speaker



Jim Hughes specializes in transformative leadership and motivational speaking, providing audiences with valuable insights that empower both individuals and organizations to reach their fullest potential. By combining personal anecdotes with actionable advice, his engaging approach not only motivates listeners but also equips them with practical strategies to turn setbacks into stepping stones on their journey toward sustained personal and professional growth. Through his dynamic presentations, Jim not only uplifts but also instills a sense of confidence and determination, enabling people to cultivate their strengths and persevere in the face of adversity.



Paul and Hava

Disability Advocates

Paul and Hava are a married couple with developmental disabilities who live on Long Island. Through their advocacy, and the support of their parents, they were married in 2012. Since being married, they were able to secure housing in an IRA supported by East End Disability Associates, Inc. (EEDA), where they have lived for over 13 years.



Tugboat Manny

Comedian

Tugboat Manny's comedic style is a delightful combination of self-deprecation and clever observations, consisting of original truths about his life, from his Mental Health and physical disabilities, his family, friends and every job that he has ever had, from serving Our Great Country of The United States of America as a former Naval Reservist and a Merchant Mariner; sailing as a deckhand on harbor and ocean going tugboats out of New York harbor.



Workshop Descriptions and Presenters

Self-Advocacy for Employment

Time: 10 - 10:45 am

Location: Emerald Room

Facilitator: Kelsey Kalafut, *SILO's Director of Peer Services Program*

Learn how to speak up for yourself in the workplace with practical tools for understanding your needs, how to communicate those needs, making informed choices, and requesting reasonable accommodations. Leave with confidence to take control of your employment journey.

Voting: Know Your Rights

Time: 10 - 10:45 am

Location: Opal Room

Facilitator: Marilyn Tucci, *SILO's Director Advocacy*, and Kaitlyn Fedziuk, *SILO's Communications Office Coordinator*

Learn about voting rights and accessibility, including physical accessibility of polling places, the use of Ballot Marking Devices, absentee ballots, and what you can do if you witness a violation.

Disability Rights under Fair Housing Laws: When "No" Is Not the Final Answer

Time: 11 - 11:45 am

Location: Emerald Room

Facilitator: Ian Wilder, *Executive Director of Long Island Housing Services (LIHS)*

People with disabilities have the right to equal access to housing. In this workshop, participants will learn how to recognize disability-related housing barriers, request reasonable accommodation or modifications, and identify possible discrimination based on a lawful source of income.

Traveling with a Disability

Time: 11 - 11:45 am

Location: Opal Room

Facilitator: Michael Ring

Traveling with a disability can be difficult. Michael Ring will share his experiences traveling. Michael acquired his disability in 2014. He will discuss the differences between traveling as a person with a disability and as a person who was not yet disabled.

ADA Basics: Know Your Rights, Everywhere You Go

Time: 1 - 1:45 pm

Location: Emerald Room

Facilitator: Constantine (Tino) Ioannidis, *Associate Director, Certified ADA Coordinator, Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities*

The ADA doesn't stop at the ramp. It follows you to the park, the beach, the grocery store, the bus you take to work, and the job waiting at the other end. Certified ADA Coordinator Tino will walk you through all five titles of the law and where each one shows up in your day. Then he'll cover what to do when something isn't accessible: who to ask, what to say, and where to go when the answer is no.

Strategies on How to Self-Advocate as a Veteran

Time: 1 - 1:45 pm

Location: Opal Room

Facilitators: Angel Flores

Join Angel for an honest and empowering conversation about self-advocacy, self-motivation, and the power of believing in yourself as a veteran. Drawing from his own experience, he will explore topics including overcoming self-pity, living with PTSD and depression, and recognizing that asking for help is okay.

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Thank You!

For a TEXT-ONLY brochure for zoom-in capabilities or screen readers, go to www.siloinc.org/selfadvocacyconference