



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Senator Liz Krueger's Virtual Town Hall: New Technology to Support People with Hearing and Vision Loss PLUS an Overview of the MTA's New OMNY Payment System

LIZ KRUEGER June 20, 2023

| ISSUE: **MTA, TOWN HALL, HEARING LOSS, VISION LOSS**

OMNY Program

Staff from the MTA provided a brief overview of the OMNY program, the new contactless fare payment system NYC for subways and buses, and how older people with half fare cards can easily transition to this convenient “tap and go” system.

New Technology for People with Hearing and Vision Loss

During the remainder of the event, experts discussed exciting advances in technology for people with hearing and vision loss that can significantly improve quality-of-life. The Center for Hearing and Communication provided information about over-the-counter hearing aids, where to buy them, how to use them, and the free services the Center for Hearing and Communication (CHC) offers to support individuals with hearing loss and their families. The Lighthouse Guild shared information about an array of support services people can access, and the new technological devices to support individuals with vision loss.

To watch a full video of the event, [click here](#).

Speakers:

Alberto Roldan, Assistant Director of Government and Community Relations, MTA

Howie Levine, Senior Accessibility Officer, MTA

Jeff Wax, LCSW-R, Director of Emotional Health and Wellness Center, Psychotherapist, CHC

Michele DiStefano, AuD, Director of Audiology Services, Audiologist, CHC

Carolyn Ginsburg Stern, Director of Outreach and Strategic Initiatives, CHC

Lisa Beth Miller, Outreach and Referral Coordinator, Lighthouse Guild

Dr. Bryan Wolynski, Chief Technology Officer, Lighthouse Guild

PowerPoint presentations from the event:

OMNY: <http://www.lizkrueger.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/PPT-June-2023-GCR-RF-OMNY-Deck-1-002.pdf>

Center for Hearing and Communication: <http://www.lizkrueger.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/PPT-OTC-Hearing-Aids-and-Mental-Health-and-Hearing-Loss-6-15-2023.pdf>

Dr. Bryan Wolynski: <http://www.lizkrueger.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/PPT-Sen-Krueger-Townhall-Assistive-Technology-2-1-212-2-final.pdf>

Lisa Beth Miller: <http://www.lizkrueger.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/PPT-13-Tech-for-Vision-PS-6.15.23-final.pdf>

Other links and resources shared by the speakers:

MTA

-OMNY Program <https://omny.info/>

- Reduced Fair Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) <https://omny.info/faq/how-omny-works>

- How OMNY Fair Capping Works Video <https://omny.info/faq/how-omny-works>

- Fair Capping FAQs <https://omny.info/faq/fare-cap>
- General OMNY FAQs <https://omny.info/faq>
- OMNY Retail Location Finder <https://omny.info/retail-locations>
- Mobile Sale Locations <https://new.mta.info/fares/mobile-sales>

Center for Hearing and Communication

- <https://www.chchearing.org/>
- Hearing Aids: <https://www.chchearing.org/otc-hearing-aids>
- Emotional Help and Wellness Support <https://www.chchearing.org/individual-group-family-psychotherapy>
- Comprehensive Information about OTC Hearing Aids
<https://www.hearingtracker.com/over-the-counter-hearing-aids>

For any questions about or interest in mental health services, please contact Jeff Wax directly at jwax@chchearing.org or 917-305-7739.

For any questions about audiology services, please contact Michele DiStefano at mdistefano@chchearing.org or 917-305-7881

Lighthouse Guild

<https://lighthouseguild.org/>

- For Exercise support: Achilles Club (<https://www.nyrr.org/getinvolved/club/achilles-international>) and InTandem Biking (<https://www.intandembike.org/>), as possible exercise organizations for you to look into. Also Blind Baseball (<https://www.nbba.org/>).
- Technology Center: <https://lighthouseguild.org/technology/technology-center/>
- Technology Workshops and Events: <https://lighthouseguild.org/event/technology/>
- On Tech and Vision Podcast: <https://lighthouseguild.org/technology/on-tech-and-vision-podcast/>
- Technology and Vision Blog: <https://lighthouseguild.org/topic/on-tech-vision>

- Apps for Adults with Vision Loss: <https://lighthouseguild.org/apps-for-adults-with-vision-loss/>

- Featured Technology for People with Vision Loss:

<https://lighthouseguild.org/technology/technology-center/gifts-for-people-with-vision-loss/>

GuildCare – 212-769-7847

Adult Day Healthcare - Call Pat Rincon, GuildCare Manhattan Program Director at 212-769-7847.

For more exciting and inspiring resources, feel free to call or email Lisa Beth Miller, LCSW-R, BCD: 646-847-4615; millerl@lighthousegulld.org. Lisa can also connect eligible people to programs through the New York State Commission for the Blind.