MCIL Celebrates 30 Years

MCIL celebrated its 30th Anniversary with about 110 consumers, staff and friends, Wednesday October 26 at the Radisson Hotel in Roseville. David Hancox, Executive Director, and Ellie Emanuel, Board Chair, welcomed everyone to the celebration, noting that the last 30 years have been years of growth and accomplishment for the Center.

Kevin Kling, Minnesota story teller and humorist, spoke about “Stories and Healing” while growing up in Minnesota. UCare provided support for his presentation. David Hancox then provided a brief history of 30 years of MCIL; from 1981 when the Center opened with three staff serving 158 consumers to 2011. MCIL has grown to include 29 staff and served about 42,000 consumers in 2011.

Before awards and honors were given, the MCIL’s Board surprised the audience with a celebrity style roast of David. The entire Board participated, teasing him about his hair and some of his favorite sayings.

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Awards were given to:

Jim Williams  - MCIL 20 Years of Service
David Hancox  - MCIL 10 Years of Service*
Nick Wilkie  - MCIL 5 years of Service
Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity  - 2011 Community Partner of the Year
Dennis Behr  - 2011 Nursing Home Relocation Consumer of the Year
Michael Sack  - 2011 Transition Student of the Year
John Worley  - 2011 IL Consumer of the Year
Brian Emerson, Pauline Karto, Alain Kinsala Lopez, and Janice Buckley  - 2011 Direct Support Professionals of the Year
RJ Duff and Don Gustafson  - 2011 Volunteer Veterans of the Year
Roxi Rejali  - 2011 Contractor of the Year
Rocky  - 2011 Special Award of the Year

* David started working at MCIL as Interim Director in 1997 and became Executive Director in 2001.
From the Director’s Desk

2011, what a year!

By David Hancox

Wow... 2011, that sure went by fast! And what a year it was at MCIL. Staff, board members, and volunteers brought meaningful services to nearly 42,000 individuals in the past twelve months. We did this in spite of a reduction in resources and a state shutdown. We accomplished this remarkable outcome because of the dedication, hard work, and creativity of our employees, volunteers and board members.

In 2011, MCIL outcomes included:
- Nearly 160 nursing home relocations and transitions.
- More than 38,000 individuals served by the Disability Linkage Line
- Continued success of the IL/VR collaboration, with more than 650 individuals served
- Increased presence in the public schools for the Transition Program
- Nearly 50 ramps/home modifications
- Nearly 60 individuals served through MCIL’s targeted services for veterans with service related disabilities
- Continued successful services in our PAS program, and
- Increased number of peer mentor relationships, and significant improvements in our peer/IL educational services /classes.

All this, in addition to a large number of other individual and organizational successes. We welcomed new consumers and staff, and regretfully said farewell to friends and coworkers who moved on to new challenges.

Many of our services have received extraordinary consumer satisfaction ratings; 97%!

And we were successful in our legislative efforts to secure sustained funding levels for our core services, the DLL, and the IL/VR collaboration.

2012 promises to present continued challenges, and likely, some new ones. With a looming budget challenge; A $876 million surplus, countered by billions in IOUs, which only means we will once again be in the position of needing to mount efforts to protect our funding and the services those funds provide. We will also need to ensure that consumers are aware of various planned legislative initiatives, and the potential impacts these initiatives could have on the lives of individuals with disabilities and other marginalized communities. We will continue our collaborations with MACIL and MN CCD to accomplish much of this work.

Last, but not least, MCIL celebrated 30 years of service this past year. We continue to appreciate your confidence and trust as your chosen provider, and we express appreciation to our many community partners and colleagues. We look forward to an active, productive, and successful 2012.

David Hancox, Executive Director.

Accessible House with Roll-In Shower
Located near the airport with all MAC improvement. 3 bedrooms and 2 baths. 2 car garage with ramp to house. $154,000
Call Bonnie Hammel at 612-810-7880 for a showing.
Nick’s Notes

By Nick Wilkie

This fall has been a blur of activities and new developments for us in Transition. Here are just a few examples of exciting things worth noting:

First, at the end of October we recognized Michael Sack as our Transition consumer of the year. It gave MCIL staff great pride to recognize a young man that has made some significant strides in the last few years. Michael recently received his diploma from Minneapolis South High School & Minneapolis Transition Plus. Not surprising to those that know him, Michael gave the commencement speech at his graduation. We got to know Michael two years prior to this event when he was just starting his blog with his friend Sam on Minnesota Twins baseball, Target Field and Accessibility coined: Two Men On. When Michael is not blogging he’s still writing somewhere. Just this last spring he published his first article in Access Press. The young author just started his education at Minneapolis Community and Technical College where we have no doubt he will excel. Michael is determined to go after everything he wants and ability to advocate and continually seek out more information set him apart from crowd. He is already somebody to know in the Twin Cities community and MCIL for one, is glad that we do.

Secondly, our staff has been invited to more Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings this fall than ever before. Cooperating staff and students are seeing the benefits to this as educational programs end their relationship when students receive their diploma; we can continue to build a variety of goals the student’s want to achieve. Our timeline for achievement is based on the young person’s motivation and interest. It might take one person a week and then again it could take another two months. It all depends on what they want to accomplish. We support them throughout the process, offer guidance and direction when needed, but at no time do we complete their goals for them. This is not the nature of our program.

Lastly, our staff was asked to give two new seminars to very different audiences. One was to the staff at an 18-21 program within St. Paul Public Schools. Many of the students in the program have significant physical and cognitive challenges; however they all have the innate ability to advocate at some level. We discussed how we at MCIL can be a resource for them, their supports and their families. In the coming months, students in this program will visit us at MCIL and use some of our community space for a variety of activities. The other seminar was to a group of young men attending Minneapolis Community & Technical College. The topic was the importance of hygiene; how it impacts us personally and professionally, and how to address those issues when they are consistently a problem. Though it was a challenging topic, the audience took it in stride and staff said it was one of the most informative discussions that they have had with this group. We will definitely be presenting on these topics again and we love the challenges that our community partners bring to our attention.

Thanks for staying informed about transition services here at MCIL. Should you have a suggestion or feedback, please contact me at nickw@mcil-mn.org or 651-603-2018. We will look forward to hearing from you in the new year.
Meet MCIL’s new staff

I am the new member of the IL-VR team here at MCIL. I’m looking forward to contributing to the independent living philosophy this organization promotes for their consumers. I enjoy working with others by supporting them in achieving their goals and increasing their independence. My previous experience in recent years has been as a Firefighter/EMT and an Independent Living Skills Specialist with Courage Center.

As an Independent Living Skills Specialist, I worked with many people who had different interests and cultural backgrounds. In my endeavors to assist others, I have had the opportunity to learn and view things from different perspectives. I’ve enjoyed this in my recent positions and look forward to meeting new people here at MCIL. I am excited to be a part of this team and the opportunity to assist others in the community.
Long-term unemployment: What to do?

Taylor Kearns, IL/VR Manager

Many people have suffered in recent years due to long-term unemployment. Being unemployed long-term can lead to a variety of issues for individuals that can make it even more difficult to get back into the workplace. It is common to see consumers from the IL-VR Collaboration Project deal with depression, lost confidence, diminishing skills, and generally having their world turned upside down. In this article, we will look at some things to do in order to get back in the game.

But first, let’s look at the current economic situation. Unemployment rates have been slowly decreasing, businesses are more likely to hire in 2012 than the previous 3-4 years, and the general health of the economy seems to be slowly improving. So 2012 is looking to be a much better year for those who have experienced long-term unemployment because economic conditions are better and more jobs will be available. The key for those folks who have been unemployed for a year or more is to create strategies that will help them get back to work. Here are some ideas that will hopefully help those who have been out of work get back to work.

1) **Market yourself:** The best way to increase your chances of being employed is to effectively market yourself. Look at the job descriptions of the opportunities you are applying for and look to see what the requirements and job duties are for the job. Your goal is to communicate that you have these skills both in your resume and when you interview. Be sure that you are clearly communicating that your skills and abilities are a fit for the position.

2) **Improve your skills:** Look at areas where you need to improve in order to make yourself more competitive with other job seekers. Do you need to improve your computer/technical skills? Locate free training at your local Workforce Center (WFC) or at local Community Education sites that have classes on using Microsoft Office applications like Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, or Excel. So many jobs today require that you are able to use computers effectively. This is an area that I frequently see with the consumers I work with in the IL/VR project. In addition to this, people need to know how to use the Internet effectively to do research and to communicate with others. Another way to build skills is to volunteer.

3) **Network:** Talk to relatives, friends, former colleagues, and other acquaintances about your job search. See if their company is hiring or if they have heard anything about other opportunities. Also, use online resources like LinkedIn, professional organizations, and other groups that help people locate job openings. It only takes one good referral to open a door.

Continued on next page
4) **Take care of yourself:** Long-term unemployment can create stress unlike any other societal issue. Losing jobs, homes, relationships, and losing one’s identity can lead to depression, self doubt, and a sense of being out of control. These are serious issues and can further add to the difficulties that being unemployed presents. To combat this, seek out a counselor/therapist to work through some of these mental health issues. In order to present the best you to employers, you need to be both mentally and physically healthy. Exercise is one critical tool that can help decrease stress and make you feel better. Talk to your doctor about getting into an exercise plan and walk, run, and bike your way to a healthier and more employable you.

5) **Access Resources:** Utilize the programs and resources at local organizations and agencies that can help you address barriers to employment, build skills, and possibly provide resources to help your job search be more effective. You are not alone and there are people out there that want to help. Use them! Again, your local Workforce Center is a great place to start. They have professionals, classes, and other resources that can help you.

For those of you reading this that have been out of work for a year or more, we recognize how incredibly difficult this can be for you. You may feel like there is no hope and that the world of work has passed you by. But this is not true. By improving your job search strategies, accessing people and services, and taking care of yourself, you can improve your chances of getting a job. Good luck to you in 2012!
Is PCA Choice Right for You?

Does your agency treat you like a customer or a client?

Can you schedule your DSPs when you need them?

Do DSP’s show up?

Do you choose who will work with you?

Are DSPs paid fair wages?

MCIL Offers Direct Support Professionals DSPs

- Paid Holidays
- Competitive Wages
- Vision and Dental Benefits
- On-call job opportunities

- Bring your DSPs with you, or tell us who you want to work with.
- We provide assistance with developing job descriptions, posting job ads, recruiting and screening.
- You make all hiring & firing decisions!
- You make your own schedules.
- We provide assistance finding coverage on the weekends or during the week.
- We provide all processing, payroll and co-supervisory supports.

For more information about MCIL’s Personal Assistant Services:

1600 University Ave. West, Suite 16. Saint Paul
To arrange an in-home visit please call 651.788.8424

www.pas.mcil-mn.org
TTY: 651.788.8424
We are located on the first floor in the Spruce Tree Building. Accessible parking, entrances & scent-free office.
Nursing Home Relocation and Transitional Services

Changes, Changes, Changes!
By Pamela Johnson, Nursing Home Relocation Manager

It seems like this is all you hear these days is more change; I am happy to say that MCIL Nursing Home Relocation Program is not changing as we are still providing outstanding quality services. As of December 1, 2011, the Nursing Home Relocation Program has been successful in moving eighteen individuals back into the community to live more independently. Not to mention our Transitional Services Program that has provided 133 individuals with damage deposits, movers, delivery, household items, and furniture in their new homes in the community. It has been an amazing year for the Nursing Home Relocation Program and I am thrilled we exceeded last year’s services to individuals by 23 consumers. WOW, that is so exciting! We plan to continue to help those we serve to live independently and make their dreams a reality.

Here is our Consumer of the Year, Mr. Dennis Behr and his story:

Dennis Behr was referred to our Nursing Home Relocation Program in June of this year. Dennis is an example of “life changed” by the Nursing Home Relocation Program. He is a testimony that if you want things in your life that you should never give up.

Dennis’s life changed after a tragic incident and was admitted to Westwood Health Nursing Facility in St. Louis Park, MN where he remained for eleven years.

Together we toured Minnetonka Assisted Living and immediately Dennis knew this was going to be his new home as they treated Dennis like family the minute we walked in the door.

I had the honor of helping Dennis’s dream of living in the community come true. The day Dennis left the nursing facility, he stated “Pamela, thank you so much for getting me out of that inferno!”

Dennis wants to thank MCIL for his new apartment furnishings and moving him to Minnetonka Assisted Living. Dennis continues to live independently in his new home and greatly enjoys being able to be living back in the community of his choice.
MCIL classes/workshops: Please join us!

Join us for education and fun this winter. All events are free and accessible. Most of the following events meet at MCIL 1600 University Ave W. Suite 16 in St. Paul. We are on #21, #16, #50, #53, #84 bus lines, please check bus schedules for exact drop off locations.

Please RSVP, and if needed, request an interpreter or alternative formatted materials two weeks prior to the scheduled activities. To RSVP, contact the staff person listed for each event. You must register at least two days prior to the event. For questions, contact: Corbett Laubignat (low-bin-ya) at 651-603-2028, corbettl@mcil-mn.org

• Classes will be cancelled if less than two people are registered.
• Check our website www.mcil-mn.org for the E-Calendar or come in and get the most current calendar of events at our front desk.
• Meeting dates are subject to change due to weather or unforeseen problems.

MCIL events attempt to be scent-free. Please remember to avoid wearing scented personal and hygiene items such as soaps, deodorants, shampoos, hair gels, lotions, “natural” fragrances and cologne/shaving products to MCIL events. This way everyone can have equal access to the services provided by MCIL. The staff and consumers thank you.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Living well with a disaility
From 10am-12pm
January 12th, 19th, 26th • February 2nd, 9th, 16th
March 1st, 8th, 15th

Knitting/crafts group
Join us in learning simple techniques, patterns and designs. This class is for everyone, so if you have always wanted to learn or if you are an old hand at this, come enjoy a relaxing and social time. Please feel free to bring yarn in the color of your choice. We meet twice a month for two hours at a time. We have adaptive equipment for people who would like an alternative to knitting needles. All crafts welcome!

• January 9th 10-12 & 23rd 1-3
• February 6th 10-12 & 20th 1-3
• March 5th 10-12 & 26th 1-3
• April 9th 10-12 & 23rd 1-3

Wii fun
Join us for snack and games! It’s a great way to meet new people, have fun and even get in a workout. Yes, it’s accessible too.

• January 5th 12-2 • February 15th 11-1
• March 14th 11-1 • April 19th 11-1

The weekenders
Are you sick of sitting home all weekend? Do you see fun activities and wish you had someone to do them with? Do you find yourself wanting someone to talk to? Well, this is the group for you. Come meet other people who share your interests and want someone to hang out with. We will meet once a month to share, talk, plan, do activities or outings throughout the month. Guests are welcome and encouraged.

• January 21st at Perkins in St. Paul; breakfast club: 12-2: Bring money for food.
• February 25th at Memory Lanes; 10:30-1:30; Bring money for food and shoes.
• March 24th at the Minneapolis Art Institute tour; 1-3:30
• April 21st at the Mall of America; 1-4: lunch and fun, maybe a movie. Please bring money to get food and a ticket. We meet at the food court under the movie theaters.

Peer Mentor trainings
• January 17th: 9-12:15 and 1:00-3:15
• March 20th: 9-12:15 and 1:00-3:13

Continued on next page
Peer Team activity
Join your fellow mentees and mentors in a day of fun, snacks and exploration. We will be creating dream webs and discussing the experiences we have had in the mentoring program.

- January 25th: 11-2
- February 15th: 11-2
- March 7th: 11-2
- April 12th: 11-2

Self-esteem
How do you see yourself? Does your inner voice say hurtful things? Come and join us as we discuss ways to change that inner voice and make it be a supportive voice instead. Please bring an open mind and a willingness to change.

- February 21st: 10;12 basics
- April 17th: 10-12; disability related issues

Meal planning
Creating a weekly menu and shopping with a list
Do you end up with more in your cart than you planned? Do you run out of ideas midweek? Join us in learning how to expand your meals without expanding your expenses.

- January 11th: 11-2
- April 4th: 11-2

Bus trainings
Available upon request. Have some fun and increase your understanding and experience with Metro Transit, the public bus line and light rail. This will be your chance to expand beyond Metro Mobility. Many options and more freedom will be opened to you. Join us for a trip from MCIL to the Mall of America. We will eat lunch, do a little shopping and return to MCIL. Please call if you are interested in a lesson. We also have Mentors available that can work one on one with you to achieve independence on the bus and light rail.

Healthy relationships
MCIL presents a series of classes centered around building interpersonal effectiveness, discussing sexuality and disability, and creating healthy boundaries.

- February 8th: 10-12; How to create, respect and maintain boundaries
- March 12th: 10-12; Workplace relationship building
- April 30th: 10-12; Medical and other human service professional relationship building

Cooking/social group
1:00pm - 6:00pm
You are invited to an evening of fun! MCIL is opening its doors for anyone who would like a place to come socialize, use our computers, watch a movie, eat, gather information, find an outlet or just chill. You are welcome to stay the whole time, come for an hour or just stop in for a few minutes. We look forward to seeing you! Please RSVP: 651-603-2028 or email corbettl@mcil-mn.org

Location is subject to change please call ahead; if it is raining please call ahead to find out where we will meet. Most likely we will meet at MCIL.

- January 31st: at MCIL 1-6pm Come celebrate the New Year! We will be making appetizers.
- February 28th: at MCIL 1-6pm join us in making a main course and salad that are easy and cost effective.
- March 27th: at MCIL 1-6pm Come join us in making three fun and healthy side dishes that can be matched with any meat.
- April 23rd: at MCIL 1-6pm Join us in making quick and impressive desserts that will wow anyone.

GLBT support group
Jan 10th • Feb 7th • March 6th • April 3rd • May 1st • June 5th
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) with disabilities Support Group meets almost always on the first Tues. of the month. We will meet at MCIL. This group will sometimes meet in the community, please call ahead to for definite locations. We will still meet from 6-7:30 pm

If you will be late or you are lost, please call Corbett at 651-603-2028. If no one shows up after 6:35pm, the support group will be canceled for the evening.

New group 5-7pm
This is a group for parents with disabilities. Join us in discussing how to balance life with a disability and being a parent.

- January 23rd
- February 20th
- March 19th
- April 23rd
### MCIL Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Ellie Emanuel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Scott Ruhsam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Scott Dehn</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Joani Werner</td>
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<td>Members at Large</td>
<td>Tim Benjamin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
<td>David Hancox</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Members</td>
<td>Dave Houghton, Roberta Juarez, Shelley Madore, Sheri Smith and David Swanson</td>
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### MCIL administration/program staff

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>651-603-2015 or 1-888-630-9793 Toll-free</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cindyt@mcil-mn.org">cindyt@mcil-mn.org</a></td>
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Disability Linkage Line ... 1-866-333-2466