Come celebrate the 22nd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

WHEN:
Thursday, July 26, 2012
1-3:30 p.m
U of M Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center
2001 Plymouth Ave N
Minneapolis, MN 55411

EVENTS:
• U.S. Department of Justice attorneys will give updates on 2010 regulations & current implementation
• Motivational speaker Dana Zimmerman
• Entertainment by artists & performers with disabilities
• Light refreshments
• FREE to everyone!

DETAILS
Opening performance by Mark Erickson: Mark is an Anishinaabe drummer and storyteller who lives in Minneapolis and who is blind.

Performance by the Ole Olson Onstage Ensemble & Entourage: The group, from VSA Minnesota, will perform “See Me Hear Me—An Attitude toward Accessible Arts.” Performers with and without disabilities include Sam Jasmine, Juliette Silvers, Kaitlyn Mielke, Jon Skaalen and others. It will be ASL-interpreted, audio described and captioned.

Closing performance by Kaitlyn Mielke: Kaitlyn, who is from Victoria, Minnesota, will perform “Defying Gravity” from the musical WICKED in ASL. She served as Miss Deaf Minnesota from 2009-2011 and is a summer intern at VSA Minnesota as part of course work for a Master’s program at the University of Minnesota.

Continued on next page
SPONSORS:
This event is being sponsored by the University of Minnesota Disability Services, ADA Minnesota, VSA Minnesota, ACCESS Press, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services, State Services for the Blind, the Minnesota State Council on Disability, and the Metropolitan Center for Independent Living.

ACCOMMODATIONS:
Sign language interpreters, CART, assistive listening devices and audio description will be provided. Other disability related accommodations requests should be made by July 9, 2012. To request an accommodation, or for additional information, please contact Cindy Tarshish with MCIL/ADA Minnesota at 651-603-2015 or cindyt@mcil-mn.org.

The ADA* at Work with You
Tuesday, July 24, 2012
6 – 8 p.m.
Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota
553 Fairview Ave N., St. Paul, MN
Free!

Americans with Disabilities Act
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is federal legislation that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. Despite the passage of this important legislation 22 years ago, some people with disabilities still experience discrimination in the workplace. Attend this event to learn more about how the ADA protects you if you are working, looking for a job or have been terminated.

Cindy Tarshish, MCIL/ADA Minnesota, will discuss:
- Disclosure of disability
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Discrimination
- Your rights
- Resources available to you.

Cindy Tarshish, ADA Minnesota, has helped hundreds of people with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations since 2002. She has spoken across the state on the issues of being employed and having a disability.

Register, call or email us about this event!
contact: John, Metropolitan Council for Independent Living
phone: 651-646-8342
email: johnw@mcil-mn.org
Please let him know if you need any accommodations.
Your information will not be used for any purpose other than to send future event notices.

Event co-sponsors
From the Director’s Desk

Ongoing challenges mean it’s not the end!

By David Hancox

I believe Mahatma Gandhi said, “Everything will be okay in the end. So, if everything is not okay, it is not the end.”

The ongoing challenges surrounding Minnesota’s PCA program is not okay, and it is not the end.

During the most recent legislative session, we watched as a lawsuit played out in Ramsey County District Court between individuals with disabilities, DSPs, provider agencies and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. At issue was the DHS legislative requirement to impose a 20% cut in PCA reimbursement rates for DSPs who provided PCA services to family members. The rationale for the legislative action was that a) it is the moral obligation of the family member to provide PCA related services to their relative, and b) even with a 20% hourly rate reduction, the family would likely continue to provide the services. (The second reason reminds me of the old Life cereal commercial..... “let’s get Mikey, he’ll eat it, he’ll eat anything.”) It is also important to note that this action was taken by the Legislature with no opportunity for public comment, and no hearings.

A “moral obligation,” really? Members of the Health and Human Services Budget Committee wanted to find $24 million in savings in their budget; They rationalized a further cut in PCA services by inventing this “moral obligation”. In all my years of interactions at the legislature, I have never heard this argument presented before. It makes one wonder why this same rationale is not applied to other populations, such as seniors. Should the legislature severely reduce funding for adult day services for seniors because families have a moral obligation to care for their senior family members? That would not be tolerated.

Many individuals who provide PCA services to their family members do so by taking themselves out of the general work force. If those family members are not able to absorb a 20% pay cut, they will likely go looking for employment elsewhere. This will then create a necessity for the family member to hire another, non family member, to provide their PCA services.

The stalemate wore on, with the court waiting for the Legislature to find a remedy, and the Legislature waiting for guidance from the court, until, incredulously, the court sided with DHS and the Legislature. The court decided that paying two individuals, who provide the exact same services, to the same individual, can be paid differing wages based on familial relationship. The court issued a ruling that action by the Legislature did not constitute discrimination, and that the Legislature had the right to impose such a restriction in the interest of conducting the state’s business.

Following the court ruling, and due to larger than expected tax revenues and savings in other areas, the Legislature suspended implementation of the 20% cut for family member PCA services.

Why all this ranting after the fact? It is simple, it is not okay, and it is not the end. The implementation was suspended through June 30, 2013, the end of the current biennium budget period. It is very likely that we have to revisit this issue and the arguments again in the future.

Other PCA services related issues to keep your eye on include the newly required PCA Consumer “spend down” for households with two or more adults, and the ongoing challenges of receiving Unique Individual Provider Numbers for DSPs in a timely fashion. More on those issues later......
Nick’s notes

By Nick Wilkie

With the 2012 academic year behind us we can reflect on its successes as we continued a focused outreach approach this year. The following are just a few highlights:

MCIL staff sought out local transition schools on a weekly basis. Staff built student and staff connections over the last nine months through one to one contact and group discussions. Our staff was invited to more IEP (Individual Education Plan) meetings this year than we ever have before, 28 to be exact. This is an average of over three per month. These were excellent opportunities to talk about what MCIL can do if students want to set goals and get involved. It also provided perfect opportunities to connect with the parents and supports. Building these relationships is the reason we took on this approach as we believe it will take us and the youth far in the coming years.

One of the other results that occurred on site at the schools was the steady contact that staff had with students. Much of this contact was in the hallways, lunch, or recreational time, however all interactions began by simply saying “hello” and by being available. These chance encounters gave staff the potential opportunity for meetings to happen this summer and for those enrolled next fall.

As an extension of these relationships, MCIL still focuses on keeping people informed of not only our internal events but also what is happening within the community as it relates to transition and youth.

Our email distribution list has over 625 recipients and is still growing. By providing a consistent connection we ensure that people increase their awareness when they choose to, not only for themselves but also for their community.

As a close to the academic year, staff was also asked to participate in numerous graduation ceremonies. As some graduate we hope that they will take advantage of those programs and services that MCIL offers. A large thank you goes out to the administrators of the community transition programs that we have partnered with; the successes we have had would not be possible without them. To the graduates, thank you for allowing us to assist you in your journey; may our paths cross again if you find yourself looking for assistance.

As always, thanks for reading and 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 I look forward to hearing from you and enjoy your summer.
The proposed Voter ID amendment will be heard by the Minnesota Supreme Court on July 17 at 1:30 PM at the Minnesota Judicial Center, 25 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, Saint Paul, MN 55101.

Oral arguments against the amendment will be brought by League of Women Voters, Jewish Community Action, ACLU Minnesota, and Common Cause Minnesota. Plan to arrive early, it will likely be crowded. A separate overflow room with a large screen will be available.

The St Paul Mayor’s Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities put on a voter outreach event this month. Speakers included Mayor Chris Coleman, Voter Outreach Director at the Secretary of State’s office Claire Wilson, and Public Affairs Associate Christian Knights.

Those who attended learned about the importance of voting, how to register, some innovative ways to get transportation to the polls and about voting rights.

Disability Linkage Line Options Counselor Julia Washenberger is a member of the committee and was asked to hand out Disability Linkage Line information to those who attended the event. It was a great way to get the word out about the Disability Linkage Line to people who can benefit from it.
I’m happy to report that things are going well. Staffing is stable and the IL/VR Specialists continue to meet with many consumers from the Vocational Rehabilitation Services program and assist them in setting and achieving goals related to increasing independence.

One popular request is to help people get more organized. The first thing I do when I meet with someone is ask them what “being organized” means to them. Do they want to work on making it to appointments on time? Creating and working through daily to-do lists? Breaking complicated projects down into manageable steps? Physically cleaning up their home or workspace? Other things to work on may include resisting interruptions, figuring out the more efficient way of tackling a task, decision-making, motivation, keeping an eye on the time, prioritizing, and anything else that keeps them from doing what is needed to be successful.

As you can see, there are many barriers to staying organized, and there isn’t a “one size fits all” approach to working on this goal. I would like to share some general tips that could help anyone get more organized and accomplish personal and professional goals.

Concentrate on doing only one thing at a time. We live in a world where we’re often forced to multitask, and I know I’m guilty of having too many internet tabs open at once when I should be focusing on just one task. Set up your space to help you succeed by eliminating other distractions. Attempt to work in a quiet environment by closing your door, let people around you know you need to focus and not socialize, switch locations to somewhere less stimulating. Make a rule that you can’t get up until you’re finished. Turn off your phone ringer, the TV, close the internet browser, etc.

Open your mail and deal with it right away. Pay the bill, address the return envelope, and put a stamp on it. Throw away or recycle the junk mail. File important documents. If you have trouble paying bills on time, another approach is to set up automatic withdrawals from your bank account. Just make sure you maintain enough money in your bank account to avoid overdraft fees.

Keep a planner or calendar and check it frequently. I am a fan of the old fashioned paper planners, but a digital planner appeals to many. Your phone or iPod may already have this feature, and you can set alarm reminders, or even sync your device with your computer. Write down all your appointments, meetings, due dates, scheduled activities, and a daily to-do list here. I usually check my planner before going to bed so I know what to prepare for the next day and when I need to be somewhere. You can even schedule household tasks you need to get done, like doing laundry or dishes. Keep notes, and write things down. “A short pencil is better than a long memory!”

Don’t wait for the “right” time or mood to tackle tasks—like Nike says, just do it! If you’re procrastinating because the task seems unpleasant, remember that it is probably not as bad as you think it’s going to be. Sometimes it can help to start with small tasks that you can accomplish quickly in order to get motivated, like cleaning up your desk for one minute or taking out the trash. If you’re putting a task off because it seems overwhelming, break it into many small, manageable tasks. If you find that you just lack interest in completing something that you have to do, schedule that task when you’re feeling at your best, and come up with a reward for your accomplishment. An example would be, “If I just make that phone call I’m dreading, I’ll allow myself five minutes of watching cute cat videos on YouTube!” Make a list of possible consequences of failing to do the task to remind yourself of why it is important to do it, and then think of how good you’ll feel when you finally get that task out of the way.

I hope that some of these tips might help you get more organized, if that’s a goal you have. Look for more tips on staying organized in future issues.
ADA Minnesota provides you and your organization with assistance to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act.

It provides the following services:
- Technical assistance & information about what the ADA covers & what is required for compliance.
- Education, trainings & presentations
- Publications with information on employment, accessibility, reasonable accommodations & more.
- Connections to a network of local & national agencies.
- Resources on accessible information & electronic technology in education centers.

Contact us! We can help.

ADA Minnesota
1600 University Ave. W., Suite 16; St. Paul, MN 55104
651-603-2015 • 888-630-9793
www.adaminnesota.org
cindyt@mcil-mn.org

Meet MCIL’s newest member

My name is Jerry Gretch and I am very happy to be a member of the MCIL team working on the Ramp Program. I have owned my own carpentry business for 33 years and specialized in finish carpentry for the last 25 of those years. I have done all of the tasks that are involved in running a company which involved taking a small business management class to better understand how a company is to be run.

Some of the skills I learned include; PR and I feel I am very good at communicating with clients. Blueprint drawing and reading as I completed a course at Anoka Tech for Architectural Drafting & Design. I also learned computer skills e.g. Microsoft Excel and Word to aid in the process of making very professional accurate quotes. I have also mentored less experienced carpenters and taught them skills as well.

As the Ramp Specialist I really look forward to working with my co-workers to construct the best possible ramps for the individuals we serve.
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

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.
One of the many lessons that was ingrained into my head, and I take very seriously, is that you can never give enough quality customer service. As I complete my required state and county reports, I try to reflect on the customer service we provide to our relocation consumers.

**Quality customer service includes:**

1) Always answer your phone.

2) Don’t make promises unless you keep them.

3) Listen to your customers—they’ve been ignored long enough.

4) Deal with complaints when they are fresh in your mind.

5) Be helpful.

6) Train your staff to be helpful, courteous and knowledgeable.

7) Take the extra step—go the extra mile it won’t hurt.

8) Take a moment to put yourself in their shoes. Ask yourself, “What would I want?”

9) Communicate with your customers daily to show them you care.

10) Resolve problems gracefully.

11) Ask yourself, “Am I a person of my word.”

12) Give a firm handshake or even a hug when appropriate.

I admit, when I enter into a place of business and the customer service is poor, it reflects the tip I leave; it reflects whether or not I return. I inform my friends and family when I have a bad experience. Like anything in life, you must work hard in order to be the best you can be, and as long as you do it well, you will continue to grow your business with repeat customers. How do you go about forming such a relationship? By remembering the one true secret of good customer service and acting accordingly; “You will be judged by what you do, not what you say.”

Ask yourself “Do I give quality customer service?”

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**New support group on chronic pain in the planning stage**

**I**n Specialist, Cindy Langr, is in the planning stages for a support group for people with chronic pain which may include speakers and other interesting activities. This will be a time to share what has worked or what hasn’t worked for you and to learn from each other.

Please contact Cindy at cindyl@mcil-mn.org if you are interested in this type of support group and she will follow up with additional information on the group meetings.
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!

Regular Monthly Events

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 hat 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!

• July 9th 1-3 & 24th 10-12
• August 6th 10-12 & 22nd 1-3
• September 10th 10-12 & 24th 1-3
• October 8th 10-12 & 9th 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.

• September 27th 11-1
• October 25th 1-3

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.

• July 21st Picnic and Bocce Ball at Como Park, call ahead for meeting place
• August 23rd MN State Fair “Thrifty Thursday,” 9am-2pm
• September 22nd “Breakfast Club” at The Egg and I on Lyndale Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55408; 612-872-7282; 11am to 1pm
• October 20th “Breakfast Club” at the Modern Times Café, 3200 Chicago Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55407; noon to 2pm

Peer Mentor trainings

• Tuesday, July 17th: 9-12:15 and 1:00-3:13
• Wednesday, September 19th: 9-12:15 and 1:00-3:13
• Tuesday, December 18th: 9-12:15 and 1:00-3:13

Continued on next page
**Personal management series**

Are you doing what you want to be doing? Do feel in control of your life? Join us to explore how mastering personal, emotional and time management techniques can help you feel more in control and can help others to see you as a decision maker. Join us for this three part series and see how your life starts to turn around. Please bring an open mind and a willingness to change.

- **September 11th** from 10am-12: *Personal/Disability Related management*—caring for your mobility devices, the extra stuff that one needs to think about, hygiene challenges.
- **October 9th** from 10am-12: *Emotional management*—relaxation, advocacy, expression of needs in an effective way.
- **October 16th** from 10am-12: *Time Management*—what does this mean; how does disability play a part, how can we find short cuts?

**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 open 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. We also provide training to people who would like to learn a certain route(s). We assist with identifying some safety concerns and assist people in working towards traveling independently. 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.

- **August 16th** 10am-3
- **September 26th** 10am-3
- **October 10th** 10am-3

**Building relationships**

**with yourself and others**

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

- **July 10th** 10-12: Self-esteem can make all the difference
- **Aug. 14th** 10-12: Conflict resolution: the ball in your court

**Cooking/social group**

1pm - 6pm

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

- **June 26th**: at 4124 Roseway Rd, Mpls, MN 55409; Join us in creating delectable sandwiches and playing yard games or exploring the gardens
- **July 31st**: at Boom Island 724 Sibley St. NE, Mpls, MN 55413; Grilling, desserts and chilling.
- **August 28th**: Normandale Lake Band shell, 84th and Chalet Rd., Bloomington MN
- **September 25th**: at MCIL; Apples, apples, apples!
- **October 30th**: at MCIL; You are encouraged to wear a costume and be ready to have fun!

**It’s Your Money - Manage it!**

- **September 18th**: 10-12- Budgeting Basics- Learn how to make a budget, keep track of spending, write out a check and manage a check register.
- **October 15th**: 10-12- Budgeting check-in, how is it going? Is it helping you change your relationship with money or your bills?

**Farmers Market and lunch**

July 19th, August 9th, September 20th, & October 18th 11am-1pm

Join us in exploring the Nicollet Mall’s farmers market. We will locate local produce and talk about how shopping locally can help save money.

Continued on next page
**Fall Social – at MCIL – Halloween party**

October 31st from 1pm-4:30pm

Do you want to meet new people? Are you ready to have fun and socialize? This is the get together for you. Come and celebrate fall. Prizes and refreshments will be served. This event is for both consumers and the community members. Please RSVP by October 25th at 2:00pm

**Walking and Rolling at Como Zoo**

Join us while we enjoy summer, good company and get a little exercise.

- June 11th & 25th: 11-1
- July 12th & 26th: 11-1
- August 7th & 21st: 11-1

**GLBT support group**

June 5th and then Sept 11th, October 2nd, November 6th, December 4th, January 8th, February 5th, March 5th, April 2nd, May 7th, June 4th

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) with disabilities (GLBT) is a support/social group that meets once a month to discuss topics related to being a part of the GLBT community and dealing with a disability. It’s a great place to meet new people who understand and can provide support and a social outlet. Dinner is provided. The group does not meet in July or August. We do ask that you RSVP at least 2-3 days in advance, if we do not have at least 3 people signed up to attend, the group will be canceled. The meetings are held at MCIL’s office- 1600 University Ave W #16, St. Paul MN 55104, which is on the 50, 16, 84, 21A and 54 bus routes. Our next two meetings will be on May 1st and June 5th. For more info or to sign up, contact Corbett Laubignat MS at 651-603-2028 or corbettl@mcil-mn.org.

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

**Parents with disabilities**

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. This group meets at MCIL. September 24th, October 29th, November 12th, December 10th, January 21st
MCIL Board

Ellie Emanuel ........................................... President
Scott Ruhsam ................................... Vice President
Scott Dehn ............................................... Treasurer
Joani Werner............................................ Secretary
Members at Large ....................... Tim Benjamin,
                                    Dave Houghton, Roberta Juarez, Shelley Madore,
                                    Sheri Smith and David Swanson
Ex-Officio ............................ David Hancox

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Independently Speaking is also available in alternative formats.