MCIL Celebrates 31 Years

MCIL celebrated its 31st Anniversary with about 70 consumers, staff and friends, Wednesday October 24 at the Radisson Hotel in Roseville. David Hancox, Executive Director, and Ellie Emanuel, Board Chair, welcomed everyone to the celebration, noting the last 31 years have been years of growth and accomplishment for the Center.

Cara Ruff, Executive Director, Independent Lifestyles, Inc., Center for Independent Living, Sauk Center, was the guest speaker. She spoke about the continuing relevance of independent living. She spoke passionately about how she got involved in the independent living movement and her enthusiasm for working in a Center for Independent Living.

Awards were given to:
- Tanya Swedo - MCIL 10 Years of Service
- Corbett Laubignat, Barbara Schifano, Julia Washenberger, and Kristen Zemek - MCIL 5 years of Service

Continued on next page
At left: Russ and Kathy Pylkki accepted the Transition Consumer of the Year Award for their daughter, Krista, who is attending the College of St. Scholastica. The award was presented by Nick Wilke, Transition Coordinator (at podium).

Executive Director David Hancox spoke to the audience.

• Yellow Ribbon Lakeville - 2012 Community Partner of the Year
• Ralph Steptoe and Jody Schueneman - 2012 Nursing Home Relocation Consumers of the Year
• Krista Pylki - 2012 Transition Student of the Year

At left: Yellow ribbon - The Lakeville Yellow Ribbon volunteers received MCIL’s Community Service Award for building ramps for veterans and their families.

www.mcil-mn.org

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All units designed for physically disabled persons. Great location near shopping, banks, parks, bus lines and entertainment. Two elevators with back-up emergency generator. Occupants pay 30% of their income as rent. Now accepting applications for the waiting list.

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Monday – Thursday between 10 AM – 1 PM
From the Director’s Desk

2012 service outcomes

By David Hancox

This is the first newsletter of the new year, and I am very excited to share our service outcomes from 2012 with you. In the most recent reporting year, MCIL provided a wide range of services to more than 32,000 individuals living in seven county metro area of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and in some cases beyond. The diagrams below will detail that data for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Service</th>
<th># of Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsel</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>114</td>
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<tr>
<td>IL Skills</td>
<td>670</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehab Tech</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Therapeutic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth/Transition</td>
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<tr>
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<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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Work with our youth and community is an ever changing process and staff here at MCIL continue to strive for the most positive outcomes for those individuals. Below are just few things we have been working on in the last months.

In the past five years our staff has continued to explore methods of community participation for youth such as our Ramp Program. This program helps builds ramps for consumers so that they can remain in their own homes. By having youth from school programs participate and help build the ramps, we see a personal gain for all involved. This fall we developed a new opportunity with the Robinsdale Transition Program. We are excited to see what this partnership brings in the new year.

As you might already know, one of MCIL’s core services is Information & Referral. This service is crucial in providing appropriate information to our consumers about what resources are in our community. In recent months our transition staff has expanded our network so that we can make those positive connections for youth and community. By touring organizations, networking with their staff, and going to transition resource fairs, we continue to foster this approach. Sometimes making a great referral can be the start to a series of wonderful outcomes for our young people.

In recent months, two additional Living Well with a Disability classes were initiated. We have partnered with CLT Transition Program in Roseville and are offering this course to two different groups of students, once a week. We are excited as we already see positive strides for those participating.

Finally, we are happy to report that our staff continues to travel around the metro area for student run IEP meetings. We made it to approximately thirty last year and this year proves to be more of the same. These meetings are great opportunities to get to know students and their supports, and find out how they can utilize MCIL’s services to assist them in becoming as independent as they desire.

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.
Yihong is a woman from China who was a “mail order bride.” She was dependent on her husband or others to get rides to places and was often stuck at home with little to do while her husband worked. When she came to Vocational Rehabilitation, through a collaborative program with Rise Inc., she was referred to MCIL for Independent Living Services training, specifically to use the public transport system. MCIL staff person, Hallie, did an excellent job teaching her how to use the bus. Yihong now goes to the Workforce Center twice a week for adult basic education classes. She also independently goes to Bridgeview weekly without relying on others for rides. Her self-confidence is better because she knows how to find her way on the public transport system. Though Yihong has chosen not to work at this time, the ILS referral and the bus training have allowed her to be far more independent, and have greatly improved her quality of life. It is very satisfying to know that her life is a little better because of the referral to MCIL.

Save the Date!
Thur., April 11
Day at the Capitol!
12 N - 1p.m.
Capitol Rotunda
Watch MCIL’s website for more information – www.mcil-mn.org

“Working Dog” dog show!
4:30-6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, February 12 • Goodwill/EasterSeals
Look for more information on the MCIL webpage: www.mcil-mn.org

Sponsored by: MCIL, NAMI, Epilepsy Foundation, MS Society, and Goodwill/EasterSeals.

Of course, Rocky and Corbett will be there.
The Ramp Project: it’s back

The Ramp Project is back to helping those with disabilities gain access to their homes. A very special thanks to Yellow Ribbon for their continued service through volunteer labor.

MCIL’s Nursing Home Relocation Program can assist individuals with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 64 who are eligible for Medical Assistance and have a waiver. These individuals are people who no longer need the level of medical care provided at a nursing facility and are looking to move back into the community to live independently in a setting they choose.

The Nursing Home Relocation program will help you find affordable housing in the community through the Relocation Services Coordination program (RSC). Transitional Services can help you make a new start by providing you with furniture and household items as well as the delivery of these items to your new home. This year, NHR provided relocation services to 175 individuals. Over 140 of these individuals received transitional services. We have three wonderful independent contractors who work with the NHR program, Jodi, Linda, and Michelle. Recently, NHR also welcomed Diane as our new administrative assistant. Every year the NHR program chooses some of its most outstanding consumers to be awarded Consumer of the Year. This year the female Consumer of the Year was Jody Schueneman, and the male Consumer of the Year was Ralph Steptoe. Thank you for another great year. We are looking forward to 2013 and being able to free more individuals from nursing facilities.
Is PCA Choice Right for You?

Does your PCA agency listen to what you?
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
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- 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 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.
IL/VR update

By Kelly Krantz, IL/VR Manager

The IL/VR (Independent Living/Vocational Rehabilitation Services) program at MCIL is largely based in community locations, as the staff work out of metro-area Workforce Centers or stand-alone VR offices. Unfortunately, that can mean that IL/VR staff and the rest of the MCIL staff don’t interact as often as they would like or have a good understanding of other programs at MCIL. The IL/VR staff work with people who are enrolled in Vocational Rehabilitation Services; in other words, all our consumers are job-seekers with disabilities whose functional limitations can be barriers to finding and keeping a job. We work with consumers on goals designed to increase independence, and also that will help them become better candidates for jobs. I’d love to share some examples of what the IL/VR program can do for consumers.

A few very common referrals to our team include support in creating or revamping a resume, and practicing interview skills. Making sure that both of these areas are covered can make a huge difference in whether that person is getting interviews and doing well during the interview process. IL/VR Specialists run workshops, or meet with people one-on-one, to work on these skills. Some of our staff also facilitate job clubs where consumers can offer each other peer support, or brainstorm how to better utilize their own personal support systems.

Solving transportation issues is something IL/VR Specialists do to help someone get and keep a job. If a person is unable to drive, or can’t afford to own a car, it can be difficult to get to a job or to an essential training program. We can help people learn to ride the bus, or figure out different routes. We assist people with applications to Metro Mobility and instruct them on how to schedule rides. Consumers often are relieved to not depend on family members for rides or pay for expensive taxis. We have also acted as “study buddies” for people who are about to take the written permit test on their path to getting a driver’s license.

Volunteering is a practical way for consumers to gain job-skills and to round out their resume. It also can be a way to better utilize free time and to give back to the community. IL/VR Specialists help by keeping unemployed consumers informed about volunteer fairs, or by seeking opportunities that line up with interest areas.

We frequently work with people to assist them in gaining access to benefits such as general assistance, food support, Social Security, or even county waivers. For many people in Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the income from GA or Social Security allows them to gain or stay in the housing of their choice. Sometimes people are able to work part-time but not full-time, so Social Security can mean the difference between supporting themselves or not while still working. Waivers can help pay for services that VR doesn’t cover, such as more supported employment. IL/VR Specialists have also helped advocate for people during unemployment hearings so they get the resources needed until other opportunities comes their way.

We help people navigate Medical Assistance, MA-EPD and MN Care to ensure that people stay healthy while working or job-hunting. Without coverage, people often go without the preventative or ongoing care that they need to stay healthy, or forgo necessary medications.

Sometimes brushing up on computer skills is just what someone needs in order to get their job search kickstarted. IL/VR Specialists help people learn practical skills like using online job-search sites, or how to attach a resume to an email. In one case, a consumer used his new-found computer skills to gain a job as a driver, and he used mapquest to look up new locations.

This list is definitely not exhaustive, and IL/VR Specialists do much more than this in the average week. I think everyone would say that we occasionally get totally unique referrals, and that every day is different, but these are some common tasks we assist consumers with. If you have any questions about the services we offer, please talk to me to learn more!
Meet MCIL’s newest members

Elizabeth Clark
I am excited to join MCIL as the new Individual Advocate. I’m looking forward to supporting people as they empower themselves and sort out life’s obstacles. I grew up in upstate NY, went to college in Iowa, and then spent a couple of years teaching, studying, and running around Russia. I landed in Minneapolis six years ago, and have gotten oriented with disability services working for CIP’s Employment and Community Supports. After hours, you can generally find me in South Minneapolis on my bicycle, hanging out with cats, or trying to grow anything and compost everything in my backyard.

Diana Pehl
I am the new administrative staff person for MCIL’s Nursing Home Relocation Program. I am a recent graduate of Concordia University St. Paul with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre. Currently I am attending Century College to obtain a degree in Medical Office Technology. In my free time I enjoy baking and spending time with family. My husband Joshua and I, who I met while attending Concordia University, were married on campus at Concordia in the Graebner Memorial Chapel. We celebrated out one year anniversary in July and currently live in South St. Paul with our cat, Fiona.

Mari Plaster
I am a new staff person within the Disability Linkage Line in the Metro area. My background is in the culinary arts with a degree in Baking and Pastry from The Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park NY. After becoming an amputee, I realized I wanted to work within the disabled community. I left the kitchen and headed out with the hopes of finding a more fulfilling career. After hearing about MCIL from a friend, I decided to sign up and become a peer mentor. One year later I am now working with the Disability Linkage Line. When not at work, I can be found catching a show at the Orpheum with friends, fishing at my cabin, or volunteering at Valley Christian Church.

Vernon Wallace
I am the new IL/VA Specialist working with veterans with disabilities. I was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio and a graduate of The Ohio State University. I spent 6 years as an Infantry Officer in the Marines. I worked in manufacturing and engineering operations management discipline for 12 years and as a functional consultant in the same for an additional 15 years. I am not really a fan of Minnesota weather.

Liz Weber
I am excited to be working on the Disability Linkage Line at MCIL. Here are some interesting and perhaps important things to know about me. First of all, I am very glad to be here at MCIL, and have the opportunity to continue to work in a field that utilizes my gifts and talents, and allows me to be able to work with people. Most recently, I finished a yearlong chaplain residency program at Abbott Northwestern, where I worked as a hospital chaplain for the inpatient Sister Kinney Rehabilitation program, as well as on the Mother/Baby units, and in the Neuro/Medical ICU. I recently started as an extremely part-time/casual chaplain at Children’s Hospitals. I graduated in 2011 with a Master of Divinity from Bethel Seminary, and have my undergraduate degree from North Central University in Cross Cultural Studies. I attend St. Paul Mosaic
Continued on next page
In my free time, I enjoy reading, playing board games, hanging out with friends, traveling (when I get the chance) and being outside.

Tia Weinand
I am a Qualified Professional in the PAS Department of MCIL. I am a registered nurse, and will be making home visits to ensure our consumer’s needs are being met. I was born and raised in the Twin Cities and I currently call NE Minneapolis home. I have been married 7½ years to my wonderful husband Michael and we have two daughters, Sophia (13) and Rosa (6). Michael is a musician and aspiring Event Planner. Sophia is a budding author and artist, while Rosa’s current plan is to be an inventor. We are a very close family, we love playing board games and geeking out together watching Dr. Who or Weird Al. Movies, music and science are staples in our household.  

My husband and I both have very large extended families, and celebrate that we are surrounded by so much diversity.

I am a graduate of Saint Catherine University and am planning to pursue a Master’s Degree in Nursing. My plan was to become a midwife and lactation consultant; however, as I begin my career, more opportunities are opening up. Cancer care, chemotherapy, disability advocacy and mother/baby care, are just some of the avenues that interest me as a nurse.

When I am not sharing my talents as a nurse and doula or playing Munchkin with my family, I am knitting or sewing. I have taught knitting classes for the past three years at a local craft store and several community centers in the Twin Cities. I enjoy all things crafty. Don’t be surprised if you see me with a knitting project in my hands!

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!
Introducing “Working Well with a Disability” workshop
January 16th 1-2:30 intro class
January 31st Sign up deadline
5-7pm
Classes: Feb. 28th March 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th

We welcome both consumers and providers to come and learn about this workshop. It is designed to provide a tool box for people with disabilities to join the workforce and maintain life in and out of the office.

Knitting/crafts group
Join us in learning simple adaptive 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!

• January 9th 10-12 & 30th 1-3
• February 4th 1-3 & 20th 10-12
• March 4th 1-3 & 20th 10-12

Facebook 101
February 12th • 10-12
Are you looking to be more social and have more friends? Have you wanted to know about social media? This is the place for you to learn how to use Facebook safely and effectively.

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 17th 1-3
• April 25th 12-2
• February 14th 12-2
• May 9th 1-3

Turning Disability into Feistiness
January 15th 1-3:30
Join us in exploring what it takes to speak your mind. We will examine what it is that may stop us from asking for what we need or want.

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 19th: 1-3 Lunch at Longfellow Grill, 2990 W River Pkwy, Minneapolis, MN 55406
• February 9th: 12-2 Brunch at The Lowry Uptown, 2112 Hennepin Ave Minneapolis, MN 55405 612-341-2112
• March 23rd: 12-2 Hazel’s Northeast, 2859 Johnson St. NE Minneapolis, MN 55418, 612-788-4778
• April 27th: 12-2 Colossal Café, 1839 E. 42nd St. Minneapolis, MN55407 612-729-2377
• May 17th: 12-2 Uptown Cafeteria and Support Group 3001 Hennepin Ave. Minneapolis MN 55408 612-877-7263

Peer Mentor trainings

• January 22nd: 9:00- 12:15 and 1:00-3:00 (Tuesday)
• March 19th: 9:00- 12:15 and 1:00-3:00 (Tuesday)
• May 21st: 9:00- 12:15 and 1:00-3:00 (Tuesday)
• July 16th: 9:00- 12:15 and 1:00-3:00 (Tuesday)

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.

• February 13th from 1-3: Personal/Disability Related management—caring for your mobility devices, the extra stuff that one needs to think about, hygiene challenges.
• March 12th: Emotional management—relaxation, advocacy, expression of needs in an effective way.

Continued on next page
April 9th: *Time Management*—what does this mean; how does disability play a part, how can we find short cuts?

April 16th: *Home Management*—what it takes to keep a living space in functioning order.

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**Bus trainings**

10am-2: March 13th, April 17th, May 15th

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.

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**Cooking/social group**

1pm - 5pm

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.*

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**Farmers Market & lunch Join Us!**

**Coming in June**

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.

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**Community Social – at MCIL**

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.

- **January 16th** from 1pm-4:30pm; **New Year gathering**; Please RSVP by January 5th at 2:00pm
- **March 21st** from 4pm-7pm; **Spring Fling**; Please RSVP by March 18th at 2:00pm

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**Happy Hour Gatherings– Social opportunities**

4-7pm

Come get out of the house and meet new people and enjoy free activities like movie night, art exploration, games, food preparation and much more. Activities will not involve alcohol. Please call ahead to reserve your spot in the social circle.

- **February 21st:** movie night/discussion over dinner
- **March 21st:** games and snacks with conversation “Spring Fling Night”
- **April 18th:** out on the town — call for location
- **May 23rd:** Grill’n and chill’n’ at Como Zoo

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**MCIL Peer Support Groups**

**Pain Management peer support group**

6-8

If you are interested in more groups like this please call Cindy at 651-603-2037 Jan 8th and 22nd

*Continued on next page*
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. **October 29th, November 12th, December
10th and January 21st**

GLBT support group
January 8th • February 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. 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
6:30pm, the Support Group will be canceled for the evening. Please be aware of weather conditions as it may
dictate whether we will meet or postpone.**
Ellie Emanuel ........................................... President
Scott Ruhsam ...................................Vice President
Scott Dehn ............................................... Treasurer

Members at Large ........................ Tim Benjamin,
Julie Faulhaber, Shelley Madore and Sheri Smith
Ex-Officio .............................. David Hancox

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denDaas, Celeste ................... IL/VR Specialist ......................... 612-834-4752 ............ celested@mcil-mn.org
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