Celebrating our new home on Robert Street North

By David Hancox

On Thursday, April 3, 2014, friends, customers, community partners, project participants, neighbors and MCIL staff and Board came together to celebrate an open house for MCIL’s new home at 530 Robert Street North, downtown St. Paul. Guests enjoyed tours of the new building, appetizers from local (neighborhood) restaurants, treats prepared by consumers in our teaching kitchen, music and lots of camaraderie.

Guests offered many positive remarks about the additional program and instructional space provided in the new building. Many also remarked about the way the space was designed to maximize staff collaboration, communication and team building.

If you were not able to join us for the open house event, I would encourage you to stop by at another time and see our wonderful new home.

Continued on next page

Photos by Paul Udstrand

Enjoying the delicious refreshments
Cutting the beautiful MCIL cake
IL cooking class baking for the event
Having a great time socializing
Enojoying the music
Fun times with friends

In this issue:
P 2 ... From the Director
P 2 ... Nursing home program has “BIG NEWS”
P 3 ... Welcome new staff member
P 3 ... New Bemidji office opens
P 4 ... Nick’s Notes
P 5 ... IL/VR update
P 5 ... MCIL workshops/classes and events
P 10 . MCIL Board Members/Staff
By Pamela Johnson, NHR Manager

I am excited to announce that Amber Brown has started part-time in the NHR Program in Administration. She will be a great asset to the already great NHR Team. Also Mari Plaster has received recognition as the new RSC Coordinator/Transition Specialist and is currently working full-time. Please take a moment to congratulate Amber on her new part-time status and Mari as the new RSC Coordinator/Transitional Services Coordinator for the NHR Program. These outstanding individuals have brought many blessings and great qualities to the NHR Team. Keep up the great work; I’m so proud to be your Manager!

A quick recap of the NHR Program for our first quarter of 2014, we completed 33 Transitions and 9 RSC Relocations. I can honestly say 2013 was an awesome year for us. We had 25 RSC consumer moves as well as 184 Transition moves in 2013! All in all we moved 209 individuals back into the community of their choice. I am so proud of my Team for all of their HARDWORK! I am honored to work with these co-workers on a daily basis.

We are off and running as well and look forward to 2014 being the year that we ROCK the consumer’s world and change lives!

Other news from the Director:

- A MACIL sponsored bill to increase based funding for CILs has passed out of both House and Senate committees and is headed for conference committee.
- The 5% Campaign effort….to increase reimbursement rates for community based waived services by 5%, or parity with recent nursing home rate increase….has been approved in both the House and Senate HHS committees. You can write to Rep. Huntely, Sen. Lourey and the Governor and thank them for their support.

Nursing home program has “BIG NEWS”

HOLMES-GREENWAY HOUSING
114 5th Street SE, Minneapolis
1 & 2 Bedroom
Section 8 Rental Apartments

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.

Call Mary at 612-378-0331
Monday – Thursday between 10 AM – 1 PM

Lifts
Controls
Vans

1-877-485-9595
St. Cloud, MN
www.northeastcentraltruck.com
Welcome our new staff members

My name is Amber Jepperson and I am thrilled to be the new Case Management Program Manager!

A little about me: I was born and raised in a tiny little town of Athens, WI (just outside of Wausau WI). I graduated from University of Wisconsin-La Crosse with a degree in Recreational Therapy and Psychology. During my time at UW-L, I had the opportunity to live in New Orleans and complete an internship at the Children’s Hospital. From there my now husband and I moved to Rochester, MN where I managed a day program for adults with disabilities and eventually transferred to the cities. I became a Case Manager at the Minnesota Brain injury Alliance as a CADI/BI Case Manager for about three years and now, well here I am! I enjoy being outdoors, biking, running, yoga, and reading. I also enjoy shopping, cleaning and organizing (geek, yes I know)! I love spending time with my family and friends and playing with my little Pomeranian dog, Buddy (I will have to bring him in sometime).

I am excited about this opportunity here at MCIL!

My name is Jessica Flack and I am the new DLL Options Counselor in Bemidji. I have been living in Bemidji for about a year now, and I am originally from the Twin Cities. While training for this position, I also spent time discovering and connecting with community resources programs in this region. I look forward to continuing to build my knowledge for this position as well as to create outreach opportunities within the community here in the Northwoods.

New Bemidji office opens

The Disability Linkage Line, Northern Region, has a new office location in Bemidji! Now located at 3124 Hannah Ave NW Bemidji, MN 56601, the PrimeWest building also is home to other area human service agencies; such as PrimeWest Health Systems, Community Resource Connections (CRC) and the United Way. Jessica Flack, DLL Options Counselor, works out of this office.

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’s NEW address:
530 North Robert Street, St. Paul, MN 55104
651-603-2015 • 888-630-9793
www.adaminnesota.org
cindyt@mcil-mn.org
Greetings Readers, Colleagues and Community:

As you continue to read, MCIL and our staff have gone through some significant changes in recent months. Aside from our new location, some of us have taken on new responsibilities as well. It gives me great pleasure to tell you that my article focus has now been moved to highlight certain policy initiatives that we have been following here at MCIL. I oversee this area as our System’s Advocate.

The legislative session kicked off on Tuesday, February 25th. Since that day, days have been a blur and it has all been taking place at the Capitol, State Office Building & Transportation Building. When not attending Health & Human Services meetings/hearings one of the events that has been a focus for us is MN CCD’s Tuesday’s at the Capitol. Tuesday’s takes place every Tuesday during session, 10:00 to 11:00am in the Transportation Building’s cafeteria. The event serves as a wonderful opportunity to hear about what is going on with various policy issues that affect the disability community as a whole. We encourage all to come on out learn how to tell your story to those that represent them. There are plenty of people at this regular event that can help you do just that, so do not worry if you are just learning the ropes or if you’ve done it many times; all are welcome.

Like other years, there has been a significant amount of rallying at the Capitol’s rotunda. On March 18th hundreds of people came to show their support for Disability Matters Day at the Capitol. This was a collaborative event that was sponsored by many other community organizations. Attendees were encouraged to make their voices heard and to make every effort to connect with elected representatives and senators. It was a great event and a terrific turnout.

With every session there is always a great deal of information to pay attention to, the following are just a few of the items that we have been keeping watch over:

- The 5% campaign to increase in funding for services that help people with disabilities live and contribute to their communities.
- The Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act to help protect students from bullying and deal effectively with incidents that do occur.
- Raising the income and asset limits for people with disabilities so they can still qualify for health care under Medical Assistance without having to live so deeply in poverty.
- Approval of the State Quality Campaign legislation, to help ensure that the services that support people with disabilities are of the highest possible quality and are meeting individual needs.

If you would like more details on any of the issues listed including more background or just what the current status of some of these pieces please don’t hesitate to contact me. My email and phone remain the same: nickw@mcil-mn.org or 651-603-2018 I look forward to hearing from you.
**IL/VR update**

*By Kelly Krantz, IL/VR Manager*

We in the IL/VR program are happily settling into our space in the new building! Although the IL/VR Specialists are mostly based in Vocational Rehabilitation Services offices throughout the metro area, we do on occasion come spend time at the MCIL office. This might be before a meeting, or while taking time to make phone calls or notes. The new building provides a comfortable, spacious, modern area in which to spend time. Tall stools line a long table, complete with pop-up sockets for out laptops and cell phone chargers. Relaxing armchairs are tucked together into corners, perfect for having a problem-solving chat with coworkers. Plenty of desk space makes it easy to spread out and get work done.

One wonderful thing about the new space is the amount of sunshine that pours into it. Overhead skylights brighten without using a lot of electricity. The morning sun shines through the large windows, making it a very attractive spot to grab lunch and people-watch. Having a sunshine pick-me-up in the morning has been great during these winter months.

Our new informal meeting space will be a great spot to brain storm new ideas and programs for MCIL.

The program itself has been very steady. Our referral rates are still as high as ever, and we continue to have a great staff retention rate. We have many success stories to highlight every month, and I continue to get emails from counselors and consumers complimenting the quality of work done by the IL/VR Specialists. We continue to successfully assist people with disabilities in overcoming the barriers to meaningful and sustainable employment.

---

**MCIL workshops/classes and events**

*New classes in 2014! All events are free and accessible.*

**Location:** Most of the following events are held at MCIL’s NEW location at **530 N. Robert Street** in **St. Paul.** We are located on the bus line, so please check bus schedules for exact drop off locations. Or call Metro Transit for trip planning assistance.

**Please RSVP** at least 2 days **PRIOR** to activity. Unless otherwise specified, all activities will be held at MCIL. If you are interested in learning more about these and other events, please visit our website at [www.mcil-mn.org](http://www.mcil-mn.org) or RSVP at 651-603-2030.

- Interpreter or alternative formatted materials must be requested at least two weeks prior to the scheduled activity.
- Classes will be cancelled if less than two people are registered.
- Check our website [www.mcil-mn.org](http://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!**

Continued on next page
IL orientation
2pm-4pm
March 10 & 24, April 14 & 28, May 12, June 9 & 23
Are you new to MCIL? Do you have questions about our services and how to get involved? Are you a professional or a member of the community and would like to learn how to get people you work with involved in our services? If so, than join us in exploring the services and opportunities at MCIL. During this one part workshop, we will also look at the Independent Living movement and how it has shaped the way people with disabilities have changed history. Please note that this is a 1 part, repeating workshop.

Living well with a disability
5pm-7pm
March 5, 12, 19, 26 & April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 & March 7
Are you looking for more balance in your life? Living with a disability can be a winding road. This workshop will provide participants with a toolbox of techniques and resources that will keep them on the path to living well. Living Well workshop provides opportunities to:
• Discover how lifestyle affects disability.
• Discover how creating meaningful life goals can help develop healthy lifestyle.
• Discover how healthy living can create new possibilities
This workshop includes ten, 2-hour, weekly sessions that focus on healthy lifestyle topics. The Living Well workshop helps people lead healthier lives that reduce limitation and increase living fully. Join others with disabilities that are going through similar experiences and are looking for ways to improve their situation and live a life that they want to live.

Working well with a disability
1-3pm • June 4, 11, 18, 25 & July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Are you just starting on your journey to employment? This is for you!
Are you employed and looking for balance between work and your personal life. This is for you! This is a peer-facilitated and consumer-directed workshop that takes participants on a journey of empowerment through goal setting and problem solving, time spent matches personal values, maintaining life balance, dealing with stress positively and stating one’s needs—advocating!

Goal setting
10am-12pm • May 6, 13, 27 & June 3
What’s your dream? Maybe you want to start a new job or get your own place. Maybe you are interested in what gets in your way when attempting to accomplish a goal. Join others with disabilities in exploring what it means to set a goal and see it through. This four-part workshop will take you on a journey of discovery and at the end you will have a tool box of skills and techniques to help you accomplish your goals in the future. *This is a 4-part workshop, please attend all four sessions to complete course.

Drivers education
9am-11am
April 3, 10, 17 & 24... More days and times to be announced
This class will be run as a study session to learn the laws and regulations of driving in Minnesota, in preparation to obtain a driving permit. We will breakdown the Minnesota Driver’s Education manual, including practice quizzes, review videos, and use flash cards to cover the material in the driver’s manual. This is a four part series. *This is a 4 part workshop, please attend all four sessions to complete course

Continued on next page
Budgeting 101
10am-12pm • April 29
This class is for anybody who struggles with understanding how to keep a budget, or for those who have never attempted to keep a budget. We will address what keeping a budget means, how to successfully create a budget, and how to build up your credit in a positive and safe way.

Getting out on your own
5-7pm • May 7, 14, 21 & 28
This class is designed for anybody who is thinking about moving into a more independent setting. We will address what is needed financially to move into your own apartment, how to go about looking for housing, how to build safe and meaningful relationships in your new community (and why that is necessary), and how to keep yourself safe (and what that means) once you have moved. *This is a 4-part workshop, please attend all four sessions to complete course.

All things transit
1pm-3pm: May 15 & 29
This class will explore a variety of different transportation services individuals with disabilities can use in the metro area. A strong focus will be centered on riding the Metro Transit Bus and Lightrail System. *This is a 2-part workshop, please attend both sessions to complete the course.

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. 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. Call to schedule an appointment.
Ongoing events

Consumerism and food safety
10am-1pm: April 7 & 21, May 5 & 19, June 2 & 16
We will look into being savvy consumers and what that means. We will review ways to stretch your dollar while out shopping, what to look for on your shopping receipt, and other savvy consumer tips. We will also learn about safety in the kitchen. This will include food safety and kitchen safety; which are important steps in preparing a meal. Come and socialize and make friends in the process.

Shopping and cooking
10am-1pm: April 7 & 21, May 5 & 19, June 2 & 16
We will plan a meal from start to finish. Come learn how to meal plan, shop, cook, set a table, and clean up afterwards. This will be a hands on class where everyone will get to try their skills at different aspects of meal planning and cooking. We will have a sit down meal and clean up afterwards. Come and socialize and make friends in the process.

Book group
Do you have an interest in storytelling and finding like minded people who share your love of literature or wish to just brush up on your reading skills? Then this monthly event is for you. Come and socialize and make friends in the process. Call for more details.

Peer mentoring training/workshops

Peer mentor training
10am-3pm: April 22, May 20, June 17, July 15, Aug 12
This is a mandatory training for all mentors who are new to the program. This training is intended to provide information on the rights responsibilities and expectations of our mentors. We will also discuss the Independent Living movement, advocacy and confidentiality. This is intended to prepare mentors for their mentoring experience. After attending this training, mentors will be well versed in basic mentoring skills and the IL philosophy.

Peer mentor group
5pm – 7pm:
March 6 & 28, April 17 & 24, May 8 & 22, June 5 & 19
Are you a mentor who is looking to improve and/or maintain your skills like listening, problem solving, disability adjustment and much more? This is an ongoing group for Mentors with disabilities that are interested in lifelong learning and want to maintain their mentoring status and improve or expand their skills.

Self help/support groups

Parent group
6pm-7:30pm: April 14, May 12, June 23
The Parents with Disabilities Group is designed for parents who have disabilities to attend and learn through sharing experiences with other parents who have been there. This group will also foster self-advocacy skills and discuss the foundations of the Independent Living model and how parents can incorporate those practices in their lives and the lives of their children.

GLBT and disability: Every Tue. evening
6PM-8PM: April 8, May 13, June 10
This group takes place the second TUESDAY EVENING of each month. The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender(GLBT) with disabilities (GLBT) is a support/social group that meets once a week to discuss topics related to being a part of the GLBT community and living with a disability. It’s a great place to meet new people who understand and can provide support and a social outlet. No need to call or register as this is a drop in group.

Continued on next page
**Social event**

**Fun with MCIL**

May 8: Meet and Greet at MCIL and then Get to Know St. Paul • 3-5pm

May 17: Como Zoo • 10:30am-12:00pm

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! Call for details.

**facebook**

A free social network site - connect with friends, share ideas, support issues/causes.

**Stay informed!**

Visit MCIL on Facebook.

**Independently Speaking**

is also available in alternative formats.

Contact MCIL for more details.
MCIL Board

Ellie Emanuel ................................................. Chair
Scott Ruhsam ......................................... Vice Chair
Scott Dehn ............................................... Treasurer

Members at LargeCharles Braun, Tim Benjamin, Shelley Madore and Sheri Smith
Ex-Officio ...................................... David Hancox

MCIL administration/program staff

Artz, Lindsey ................. DLL Manager .......... 651-603-2002 lindseya@mcil-mn.org
Brown, Amber .......... Ramp Specialist .......... 651-603-2029 amberb@mcil-mn.org
Campbell, Ian .......... DLL Specialist ............................. 682-834-4752 celested@mcil-mn.org
Clark, Elizabeth ....... Case Manager .......... 651-603-2003 elizabethty@mcil-mn.org
denDaas, Celeste ...... IL/VR Specialist .......... 612-834-4752 celested@mcil-mn.org
Flack, Jessica .......... DLL Specialist-Bemidji . 651-209-4962 chrisr@mcil-mn.org
Garrett, Quillan ....... IL/VR Specialist .......... 651-248-0991 quillang@mcil-mn.org
Gentillini, Butch ...... IL/VR Specialist .......... 651-955-4349 butch@mcil-mn.org
Gordon, Catherine .... PAS Services Coordinator .. 651-603-2039 catherineg@mcil-mn.org
Hancox, David ....... Executive Director .......... 651-603-2012 davidh@mcil-mn.org
Henry, Erin .......... IL Specialist .............. 651-603-2037 cindy@mcil-mn.org
Herbst, Annelise ...... IL Specialist ............. 651-603-2011 anneliseh@mcil-mn.org
Jepperson, Amber ... Case Management Manager .. 651-636-0346 amberg@mcil-mn.org
Johnson, Pamela .... NHR Manager .......... 651-603-2016 pamelaj@mcil-mn.org
Krantz, Kelly .......... IL/VR Manager ............. 651-285-7112 kelly@mcil-mn.org
Lamminen, Kevin .... DLL Specialist ...... 651-603-2026 kelly@mcil-mn.org
Laubignat, Corbett ... IL Specialist/Peer Coordinator .. 651-603-2028 corbett@mcil-mn.org
Murphy, Sarah ........ IL/VR Specialist .......... 651-262-4528 sarahm@mcil-mn.org
Ogenga, Oscar ....... PAS QP ............................. 651-788-8424 oscaro@mcil-mn.org
Peterson, Connor .... Custodian .........................
Phillips, Jack .......... DLL Specialist .......... 651-603-2036 jackp@mcil-mn.org
Plaster, Mari .......... NHR Admin ............ 651-603-2005 marip@mcil-mn.org
Rasmussen, Chris ... IL/VR Specialist .......... 612-209-4962 chrisr@mcil-mn.org
Saari, Matt .......... Tech Manager .............. 651-603-2023 matt@mcil-mn.org
Schifano, Barb ....... Core Services Manager .... 651-603-2026 barabus@mcil-mn.org
Schultz, LaRonda ... Receptionist/PAS Admin .... 651-603-2030 larondas@mcil-mn.org
Dick, Tanya .......... Operations Director .......... 651-603-2014 tanyad@mcil-mn.org
Tarshish, Cindy ...... ADA Coordinator .......... 651-603-2015 cindyt@mcil-mn.org
Walby, Elizabeth ...... IL/VR Specialist .......... 651-341-0680 elizabethw@mcil-mn.org
Washenberger, Julia .... DLL Specialist .......... 651-603-2018 julia@mcil-mn.org
Weber, Liz .......... DLL Specialist .......... 651-276-7562 lizw@mcil-mn.org
Weiss, Shanna ...... IL/VR Specialist .......... 651-285-7777 adriennew@mcil-mn.org
Wilcox, Adrienne .... IL/VR Specialist .......... 651-603-2018 nickw@mcil-mn.org
Wilkie, Nick .......... Systems Advocate .......... 651-603-2018 nickw@mcil-mn.org

Disability Linkage Line .......... 1-866-333-2466