The third **Boomers and Beyond Senior Expo**
was a success!

The third annual Boomers and Beyond Senior Expo was held August 13th, 2014 in Bemidji, MN.

There were over 50 vendors on hand, breakout sessions, food, and the opportunity to explore ways to enhance your lifestyle. Jessica Flack with the Disability Linkage Line and Carol Bye with the Senior Linkage Line partnered to have an informational booth at the Expo. Planners for the B&B Expo have expressed interest in having the DLL and SLL conduct a breakout session next year.

Once again, we give gratitude to our volunteers

As noted in our last issue of *Independently Speaking*, the Yellow Ribbon volunteers are retired Vets who provide labor to families that have served in the military. They have built approximately 50% of our ramps for free. At left is the latest ramp they built, with DEED grant funding.

We feel very fortunate to have them working with us and wish to send them our sincere gratitude.

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Jessica Flack, with the Disability Linkage Line, and Carol Bye, with the Senior Linkage Line, answered questions and gave out material during the expo.
SCC will be the transition leadership for MCIL

By Renae Oswald-Anderson

Strategic Consulting and Coaching (SCC) is serving as transition leadership for MCIL for the next several months. They are providing agency leadership as well as staff support to the board of directors during the search process for the next Executive Director of MCIL.

Cheryl Jensen and Renae Oswald-Anderson are seasoned nonprofit health and human services executives as well as consultants. Both have worked in large and small human services organizations across Minnesota. Cheryl and Renae are passionate about leadership, staff engagement, and building multi-cultural inclusive communities where they work.

Cheryl possesses a Master's degree in Organizational Development-Human Services Planning and Administration and is a certified leadership coach. Renae has a Master’s degree in Nonprofit Management and Administration and teaches in the human services department at Century Community College. In their free time Cheryl enjoys golf, sports of all types, and her dog Neiko. Renae is a power walker, loves to entertain, and work in her flower gardens. Renae and her husband share their home with 2 daughters who are both in college, a dog and a cat.

Cheryl and Renae may be reached by calling 651-603-2012 or electronically at interimed@mcil-mn.org

News about the PAS program

Over the last few months, MCIL’s Personal Assistant Services (PAS) program has gone through some exciting changes.

The PAS Program is thrilled to have been able to give all our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) a sixty cent raise, across the board, due to the 5% increase in reimbursement rates from the legislature. In doing so, the PAS program is putting 95% of the 5% increase directly back into DSP wages and benefits. As a direct result of the 5% increase, the PAS Program has also been able to raise the starting wage for DSPs by fifty cents, as well as match wages up to a higher amount.

Kat Gordon, formerly the PAS Services Coordinator, has become the PAS Program Manager. She will continue to work closely with the MCIL Business Manager and PAS Operations Specialist. She will be working on outreach, creating on-going contact with DSPs and consumers, and assisting other PAS staff.

The PAS Program is pleased to now offer home making services to consumers. This service is available through waiver programs, as well as through private pay.
Looking for a knowledgeable PCA Agency that provides personalized choice services?

We accept:
Medical Assistance
Waivers
UCare
Private Pay

We offer Employees
* Holiday Incentives
* Competitive Wages
* Tuition Assistance
* Training Opportunities
* A chance for extra income with the On-call list

We offer Consumers
- Consumer Control over who you work with, what support you receive and staff schedules
- Assistance with creating and posting job ads, recruiting and screening.
- Handling payroll and Human Resource duties

www.pas.mcil-mn.org

For more information Call 651-646-8342

Metropolitan Center for Independent Living
1600 University Ave. West, Suite 16,
Saint Paul, MN 55104
Welcome our new staff members

My name is Jenna Bergman and I am a new MCIL Independent Living Advocate. I am a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities with a bachelor’s degree in Psychology with an emphasis in family violence prevention. I have worked in various group home and day placement settings with both children and adults for the past three years. I am a crafty person. I enjoy knitting, sewing and painting nails. As sedentary as all three of these hobbies are, I need activity in my life so I spend a lot of time outdoors hiking, camping and wakeboarding in the summer as well as participating in yoga. I’m so happy to be here and look forward to working with many of you.

My name is Isabelle Hoag and I am a new Disability Linkage Line Options Counselor. My background is in education and I have taught all ages from pre-kindergarten to adult. Most of my elementary teaching experience was in exotic locations such as Finland, Turkey, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and even… Texas. In addition to my training as a teacher, I have a B.A. in psychology from Earlham College and I spent three years working for the State of Illinois with the Rock Island County Department of Public Aid. In my spare time I am an instructor with WIDE World online professional development for K-12 teachers. I have been invited to present an hour long workshop on using poetry in the classroom at Education Minnesota in October. I live in Shoreview with my twin sons who will be going into 5th grade next year.

My name is Megan Jacobs I am the newest member of the Case Management team. I came to MCIL with experience as an ILS Worker and Site Supervisor in various group home settings for adults with traumatic brain injuries and mental illness. I graduated from University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in 2011 with my bachelor’s degree in social work and just recently graduated from University of St. Thomas/St. Catherine University with my masters in social work. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my husband, cuddling with my cat, reading, and practicing yoga. I look forward to my work in case management.

My name is Harmony Kuller (cooler), but my friends call me Harmonious or Harmless. I am very happy and honored to be joining MCIL as the new morning receptionist.

I am bilingual and received my BA in Spanish from the University of Minnesota. I am also certified as a Spanish Interpreter/Translator; I love using my language skills to ensure that all non-English speaking patients are able to fully understand their doctor, clinic or hospital visit and diagnosis so they can make informed decisions about their treatment and future care. Further, I have worked in an administrative capacity for many years for a wide variety of both for profit and non-profit organizations.

I enjoy volunteering, traveling, attending concerts and plays and watching (old) movies, but my true passion is playing Scrabble™ locally at Club 42 and competitively at tournaments across the country and abroad!

I look forward to getting to know you and greet you at the front desk.

My name is Kab Nras Lee and this is how it is spelled in Hmong, which makes it a little tricky. You can call me Ka-drah. I am excited to be a part of the Disability Linkage Line team as an Options Counselor. I recently graduated from Saint Catherine University in December of 2013 with a degree in Public Health and minor in Business Administration. I love being involved in the community and have provided health education and promotion in the Hmong community. I enjoy the outdoors, camping, fishing and taking long walks. I look forward to working with everyone and developing new skills and knowledge.

Continued on next page
My name is Kianna Lehman and I am familiar with disabilities as I have Multiple Sclerosis. I was the first in my family to graduate from high school (De La Salle), and I also earned an AS in Business Management from MCTC, and a BA in Individualized Studies from Metropolitan State University. As I mature I can tell there is an advocate in me for myself and others with disabilities. Most people when they meet me tell me I should be a comedian since all I do is make them laugh! I am very excited to be working again, especially at MCIL. I hope to be a part of this organization for a long time.

My name is Danielle Mahoehney and I am the new IL/VR Specialist based in the Woodbury and West Saint Paul Vocational Rehabilitation offices. My previous experience includes living and working at L’Arche Harbor House, an intentional community comprised of people with and without intellectual disabilities in Jacksonville, Florida. I completed my undergraduate degree in English at the University of Notre Dame. I recently graduated from the University of Minnesota’s Master of Social Work program, during which I interned with the Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota, the Minnesota Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities, and Ramsey County Disability Services. I am particularly interested in the issue of disability and employment, so I am excited to be working with the IL/VR team. Outside of work, I enjoy reading, biking, being in nature, and spending time with my lovely husband, J.P.

My name is Sarah Mauser, and I am an Options Counselor on the Disability Linkage Line. I graduated with a Bachelor’s in Social Work this past spring and I’m currently in the process of getting licensed. I have been at the Anti-Violence Program at OutFront Minnesota as a crisis services intern-turned-volunteer-advocate for almost a year. I also have experience in organizing efforts and mobilizing groups while being in various officer positions in four different student organizations. One of my biggest passions outside of social justice is guinea pigs. I had two special needs guinea pigs while in high school and I’ve been devoted to the species ever since! A little something extra to work better with me: I identify as bi-gender and gender-queer, so I prefer gender-neutral pronouns like “they,” “them” and “Mx.” I ask that you use those pronouns instead of “she,” “her” or “Ms.” (For more information on what that is, check out the “Trans* Etiquette 101” article.)

My name is Madeline Nyvold and I am very excited to join MCIL as an Options Counselor with the Disability Linkage Line. I graduated from Augsburg College in 2007 with a degree in Communications Studies. After college, I worked as an education assistant at a variety of schools. I currently live in Minneapolis and enjoy reading, drawing, and spending time with friends. I hope to learn a lot in this position and look forward to my work on the Disability Linkage Line.

My name is Ashley Tapia. I am a student at Inver Hills and am getting my degree in Human Services. I love spending time with family and friends; I am a huge hockey fan and love going to games. I also love camping and the outdoors. I am interested in learning more about transition services. I know a little of how they work as my brother went to transition plus in Apple Valley after he graduated High school. I know there are other options out there and would like to know more about the process. I am also interested in case management. After I graduate I would like to work as a case manager and would like to know more about the process. Advocating is also an interest I would like to know more about being someone’s advocate. I hope to learn about different services and resources there are out there for people with disabilities.
Greetings Readers, Colleagues and Community:

It has been a whirlwind of activity over the last few months and staff here at MCIL have been working diligently to plan and prepare for the upcoming session. Below are just a few of the highlights to take note of:

We continue to collaborate with MNCCD and their efforts to provide a unified voice for the community and people who have disabilities.

Thanks to the preparation and the organized efforts of the 5% campaign last session, the community will take this momentum and apply it to a new campaign. The issue that we will be rallying around this session is the Medical Assistance Income and Asset Standards.

Here is a little background on this issue:

If a person with a disability has too much monthly income to qualify for Medical Assistance (MA) there is a “spend-down” provision in State law. This allows people to deduct their medical expenses from their income for purposes of qualifying for MA.

The “spend-down” is a great concept, it allows people with higher incomes to qualify for MA and get access to home and community based services. The problem is in the way this policy is implemented. People with disabilities on a spend-down are allowed to keep less of their own income before MA starts paying their medical bills than any other group. Current law sets this at 75 percent of the Federal Poverty Guideline.

A single person on the spend-down is expected to be able to live on $729 a month. It is incredibly unfair to individuals and short-sighted by the State to expect people to live in poverty to gain access to the services that can keep them living independently in the community and avoid costly institutional care.

MNCCD is collecting personal stories from the community that have been impacted by this issue. The plan is to share these stories with elected officials throughout this session and create more awareness and buzz around the issue. Should you want to share your story or a story please go to: www.mnccd.org and click on the Advocacy & Policy tab, there you will find a link to campaign materials.

If you would like more details on, or more background or please to contact me at: nickw@mcil-mn.org or 651-603-2018 I look forward to hearing from you.

Nick’s notes

By Nick Wilkie, Systems Advocacy

We’ve added to the Case Management team

By Amber Jepperson, Case Manager Supervisor

MCIL Case Management Department has been very active this past quarter. I am proud to announce that over this past quarter our department has added another full-time Case Manager, part-time Case Manager and a part-time Case Aide. We have all been busy with new referral meetings, quarterly meetings, semi-annual meetings, housing meetings, reassessments and more. We continue to be actively involved coordinating services and advocating for our consumers who we serve throughout the metro counties on the CADI waiver Management Department.
Before we discuss trans etiquette, please understand trans folks are people, too, and some of us are people with disabilities (including myself). When learning about trans etiquette there are a couple ground rules that are similar to disability etiquette.

Firstly, don’t assume we all have the same strengths and challenges and that we all want similar things from people. We have different needs, strengths, and challenges, and we don’t all want or need the same services. Also, respect “The Bubble.” This means different things for different people, but it basically means respect our personal space. Trans bodies are often seen as public property and treated as such, via both physical touch and invasive questions, therefore please respect our boundaries like you would with anyone else. And finally, treat us with the same respect you’d treat others.

I’m trans myself, therefore I don’t mind answering questions about working with or being someone who identifies as trans. Some quick vocabulary: trans or transgender can mean not identifying with the gender someone was assigned to you at birth; cis or cisgender can mean agreeing with the gender you were assigned at birth. Gender is how one identifies themselves and how cultural signals and expectations affect perception and expression, sex refers to physical components like hormones and chromosomes, and sexual orientation is who you are or aren’t into. Today, we’re talking about the trans side of gender.

As for etiquette, never assume gender identity. For example, I have a very high-pitched voice therefore many people assume I identify as a woman which is incorrect. Next, never challenge someone’s identity. Even saying something like “Really?” is hurtful for a lot of trans folks, including myself. Asking for and respecting preferred pronouns is very important. Pronouns are shortened and usually gendered ways we refer to each other. Examples include Ms., Mr. He, she, they, etc. I personally prefer they, them, and Mx. (e.g., Mx. Mauser) for pronouns. For example, when referring to me, please don’t say “she can speak with you now.” Instead, say “they can speak with you now” which is a significant way to respect my gender identity. Finally, understand that trans folks face structural and cultural barriers in almost every area of life; from difficulty and fear accessing public and private resources and services in addition to a much higher rate of violence than the general population.

Now that you know what to do, it’s also helpful to know what not to do. A couple words never to use (unless a person self-identifies as such and requests you use those terms while referring to them) are: tranny, transvestite, transsexual, and gender identity disorder. All of these terms are rooted in historical oppression and often used in hate crimes and hateful and damaging reporting of trans lives and deaths. Gender Identity Disorder is an outdated term in the last DSM (changed to Gender Dysphoric Disorder, which is still not good) that was used to stigmatize, institutionalize, and sterilize trans folks. Also, never gossip behind a co-worker’s back about their gender. Examples of what not to do include: “He says he’s a woman but he’s actually a man,” “I don’t understand why he is asking for special privileges. No one has ever asked me to call them by pronouns/ names they actually were not,” “What surgeries have you had and what’s it like down there?” and finally “I know he claims to be a woman, but I don’t feel comfortable with a man in my bathroom.”

All of the preceding statements are incredibly offensive and demonizing on several levels. Not to mention if someone is trans and they’re not out you could be saying this to someone in the closet.

This is important in our line of work as there are few resources for those who are trans. Many experience barriers and higher rates of violence often compounded by having a disability. For example, when looking for a homeless shelter a trans person who has a disability would need to find an accessible shelter and one who did not turn away trans people or assign them to the wrong housing section as well as being at risk for increased rates of physical and sexual violence. Many public and private agencies refuse to help someone if they’re trans which is legal in the state of Minnesota. For more

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information on some of the barriers and violence that trans people often face, check out “Injustice at Every Turn; A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey.”

It is important to keep in mind throughout incredible historic and current discrimination, oppression and violence, we’ve survived. You’ll often find that people who are trans, just like those of us with disabilities, are incredibly resilient. The community itself is vibrant and very supportive of each other. Just because someone is trans, don’t give up hope on figuring out next steps; if we’ve made it this far, it means we’re fighters.

If you have any further questions about trans etiquette please contact me at smauser@mcil-mn.org Gender, sex and sexual and relationship orientation are specialties of mine, so feel free to ask me any questions about any of these topics.

IL/VR experiencing transition and change

The past few months have brought a lot of transition and change to the IL/VR team. Our new IL/VR Specialists are settling into their roles at their respective workforce centers very comfortably. Another big addition in the life of an IL/VR Specialist is that Elizabeth Walby had her baby! Annabelle Joy arrived on August 10th, weighing a healthy 8 lbs 12 oz. We are very happy for her and her family! This quarter is certain to be an exciting one for the IL/VR team as we enter our 8th year as a program.

MCIL workshops/classes and events

All events are free and accessible.

Location: Most of the following events are held at MCIL’s NEW location at 530 Robert Street N. 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 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 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
Regular (ongoing) Events

**Shopping and cooking**
10am-1pm first and third Mondays
October 6 & 10, November 3 & 17, December 1 & 15
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. This is also a great time to meet your peers who have similar goals.

**GLBT and Disability**
6pm – 8pm second Tuesday
October 14, November 11, December 9
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 class.

**IL Orientation**
2pm – 4pm first and third Mondays
October 6 & 20, November 3 & 17 December 1 & 15
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.

Workshops and Classes

**Drivers Education**
10am – 2pm on Thursdays
SERIES 1: October 2, 9, 16 & 23
SERIES 2: November 6, 13, 20 & December 4
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 offered.
*Must attend all four sessions to complete class.

**Hygiene**
10am – 12pm first and third Wednesdays
November 5 & 19
Are you looking increase your personal care skills and step up your efforts to put your best foot forward? This class will assist you in looking and feeling your best. Whether you are thinking of going back to work or just making new impressions, what you say to your world about your appearance says a lot about how you feel.

**Budgeting**
10am – 12pm second and fourth Wednesdays in November 12 & 26
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.

**Bus/ Lightrail 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. 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.
MCIL Peer Mentoring Training Workshops

**Initial Peer Mentor Training**
10am – 3pm second Mondays
October 13, November 10, December 8
FOR PEER MENTORS ONLY!
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**
4pm – 6pm first and third Wednesdays
October 1 & 15, November 5 & 19, December 3 & 17
FOR PEER MENTORS ONLY!
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 people with disabilities who are interested in lifelong learning and want to maintain their mentoring status and improve or expand their skills.

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**Social Events**

**Art and You**
12pm – 3pm third Friday
October 17, November 21, December 19.
Do you have a disability? Have you always wanted to find a space to be creative? Are you frustrated and need a creative release all the while making beautiful Art? Well, that time has arrived!!!

Come to this class and enjoy the opportunity to be creative. Whether it be painting or Mosaics’, you are invited to enjoy a safe and welcoming environment to express yourself and make new friends. You will also have the opportunity to sell your work at the next St. Paul Art Crawl in October, 2014.

**Coffee Break**
9am-11pm first and 3rd Tuesdays
October 7 & 21, November 4 & 18, December 2 & 16
Come and enjoy coffee and treats, make some new friends and see what MCIL has to offer!

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**Lewis Park Apartments**
180 Wayzata Street, St. Paul, MN 55117
- Barrier-free housing
- Ramp from 6th to 1st floor
- One- and two-bedroom units
- Roll-in showers available
- Craft room
- Lounge/meeting areas
- Exterior parking
- Heated underground parking
- Next to city park and playground
- On bus lines and close to Como Park

For more information, contact:
651/488-9923
# MCIL Independent Living Calendars

## October 2014

Please RSVP! At least 2 days before the event

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RSVP Events: By calling Jenna at 651-603-2028 or Check our website www.mcil-mm.org and click on “Classes Groups and Sessions” for updated information or to print this calendar. Please give 2 weeks notice if alternative format or other accommodations are needed. Events are free, accessible and mostly scent-free. Most events meet at MCIL. MCIL is located at 530 N. Robert Street. St Paul, MN 55101.
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 Robert Street North, St. Paul, MN 55104
651-603-2015 • 888-630-9793
www.adaminnesota.org
cindyt@mcil-mn.org
## MCIL Board

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<td>Ellie Emanuel</td>
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## MCIL administration/program staff

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bergman, Jenna</td>
<td>IL Specialist</td>
<td>651-603-2028</td>
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