



# INDEPENDENTLY SPEAKING

## Metropolitan Center for Independent Living

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Winter 2009

## Don't balance the budget on the backs of people with disabilities!

By Ann Roscoe

**T**hat's the theme of *Disability Advocacy Day at the Capitol*, February 23, at the Capitol Rotunda in St. Paul. This year, MCIL is collaborating with the Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD), the Minnesota Association of Centers for Independent Living (MACIL) and the Direct Support Professionals Association of Minnesota (DSPAM) on the statewide *Disability Advocacy Day at the Capitol*. This day is a chance for consumers and their allies across the entire state to meet with representatives and senators.

legislators, followed by brief comments by Legislative leadership. Starting at 11 a.m., speakers from both the House and Senate will talk briefly about issues facing consumers with disabilities in the upcoming session.

In the afternoon, consumers can stop by their legislators' offices and talk with them. Materials will be handed out about disability concerns and with locations of legislator offices. Maps will also be provided.

For more information, and to register, contact Betty Culver, 651-603-2026 or [bettyc@mcil-mn.org](mailto:bettyc@mcil-mn.org). Please indicate needs for accommodation when registering. ■



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We will start in the Capitol Rotunda at 10 a.m., with a welcome to the day and introduction to how to talk with

## MCIL, Kevin Kling & Congressman Jim Ramstad-what a celebration!

By Ann Roscoe

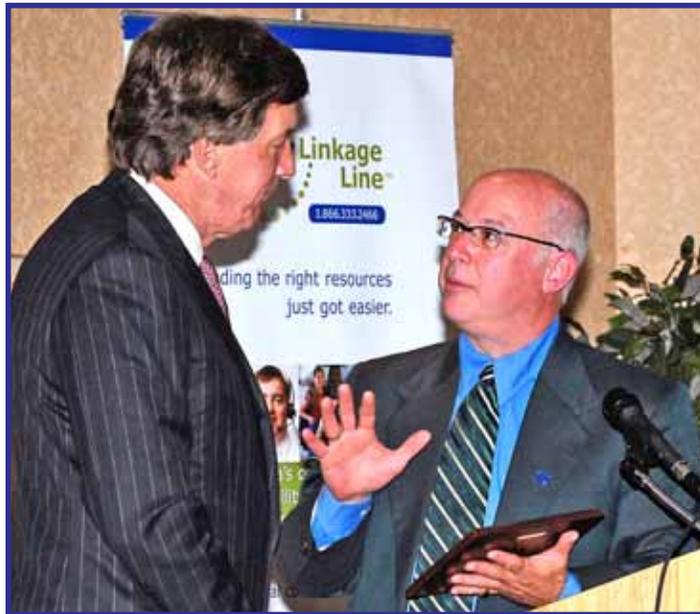
**K**evin Kling, Minnesota humorist and story teller, was the featured speaker at the MCIL Annual Meeting on October 22, 2008. Kling spoke on "The How and Why of Life and Death," talking about his life experiences and his near fatal motorcycle accident five years ago. Kling also talked about lessons learned from his dachshunds, a horse, people in his life, and the accident; all of which contribute to the richness of his life.

*Meeting - Cont. on page 2*

Jim Ramstad, Minnesota’s Third District Representative, received MCIL’s Outstanding Lifetime Achievement

mental in starting the PCA program and Metro Mobility. In Congress, he co-sponsored the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act. Ramstad also co-sponsored, along with the late Senator Paul Wellstone, the Mental Health Parity Act, which passed late in 2008. Ramstad will retire at the end of the 110<sup>th</sup> Session in January 2009.

**Awards were also presented to outstanding individuals who have contributed to MCIL’s success throughout 2008:**



*David Hancox (right) presenting Congressman Jim Ramstad with MCIL’s Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award*

ment Award for his numerous contributions to people with disabilities in Minnesota and throughout the country. In presenting the award, David Hancox, MCIL Executive Director, noted Ramstad’s commitment to improving lives of people with disabilities. During his career in the Minnesota Legislature, Ramstad was instru-

**Outstanding Personal Care Attendants Awards:**

Emily Koerber and Kara Whalen

**Personal Assistant Services Awards:**

Mike Harrison, Robert Foster, Angela Strasser, Pamela Homada and Sarah Trapp

**MCIL 10 years of Service:**

Eva Hansen, Manager, Nursing Home Relocation

**IL/PEER Recognition Award:**

Derrick Dawson

**Community Partnership Award:**

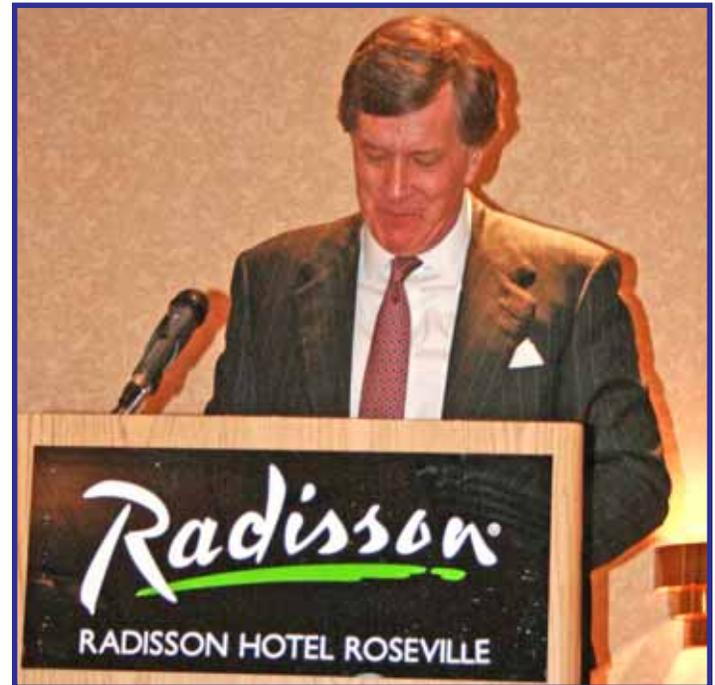
Hotel Furniture Liquidators

**Transition Recognition Award:**

Ann Johnson ■



*Kevin Kling was the featured speaker at the MCIL Annual Meeting*



*Rep. Jim Ramstad was please to receive MCIL’s Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award*

## From the Director's Desk

# Let them know the CILs are wanted and needed!

By David Hancox

These are difficult times for us all. The current economic crisis we are facing is affecting people with disabilities, their families and others through reductions in service, cuts to service hours, unallotment of state resources, and restrictions on valuable federal resources. And, we know we are not alone.

A few years ago, MCIL and Minnesota's other seven Centers for Independent Living lost 30% of their state supports in the 2003 budget crisis. Others certainly lost even more. And while we know that in a crisis like the one we are now facing everyone has to share in the pain, we want to remind legislators not to balance the budget on the backs of people with disabilities.

We are not alone...but we have a voice. So, as we move into a new year, and a new legislative session where critical life changing decisions will be made, it is important for you to renew your relationship with elected officials. If you do not know who your state representative or senator is, you can contact the Minnesota Secretary of State's office (877)600-8683 and they can help you determine your district and elected officials. Please let your elected

officials know how much you value the Centers for Independent Living and services they provide.

To contact your congressional representative in Washington, DC, please consult the list below.



*David Hancox*

### LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Local Addresses of U.S. Congressional Representatives for Minnesota:

**Senator Amy Klobuchar**, (612)-727-5220  
1 Federal Dr., Federal Building, Suite 298,  
Fort Snelling, MN 55111

**Senator Norm Coleman**, (651)-645-0323  
Court International Building; 2550 University Ave W,  
Suite 100 North, St. Paul, MN 55114

**Congressman Tim Walz**, (507)-388-2149  
2227 East Main St, Suite 220, Mankato, MN 56001

**Congressman John Kline**, (952)-808-1213  
101 W Burnsville Pky, Suite 201,  
Burnsville, MN 55337

**Congressman Jim Ramstad**, (652)-738-8200  
1809 Plymouth Rd S, Suite 300, Minnetonka, MN  
55305

**Congresswoman Betty McCollum**, (651)-224-9191  
165 Western Ave North, Suite 17, St. Paul, MN 55102

**Congressman Keith Ellison**, (612)-522-1212  
2100 Plymouth Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55411

**Congresswoman Michele Bachmann**, (651)-731-5400  
6043 Hudson Road, Suite 330, Woodbury, MN 55125

**Congressman Collin Peterson**, (218)-847-5056  
714 Lake Avenue, Suite 107, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

**Congressman James L. Oberstar**, (218)-727-7474  
231 Federal Building, Duluth, MN 55802 ■



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# Independence doesn't mean doing it alone

By, Sheila Faricy

**I**ndependence means developing and using skills. It means developing decision-making skills, skills in determining what one needs and skills in contacting and using resources in the community. It also means developing good habits in using those skills. Examining what independence means may help to understand how it applies to people.

## **Independence means developing skills in determining what one needs**

For example, one person I know who has deaf-blindness determined that his home needed to be cleaned regularly. He determined that he wanted the comfort of living in a clean home. He also knew that a home that was cleaned regularly was a healthier environment than one that was not. He had the skills necessary to clean his home, but he worked during the day, and had an active social life that left little time for cleaning. Although he knew it was his responsibility to see that his home was cleaned, he did not want to spend so much of his free time cleaning it. He determined what his needs were: that he needed to have his home cleaned regularly, and that he needed to be responsible for making sure that this was done.



## **Independence means developing decision-making skills.**

Decision-making may mean having to make a choice, or deciding to do something. The person in the home cleaning example determined that one choice available was to hire a maid service to come to his home every two weeks to clean it. In order to make this choice, he had to give something up. Either he chose the maid service and gave up some of his extra money, or he chose to clean his home himself and gave up some of his free time. It was not an easy decision for him to make. He struggled for several days with the decisions, until finally he decided to try the maid service for one month and would then decide at the end of the month whether to continue it or not.

Before making the decision, he talked to several people

about it. He did not ask anyone to decide for him. He knew he had to do that himself. It was his choice to make, and he made it.

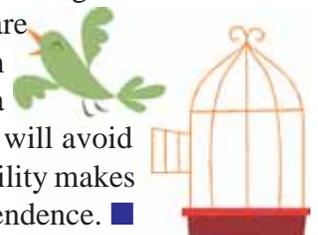
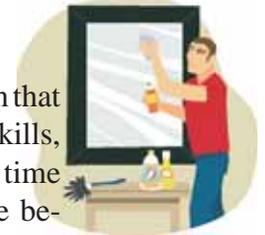
## **Independence means developing good habits in using skills.**

Sometimes it takes a while before using new skills. There are reasons for this. Some of these reasons may be stress; or relying too much on someone else to help with day-to-day activities; or a lack of confidence in using those skills.

In the house cleaning example, when that person first learned housecleaning skills, he found it very difficult to schedule time during the week to clean his home because he was not in the habit of doing so. He found that when he did not schedule enough time, or did not schedule time at all, his home became harder to clean. When it was too hard to clean, he found it was too much for one person to do and he needed to depend on someone else to help him with it. He needed to develop good habits in using his skills, or he experienced too much stress and a lack of confidence related to housecleaning.

Independence does not mean doing everything alone. It does not mean that because someone uses an interpreter, they do not communicate independently. It does not mean that because someone uses a reader to identify their mail, that they cannot respond to that mail independently. It does not mean that because someone holds onto another's elbow when walking through an unfamiliar area, that they cannot travel through that area independently. It does not mean that just because someone does not see or hear well, that they cannot live independently.

When anyone uses decision making skills and skills at independence, they are demonstrating the foundation of independent living. And if we are defining independence each time we apply that concept to a person with any disability, we will avoid the trap of thinking that a disability makes it impossible to achieve independence. ■



# Meet MCIL's newest member

**H**ello everyone, I am Jane Halvorson, the new DLL Specialist in the Bemidji office. I, my husband Ryan, son Finn, and two dogs, Jake and Zagzilla, enjoy camping and being around family-whom are in greater abundance since we've moved south to Bemidji from Greenbush. I love the Bemidji area and am happy to have found such a caring and open place to work. I've gained a new found freedom working for a company whom not only talks-the-talk but also walks-the-walk. MCIL seems to be a company truly living the mission working WITH people disabilities and not FOR people with disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity and I look forward to getting to know all of you better. ■



# PAS Update

by Brigette Menger-Anderson

## PAS Announces Title Change for PCA Staff

Effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 the Personal Assistant Services will refer to the personal care attendant (PCA) staff as Direct Support Professionals or DSPs. The decision to make this change was based on the movement to advocate with and empower the direct support workforce by providing increased training, networking and career ladder opportunities, as well as recognizing the professional supports that staff provide to consumers.

We believe these opportunities will further challenge and improve societal perceptions of the home care workforce, thus affecting the wages that the State allocates in-part for services, as well as encourage job retention and advancement for support staff.

Please join us in this movement by using this language in your work environments.

*PAS - Cont. on page 6*

Start off the New Year with MCIL!

DSP Wages \$10.25-\$13.25  
Paid Holidays/Time Off  
Tuition Assistance  
Retirement, Medical,  
Vision & Dental Benefits

People who use PCA Services are often faced with a dilemma—not a choice.

Does your PCA agency make your schedules and decide when and who will provide your supports?

Do DSPs show up?

Is there back-up?

Are DSPs paid fair wages?



- We provide assistance with developing job descriptions, posting job ads, recruiting and screening.
- You make the hiring & firing decisions!
- You make your own schedules.
- We provide all processing, payroll and co-supervisory supports.

For info about MCILs Personal Assistant Services:  
[www.mcil-mn.org](http://www.mcil-mn.org)  
TTY: 651.603.2013

1600 University Ave. W,  
Suite 16, St Paul

We are located on the 1<sup>st</sup> flr in the Spruce Tree Bld.  
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651/488-9923




**PAS - Cont. from page 5**

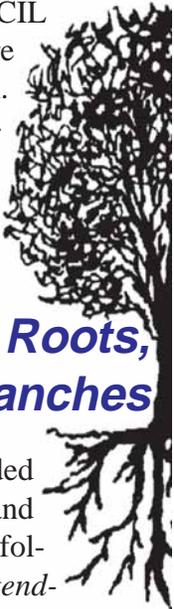
**Strengthening roots, extending branches**

The year 2008 was a very successful year for the Personal Assistant Service Program. Closing out the year with nearly 130 consumers and 305 staff, the PAS program increased its program revenue by nearly 68%. The growth of the PAS program has given MCIL overall the opportunity to support its core services and re-invest in the PAS program. This commitment to reinvestment has allowed the PAS program to focus on a marketing campaign to illustrate the growth and evolution of our consumer-directed supports and services.

To your right you can view the new PAS

**Strengthening Roots, Extending Branches**

logo; an established tree with deep, grounded roots and branches that reach upwards and out. The PAS program also adopted the following slogan: “*Strengthening Roots, Extending Branches.*” This new look in no way replaces the



traditional MCIL logo, nor does it replace MCIL’s mission statement “to work with people with disabilities in fulfilling their desire to lead productive, self-determined lives.”

With nearly 600 Personal Care Provider organizations in Minnesota, we felt it was important to develop marketing materials to assist us in standing out among other providers.

We have also learned throughout the past year that our reputation for professional, quality services, top wages for staff and responsible business ethics is being conveyed around the twin cities area through consumers, staff, case workers, and even public health nurse testimonials. We couldn’t be more honored, and we thank each of you who has continued to support us.

We look forward to both the challenges and the celebrations together, in the year ahead. Thank you for being a part of our growing family tree. ■



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*Do you like meeting people?*



*Do you have Office Skills?*

*Do you have time to Volunteer?*



**VOLUNTEER!**

**The Disability Linkage Line is looking for dedicated people to become Volunteers for the program.**

*Training is provided.*

**Please call 651-603-2005 for more information.**

Nick's Notes

# Exciting times for Transition Services

By Nick Wilkie

**I**t has been a great year here in Transition. We continue to utilize community connections to achieve goals for youth. In September through December we have held an audience with over 500 people. I was invited to speak at two events where there were over 100 people each time! This is an amazing amount of exposure and I would like to thank all of our collaborative partners that have made requests to have me come to your events or classrooms to share our message and philosophy for young people. This number will not satisfy me through the winter months though; I need it to grow and with that I need your help. If you know of a staff or school that you think I should be connected to please call me or email me. Let me know how to get in contact with staff and I will make the connection.

On the technology side of things, we are finishing up with the Paul Adelman Technology Grant provided by Pacer Center. Through this grant we have outfitted our Tech Lab with numerous improvements. Please see below for

details on what we have available how you can come on in and check this out!

We have a variety of open lab times and we have staff available for 1:1 appointments. Many thanks goes to Pacer Center for their assistance and support in this process.

Recently, fellow staff and I are finally seeing some cross department interaction. Consumers have enjoyed being a part of our classes and I continue to push distribution of our calendar/events when I am presenting in the community. Personally, I look forward to seeing more young people sign up to be part of our Peer Program. Based on the amount of outreach that I have done this quarter I believe these referrals will be on the rise.

I hope this update finds you well. I wish everyone the warmest wishes in this winter season. My contact info remains the same: [nickw@mcil-mn.org](mailto:nickw@mcil-mn.org) or **651.603.2018**. Feel free to connect with me at any time. ■



## A Place Where Technology is Easier

Have you ever wanted to learn about how technology can make your world and what you do easier?

Maybe you are comfortable with your computer skills but your technology access is limited?

If any of this applies to you, MCIL's Technology Lab might be the place for you!



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Creating a 21st Century Plan for Disability & Aging

## STATE WIDE RALLY

Join us to show your support for services for individuals with disabilities and older Minnesotans at noon on Saturday, March 7, 2009 at the State Capitol.

### WHO

Concerned citizens and stakeholders from the community of individuals with disabilities and older Minnesotans.

### WHAT

A rally to support services for individuals with disabilities and older Minnesotans. For further information including transportation options for both greater MN and Twin Cities metro attendees, please visit our website at [arrm.org/summit](http://arrm.org/summit).

### WHERE

Minnesota State Capitol, 75 Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. St. Paul, MN, 55155

### WHEN

Saturday, March 7th, from 12 noon to 1 pm.



Creating a 21st Century Plan for Disability & Aging

Find more information on the web at [arrm.org/summit](http://arrm.org/summit).

FAQ@DLL

# Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage— Act now to get ready for 2009



**I**t's time to review your Medicare prescription drug coverage for 2009 to make sure you are in the plan that best meets your needs, and to see if you will continue to receive the Extra Help with prescription costs.

**Q:** I already have a Medicare prescription drug plan do I need to do anything?

**A: YES!** Everyone enrolled in a plan will receive an Annual Notice of Change from their current plan.



**Read this information carefully.** Look for changes in costs, benefits and drugs that are covered. Because your plan was the best plan for you in 2008 does not necessarily mean it is still the best plan for you in 2009. If nothing changed and you're satisfied with your current plan, you do not need to do anything to stay in the plan. If you want to change your plan, open enrollment begins November 15, 2008, and ends December 31, 2008. People who are on both Medicare and Medical Assistance can enroll and change plans anytime throughout the year.

People who are getting Extra Help for the Medicare prescription drug costs, and do not want to pay any plan premium, need to choose a plan that is a "benchmark plan". For 2009, there will be nine benchmark plans. **Keep in mind, there are seven plans that were benchmark plans in 2008 that will not be benchmark plans in 2009.** You should research all plan options and find the best plan to cover your drug needs. **To compare plans you can go online at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov), or call the Disability Linkage Line (DLL) at 1-866-333-2466.**

**Q:** Will I receive the same Extra Help with prescription drug costs next year?



**A:** People who automatically qualified for Extra Help in 2008 were Medicare enrollees who were on at least one of the following programs; Medical Assistance (MA), Medicare Savings Programs (QMB, SLMB, QI-1) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). If you are still on one of these programs you will continue to automatically qualify for the help.

If you are no longer in one of these programs as of July 1, 2008 you will receive a letter from Social Security on **gray paper** letting you know that you will need to apply with Social Security for the Extra Help and qualify based on your income and resources. You can fill out the application mailed to you or you can expedite the process by filling it out on-line at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). The Disability Linkage Line can also help you fill out an application for Extra Help in 2009.

If you currently receive Extra Help with your prescription costs because you filled in the application, you might receive a re-verification letter (**Form 1026**) from Social Security. You **must fill this form out to qualify for Extra Help in 2009**, even if your income did not change, and return it within 30 days.

## Key tips to help you manage your benefit:

- Keep all of the notices and letters you receive. Take the time to read them.
- Ask questions...
- If you want or need to make plan changes or apply for the Extra Help with prescription drugs costs, **act now to assure a smooth transition to 2009.**
- If you need help **call the Disability Linkage Line (DLL) at 1-866-333-2466** from 8:30 am – 5:00pm Monday through Friday. ■



# RS-IL Collaboration: Year in Review

By Taylor Kearns

The RS-IL Collaboration Project is nearing the end of its first year and what a year it has been. MCIL staff have been providing core Independent Living services within the 12 metro Rehabilitation Services (RS) offices located in the Minnesota WorkForce Centers system. This is the first year of a three year grant that is being supported by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and represents a change in the way that RS and IL work together to deliver services to RS consumers. By adding IL staff into RS offices around the metro area, RS staff and consumers are now able to quickly address IL needs that impact people as they look to advance their careers. RS Regional Area Manager (RAM) Chris McVey provided a statement that highlights the level of success this project has already achieved in just one year. She states “Rehabilitation Services staff are really seeing the value of having IL staff at the WorkForce Center. We are learning so much about what IL staff can do and how they can serve our consumers. VR can’t do it all. So much of our time is taken up with assisting our consumers with job search activities. Having additional resources available for our consumers struggling with basic needs is simply wonderful.”

Seeing as though it is a time of the year for reflection, let’s quickly review year one and look at what will be happening in year two.



## Year One

The talented people involved in this collaboration are a major reason for the success of this project and deserve recognition. MCIL Executive Director David Hancox along with RS Director Kim Peck and the other RS RAMs have provided the vision and leadership that has been instrumental in building the relationship between RS and MCIL. The IL Specialists from MCIL consisting of Dana Nelson, Barb Schifano, Ryan Taylor, Kelly Krantz, Taylor Kearns, and newly added member Adrienne Wilcox have done an incredible job of integrating themselves into the RS environment and working with consumers on their IL needs. In just 9

months, the IL staff served well over 500 consumers. The majority of the services provided include IL skills training, advocacy services, and information and referral.



One of the biggest issues we saw this year was the impact of housing on people’s ability to find and sustain employment. If an individual is homeless or is on the verge of losing their housing, people lose their focus on their job or job search because of the fear and anxiety that comes with not having a place to call home. Along with this, we have also seen the huge demand for housing assistance programs. IL staff frequently work with people in navigating through the process of finding housing and housing resources. As many of us know, things are tough out there but with knowledge and some hard work, good outcomes do occur. This is but one example of how IL services can impact the employment outcomes for people with disabilities.



## Year Two: What’s next?

Sitting back and admiring our successes is not how we do things. Our mindset is to always look for ways that we can better serve RS consumers and staff. We see ourselves as not only service providers, but also as trainers who teach people how to be more self-sufficient in addressing their individual needs. One of our goals for 2009 is to increase group training opportunities that help people develop the skills and knowledge that will help people be more successful not just on the job but also at home and in the community. We are currently designing and developing classes that address the issues that are unique to each RS office. Examples would include classes on communication, self-advocacy, interpersonal relationships, and disability rights. Being able to build skills and knowledge in people will increase people’s abilities to succeed in anything they set out to achieve.

In conclusion, though the RS-IL Collaboration project has achieved many great things in the first year, the staff are excited to build on these successes and make year two even better. Stay tuned and look for new successes in 2009! ■

## The Disability Odyssey continues

# What Senator Daschle said about long term care

By Steve Gold, *Information Bulletin # 273 (12/08)*

President-elect Barack Obama has nominated former Senator Tom Daschle to be Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. His book, *CRITICAL—What We Can Do About the Health-Care Crisis*, (Thomas Dunne Books, St. Martin's Press, 2008) is quite important for advocates of the disability and elderly communities. Below are some relevant portions of the book.



*Senator Tom Daschle*

The book starts out with the following quote: “Millions of our citizens do not now have a full measure of opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health. Millions do not now have protection or security against the economic effects of sickness. The time has arrived for action to help them attain that opportunity and that protection.”

Whom did he quote? Clinton? No. President Harry Truman, 1945. Daschle writes that both Truman in 1945 and Clinton in 1993 “underestimated the strength of the forces arrayed against them. Special-interests lobbyists....” He asks “Why have we failed to solve a problem that is such a high priority for so many citizens?... the limitations of our political system, and the power of the interest groups....”



Here’s what he writes about “long-term care,” which he recognizes as a “troubling area—and the only one in which we spend less compared to peer nations.” Medicaid “is fundamentally geared toward institutional care, even though most elderly people prefer to receive care at home or in more personalized community settings.”

Daschle quotes Professor David Mechanic who calls “long-term care” the stepchild of our health-care system,” which “vividly exhibits our system’s inability to deal with chronic conditions in an integrated way.”

“I believe that our health-care system must cover these vital services [i.e., long-term care].... We should promote home-based care, which most people prefer, instead of the institutional care that we emphasize now.”

OK. Now let’s see if he will walk-the-walk, and not just talk-the-talk.

Will Daschle and Obama have both the will and fortitude to stand up to the “power of the interest groups” that have forced people with disabilities and elderly Americans to go into nursing facilities instead of receiving care at home?

Will he take the initiative and make sure Medicaid provides every elderly and disabled American the choice of where they wish to receive long-term care?

We know that the “interest groups” will not roll over. Our challenge is to hold Daschle and Obama to their statements. “Yes we can.” We have the power!!!! Write letters to your local newspapers and opinion pieces, quoting Daschle. Tell stories of real people. ■

*Back issues of other Information Bulletins are available online at [www.stevegoldada.com](http://www.stevegoldada.com) with a searchable Archive at this site divided into different subjects. To contact Steve Gold directly, write to [stevegoldada@cs.com](mailto:stevegoldada@cs.com) or call 215-627-7100.*

Toll-free  
Disability Linkage Line:  
1-866-333-2466

# MCIL participation explosion!

By Corbett Laubignat



It has been a very busy four months for the Peer Mentoring and IL Skills programs here at MCIL. The number of people who have attended our IL and Peer related activities has been outstanding. We have had an explosion in the number a people in our Peer Mentoring Program; so much, in fact, that we have almost out grown our current meeting room and we are continuing to grow. Our MCIL Social Night has also seen an increase in attendance. People braved the freezing temperatures and snow to come to the last cooking class/ social night where we made and decorated Holiday cookies which some people ate and some took home to give to family and friends. If you missed this round, don't worry, we have plenty more in store for you. Come and see what all the buzz is about! The dates, times and locations of all the activities, classes and special events can be found on our E- Calendar, in paper form in our office and in the back of this news letter. See you soon!



## Thank Your Mentor Day: January 27

January is National Mentoring Month, and Tuesday, January 27, 2008 will be the sixth annual Thank Your Mentor Day. It will be MCIL's second time celebrating it with our Mentors and Mentees. Please join us for a social gathering and light snacks. We would like to invite all those who have been, are, or would like to be involved in the Peer Mentoring Program.

This program will be held at 1600 University Ave W. #16, St. Paul from 1pm-3pm  
Please RSVP by January 20, 2008 to  
Corbett Laubignat Peer Mentor Coordinator  
651-603-2028 or [corbettl@mcil-mn.org](mailto:corbettl@mcil-mn.org)

## Violence Prevention Day: February 9



Come join us in learning about how to prevent violence against women and people with disabilities. We will be exploring who this affects, what signs to look for, and how to report. After, join us in watching "the Vagina monologues" a film by Eve Ensler. This film is a one women production in which she explores topics including personal safety, sex, social issues, vocabulary and not to mention fun. This is a free event open to both men and women of all abilities and professionals.

This event will be held at 1600 University Ave W. #16, St. Paul from 1pm-4:30pm  
Please RSVP by February 5, 2008 to  
Corbett Laubignat Peer Mentor Coordinato  
651-603-2028 or [corbettl@mcil-mn.org](mailto:corbettl@mcil-mn.org)

*Classes - Cont. on page 10*

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**Classes - Cont. from page 9**

**Cooking Classes**

Hungry? Don't know how or what to make? Come to one or all of our cooking classes. Together we'll learn to make quick and easy recipes that you will be able to incorporate into your daily life. Due to limited space, please RSVP at least 5 days before the designated day.



January 20: 1-4pm, February 24: 1-4pm, March 16: 1-4pm, April 28: 1-4pm  
Please RSVP by 5 days in advance to Corbett Laubignat Peer Mentor Coordinator 651-603-2028 or [corbettl@mcil-mn.org](mailto:corbettl@mcil-mn.org)

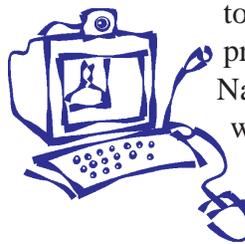
**American Sign Language Classes**

(January 12 & 19, February 2 & 16, March 2 & 16, April 6 & 20) "Let your HANDS do the Talking." Basic American Sign Language (ASL) class will meet at MCIL on Mondays from 1 -2 pm, RSVP 651-603-2027 or [sheilaf@mcil-mn.org](mailto:sheilaf@mcil-mn.org)



**Open Technology Lab**

We open the lab every Wednesday from 1-3 pm at MCIL, unless otherwise specified. Please take this opportunity to learn about the computer including programs like Word, Excel, Dragon Naturally Speaking and much more as well as check/ set up emails, surf the Internet, play games and more.\*Only four computers are available so please call ahead to RSVP: 651-603-2028 or [corbettl@mcil-mn.org](mailto:corbettl@mcil-mn.org)



**Goal setting/Dream Achieving: March 23**

Do you have a goal or dream and don't know how to get there? Come join us for an introductory lesson in setting and achieving goals. Please come with a specific goal and determination to see it through, we'll provide the "tools." Please RSVP by 5 days in advance to Corbett Laubignat Peer Mentor Coordinator 651-603-2028 or [corbettl@mcil-mn.org](mailto:corbettl@mcil-mn.org)

**Disability Tool Box April 21**

Have you recently acquired a disability or has your disability changed? We would like to provide you with a tool box that you can draw from when dealing with your disability and related situations. We will look at the history of the Independent Living Movement, laws, resources and community.



**Understanding how the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) can work for you!**



**April 13 from 10am-12pm** We will be exploring why and how the ADA came to be, we will also discuss how to use it, when to use it and other supplemental resources that may help you achieve or access what you may need.

**MCIL Social Night!**

(Tuesdays: January 27, February 24, March 24, April 28: 4 – 6 pm) 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 computer, watch a movie, eat, gather information, find an outlet or just chill. This monthly event will begin at 4 pm and go until 6 pm. 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!



*Cookies and a movie provided a great excuse to get together and enjoy each other's company.*

*Classes - Cont. on next page*

**Classes - Cont. from page 10**

**Bus/Light Rail Training**



Coming in March, April and May. If interested please call or email Corbett Laubignat: (651) 603-2028 or [corbettl@mcil-mn.org](mailto:corbettl@mcil-mn.org)

Training: Bus, light rail & lunch at MOA 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! Have some fun and increase your understanding and experience with Metro Transit—the public bus line and light rail. This will be a 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.

**RSVP needed: Corbett Laubignat: 651-603-2028 or [corbettl@mcil-mn.org](mailto:corbettl@mcil-mn.org)**

**Peer Mentoring Program Training**

Mentor Trainings will be held on:  
February 10<sup>th</sup> 9am-3pm, April 14<sup>th</sup> 9am-3pm.  
Mentee trainings will be held on:  
January 13<sup>th</sup> 12pm-2pm, May 12<sup>th</sup> 12pm-2pm.  
Please RSVP space is limited:  
Corbett Laubignat: 651-603-2028 or [corbettl@mcil-mn.org](mailto:corbettl@mcil-mn.org)



*Other events and activities to be announced. Please check out the online calendar for more information.*



**THREE MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUPS**  
RSVP 651-603-2027, [sheilaf@mcil-mn.org](mailto:sheilaf@mcil-mn.org)

**GLBT Support Group**

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) w/ disability Support Group usually meets on the first Tuesday of the month at Goodwill/Easter Seals of Minnesota, 553 Fairview Ave N St Paul, MN 55104 (Free Parking) from 6-7:30 pm (**January 13th, February 3rd, March 3rd, April 7th, May 5th and June 2nd.**) Goodwill is located one block north of University Ave, the bus service is excellent. #16, 50, #87. It's right across from the Midway Workforce Center. If you will be late or lost, please call Goodwill at: 651.379.5937 A new policy: If no one shows up after 6:35pm, the Support Group, we will cancel for the evening.



**Traumatic Brain Injury**

**Chemical Dependency w/ Disabilities**

**This group is looking for a new group facilitator to plan and lead a support group\*\*** TBI Support Group w/ disabilities meets every other Thursday of the month at MCIL 6 pm-7 pm: (**January 8 & 22, February 5 & 19, March 5 & 19, April 2nd & 16**)

**Chemical Dependency w/ Disabilities**

CD w/ disability Support Group meets every Wednesday of the month at MCIL 6:30 pm-8pm.

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



# MCIL Board

<b>George Hall</b> .....	<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>Michele Berndt</b>	<b>Scott Dehn</b>
<b>Ellie Emanuel</b> .....	<i>Vice Chair</i>	<b>Dave Houghton</b>	<b>Roberta Juarez</b>
<b>Vacant</b> .....	<i>Treasurer</i>	<b>Steve Laux</b>	<b>Johnny Ott</b>
<b>Sheri Melander-Smith</b> .....	<i>Secretary</i>	<b>Sheri Smith</b>	<b>Chad Strathman</b>
<b>Tim Benjamin</b> .....	<i>Member at Large</i>	<b>David Swanson</b>	<b>Joani Werner</b>

## MCIL administration/program staff

Culver, Betty .....	Admin Coordinator .....	651-603-2030 .....	bettyc@mcil-mn.org
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Williams, Jim .....	Ramp Coordinator .....	651-603-2029 .....	jimwi@mcil-mn.org
Zemek, Kristen .....	DLL Coordinator-Bemidji .....	218-444-2171 .....	kristenz@mcil-mn.org
ADA Minnesota .....	651-603-2015 or 1-888-630-9793 Toll-free		
Disability Linkage Line .....	1-866-333-2466		

*Independently Speaking* is also available in alternative formats.