



# INDEPENDENTLY SPEAKING

## Metropolitan Center for Independent Living

Published Quarterly by MCIL

Summer 2014

## ADA 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on July 25 features fascinating speakers and wonderful entertainment

**Free Event and Open to the Public**

MINNEAPOLIS – Twenty four years ago, people with disabilities officially gained the same rights and freedoms as other U.S. citizens when the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. Minnesota will commemorate this landmark legislation with a statewide ADA 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on Friday, July 25, from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Elmer L. Anderson Building (DHS) at 540 Cedar Street in St. Paul, rooms 2370 & 2380. The event is free and open to the public.

The program will feature local speakers and entertainers, including: Darlene Zangara, the new Director of Minnesota's Olmstead Plan Implementation Office; Rose Hollermann, 2012 Paralympic Games participant and other international competitions in wheelchair basketball; Leslye Orr, St. Paul writer and storyteller and Tony Wentersdorf & Mary Parker, Twin Cities-area musicians. Light refreshments will be provided by Byerly's Roseville.

Accommodations for people with disabilities include ASL services; CART services; and audio description. Those who need other disability related accommodations must make their request by July 17 by contacting Cindy Tarshish at [cindy@mcil-mn.org](mailto:cindy@mcil-mn.org) or calling (651) 603-2015 in the Twin Cities or (888) 630-9793 Toll-

Free. Additional questions may be directed to the contact information listed below.

### Event sponsors are the following:

- University of Minnesota Disability Services
- ADA Minnesota
- VSA Minnesota
- Access Press
- Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service
- Department of Human Services
- State Services for the Blind
- Minnesota State Council on Disability
- Disability Viewpoints
- Metropolitan Center for Independent Living.

The event is free and no registration is required.

**Contact:** Cindy Tarshish

**Phone:** (651) 603-2015 (Twin Cities)

(888) 630-9793 (Toll-Free)

**Email:** [cindy@mcil-mn.org](mailto:cindy@mcil-mn.org)



### In this issue:

P 2..... From the Director

P 3..... Welcome new staff member

P 3..... The changing face of IL/VR

P 4 ..... Nick's Notes

P 5..... Gratitude foes to the Yellow Ribbon volunteers

P 6..... MCIL workshops/classes/events

P 10 ... MCIL Board Members/Staff

# Legislative wrap up.

By David Hancox

The Minnesota Association of Centers for Independent Living, (MACIL), began the 2014 Minnesota Legislative session with an allocation request for \$692,000.00 in additional funds for the purpose of expanding IL core services in Minnesota. Our recommendation included the rationale that this would allow us to complete the statewide network of CILs, and meet the recommendations contained in the Statewide Plan for Independent Living, (SPIL), prepared by the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC).

MACIL found sponsors for the bills, Rep. Kim Norton as chief sponsor in the House, and Senator Scott Dibble as chief sponsor in the Senate. MACIL also found several co-sponsors to sign on the bill. The bills became HF 2650 and SF 2640. Both bills received hearings in their respective House and Senate Committees, House Jobs and Economic Development Finance and Policy, and Senate Environment, Economic Development and Agriculture. After successful hearings, both bills were held over for inclusion in the Omnibus Supplemental Finance bill.

At the time the bills were transferred to the finance committee, two significant changes were made. First, a decision was made to allocate the increased funds from the Workforce Development Fund, rather than the general fund. This complicated our efforts because it placed MACIL in direct competition for funding with local VRS providers and others. It created a conflict with DEED/VR because they could not conceivably “carve out” the funds



*David Hancox*

from WFD funds without decreasing funding for existing programs. Also, using the WFD funds would have created an employment related outcomes qualification that would have been very difficult for the CILs to achieve.

The second change was to make the allocation one-time funds. This was less of a concern than then the item above, but was not desirable. One time funds from the WFD funds would have provided inadequate time for CILs to “re-tool” to meet the requirements, and the ROI would have been difficult to achieve as well.

In earnest, MACIL began contacts with the original bill sponsors, the separate House and Senate Committee Chairs, and others to remove the changes and restore the original language. With assistance and collaboration from DEED and lobbyists representing community providers, language in the bill was eventually (in the final days....hours....of the session) returned to represent more closely to our original intent.

The final language allocated \$450, 000.00 from the general fund to the CILs. The allocation is still one-time funds, but we are confident of our ability to add them to our base in the 2015 Legislative session. ■

## HOLMES-GREENWAY HOUSING

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# Welcome our new staff members



**M**y name is Mogos Tesfagiorgis and I am the new IL/VR Specialist in South Minneapolis.

I previously worked at Lifetrack Resources as a Lead Employment Specialist for 6 years. I graduated from Minnesota State University of Mankato where I received my Bachelor of Science degree. I'm originally from Eritrea, which is located in North East Africa. I'm bilingual and speak Tigrinya.

In my spare time, I enjoy hanging out with family and friends and exploring Minnesota's 10,000 lakes and bike trails.

I'm happy to join MCIL and look forward to meeting all of you. ■

**M**y name is Ka Thao and I am the new Case Manager.

I came to MCIL with work experience as a Community Alternatives for Disabled Individuals CADI/BI Waiver Case Manager and a Care Coordinator for two PPHP programs.

I graduated from Metropolitan State University years ago with a Social Work degree and am in the process of pursuing my nursing degree.



In my free time I like to spend time with my three boys, read books, and hand stitch. One of my greatest passions is learning and I hope to continue to learn many new things here at MCIL. I'm excited to be here and be a part of MCIL. ■

## The changing face of IL/VR

**T**he IL/VR team has some new employees starting this summer! Mogos Tesfagiorgis took over the South Minneapolis Vocational Rehabilitation Services site in June.

In July, we have two new folks starting, Danielle Mahoehney and Melody Oaks. Danielle will staff the Woodbury and West St. Paul sites, and Melody will be stationed at the Blaine Workforce Center for a temporary assignment.

We also had Annelise Herbst take over the Bursville/Apple Valley/Shakopee locations recently. She comes to us from a very successful stint in IL Core services. All of these folks bring wonderful and diverse skills to the team.

We also have another exciting partnership for the summer as Erin Henry from IL Core services has teamed up with VR sites and is offering classes and support for transition-aged people.

She is running a Driver's Permit test class in North Minneapolis and is a referral to support some studying for this test, which can be lengthy and requires a great deal of effort. It's great to have a class going, so consumers can support each other as peers, study together and many folks can learn the information all at once.

We welcome this partnership with the IL Core program and hope that there are more to follow. ■



# Nick's notes

By Nick Wilkie

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 will highlight certain policy initiatives that we have been following at MCIL. I oversee this area as our System's Advocate.

The legislative session kicked off on Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>. Since then days have been spent 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. This 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 and 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 monitoring:

- The 5% Campaign to increase 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 at [nickw@mcil-mn.org](mailto:nickw@mcil-mn.org) or 651-603-2018. I look forward to hearing from you. ■

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EHO

# Gratitude goes to the Yellow Ribbon volunteers



The Yellow Ribbon volunteers are retired Vets that provide labor to families that have served in the military. They have built approximately 50% of our ramps for free. Beautiful job!



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## 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](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**

# Regular (Ongoing) events



## IL orientation

2pm-4pm

July 7 & 21, Aug 4 & 18, and Sept 8 & 22

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.



## Book group

1<sup>st</sup> Tue. of the month • 6-8pm

July 1, Aug 5 & Sept 2

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.

## Shopping and cooking

10am-1pm: July 14 & 28 • noon-3pm: July 22 & Aug 13

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.



## GLBT & Disability: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue. of the month

6pm-8pm: July 8, Aug. 12, Sept. 9

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.



# Workshops & Class schedule

## Open lab

MCIL offers you the opportunity to meet with a staff one on one to address immediate concerns, get assistance filling out paperwork, or to address other needs. Please call for specific dates and times.



One-on-One

## Leadership: 1pm-3pm

10am-noon: Sept. 8, 15, 22 & 29

What does leadership mean to you? Are you a natural leader or do you wish to become one? This class will explore the many facets of what makes great leaders while others prefer to follow, and the benefits of both.

\*Must attend all four sessions to complete class.



## Working well with a disability

1-3pm • 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!



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**Housing and you**

1pm-3pm • July 10 & 24

This class is for anybody who is ready to start looking for housing or has questions about navigating the housing system. We will address the different housing programs that are available, as well as where and how to look for housing. It is never too soon to learn about the available options out there!

**Personal safety & Public safety**

10-12pm • Aug 7 & 14

Join us in discovering how we can access the community safely and with confidence. We will explore techniques and practice interaction as well as build self-advocacy skills that will help you to get what is needed from different environments.

**The power of change**

1pm-3pm • Sept 10, 17 & 24

We all have things that we would like to be different or change. Sometimes we have to ask ourselves “how do I change?” This workshop will explore the steps we take in the change process. This will be an interactive workshop with interesting views. Join us in the change.



**Farmers Market**

July 24: 1-3pm • Aug 7: 1-3pm  
Sept 25: 10-12

Explore local produce and crafts at the farmers market. We will look at how you can buy fresh and local on a budget. \* Weather permitting. Please call for locations.

**Benefits and You**

1-3pm • Sept 11 & 25

This class is great for individuals who want to learn the ins and outs of disability benefits. This is a two part class in which individuals will learn the necessary tools and information regarding health coverage and benefits, how to apply for benefits, and how to work within the system once you receive benefits. Come with any questions you might have.



**Advocacy 101**

3pm-5pm • Aug 6, 13, 20, 27

What is advocacy to you? Are you looking to develop skills that will assist you in asking for what you need or want effectively? Join others with disabilities in exploring what advocacy looks like, what techniques work, and learn where your advocacy strengths lie. Use your voice and be heard!

**Drivers Education**

10am-12pm • July 3, 10, 17, 24; Aug 5, 12, 19, 26

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.



**Transition Trek**

6pm-8pm • Aug 6, 20

This class will help those in high school and their parents or guardians learn about the process of transitioning from high school to college. How to prepare, and what you can start doing now in preparation for the new journey. This is a great way to get answers to questions about transitioning, and to meet with peers who are going through a similar situation as you.

**Self Discovery**

9am-11am • Sept 5, 12, 19 & 26

The class is designed for anyone that would like to learn more about themselves and their disability. How increasing confidence can lead to changes in attitude; and finally how writing a mission statement can help provide the drive to achieve significant life goals. \*Must attend all four sessions to complete class.

**Hygiene**

10am-12pm • July 9 & 23

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 considering 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.





**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



**Social event**

**Art and You**

**9am-12pm • July 11, 25, Aug 8, 22, Sept 12, 26**



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 is 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.

**The Weekenders**

Are you sick of sitting home all weekend? Do you see fun activities and wish you had someone to do them with? Do find yourself wanting someone to talk to? Do you want someone to just hang out with? Well, this is the group for you. Come meet other people who share your interests. 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.



**Minneapolis Institute of Art Tour**

**1-3pm • Aug 16**



Join us in exploring our artistic side at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Bring some money for a snack. Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2400 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55404, (888) MIA ARTS (642-2787)

**Como Zoo day**

**1-4pm • September 13**

Join in a day of wild fun and amusement. Please bring money or a bag lunch. 1225 Estabrook Drive, Saint Paul, MN 55103



**Minnesota State Fair**

**1-4pm • August 21 1-4pm**



Join us in celebrating all things Minnesota! Eat something on a stick or ride the Ferris wheel...

Just make sure you reserve your spot today!

**Target Fireworks**

**6:00pm-10:30pm • July 20**



One of the largest annual firework shows in the country, the Target Fireworks will light up the Minneapolis sky with a spectacular pyrotechnic display in celebration of the 74<sup>th</sup> Minneapolis Aquatennial. In

addition to the amazing firework show at 10 pm, enjoy pre-firework live music beginning at 6 pm, between Portland Avenue and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Bridge. Make sure to tune into 96.3 K-TWIN for the Target Fireworks Simulcast! Make sure to bring food or money to buy food.

*More to come!*

*Please call or check our website for more info and updates on events*

**www.mcil-mn.org**

**Continued on next page**

# Peer mentoring training/workshops

## Initial Peer mentor training

10am -3pm • July 15, Aug 12, Sept 16

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

July 16 & 30, Aug 14 & 28, Sept 4 & 25

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.



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*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](http://www.adaminnesota.org)  
[cindytc@mcil-mn.org](mailto:cindytc@mcil-mn.org)

**Independently Speaking is also available in alternative formats. Contact MCIL for more details.**

# MCIL Board

Ellie Emanuel .....	Chair	Members at Large .....	Charles Braun,
Scott Ruhsam .....	Vice Chair	Tim Benjamin, Shelley Madore and Sheri Smith	
Scott Dehn .....	Treasurer	Ex-Office .....	David Hancox

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