

## ***Disability Advocacy Collaborative Bulletin Board***

### ***Disability Rights is a Civil Rights Issue (August) September 2004***

Please relay this information to your membership including constituents who do not have e-mail access. Make this available in large print, tape and for others who have difficulty accessing information. View and Print this Bulletin in [RTF format](#) (compatible with most word processing software).

If you want something to appear in the next edition send it to me at [jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com](mailto:jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com) or [jik1009@hotmail.com](mailto:jik1009@hotmail.com) or Jayne Kleinman, 55 Corrigan Ave., Meriden, CT 06451, 203-238-9391

#### **ADDRESS CORRECTIONS AND REMOVALS:**

If you are not interested in receiving this information or you would like this information sent to a different e-mail address, please e-mail Jayne Kleinman at [jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com](mailto:jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com) with your request, or simply reply to this message.

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## Calendar of Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Sept. 11, 16, 18, 24, 25 Oct. 6, 8, 9, 16, 19	Voter Registration Drives “Every Vote Counts” “Voters have Clout”	Various locations around the state	CT Votes	Minaren Bozeman 860-727-1157
Sept. 18	2004 Americans with Disabilities Convention (Presidential candidates invited)	Atlantic City, New Jersey	NJ Council on DD	skosloski03@comcast.net
Sept. 18, noon-3 PM	WeCAHR Family Celebration and Picnic	Harrybrooke Park, New Milford	WeCAHR	203-792-3540 advozealot@aol.com
Sept. 20- 23	Social Role Valorization Training	Central CT State University	DD Council and SRV Project of Worcester, MA	Yvette Johnson at (860) 418-8709, or yvette.johnson@po.state.ct. us
Sept. 23, 28, 29, 30	Critical Public Hearings on Housing and Medicaid			Beth.leslie@po.state.ct.us
Sept. 27	CT Women and Disabilities Network Membership Meeting	Planned Parenthood 345 Whitney Ave. New Haven, CT	CWDN	Lisa Wolf or Christine Fortunato 860-297-4375
Sept. 30 3-5 pm	Advocacy In Action	Wallingford Community Parks and Recreation	Disability Advocacy Collaborative	<a href="mailto:skosloski03@comcast.net">skosloski03@comcast.net</a> or jayne@Kleinmanconsulting. com
Oct. 1	Absentee Ballots available			Secretary of State’s Office for Questions 1-800-540-3764

Oct. 2 9:30	WALK 'N ROLL	Manchester Community College	Communitas and MCC Institute on Disability and Community Inclusion	Joan Jakiela 860-512-2705 <a href="mailto:jjakiela@comnet.edu">jjakiela@comnet.edu</a> or (George, Pat or Bev) gducharme@mcc.comnet. edu
Oct. 11-12  Mon. 6-8 Tues. 10- 3:30	A Partnership for Progress: For People with Parkinsons and those who care about them	Sturbridge, Mass.	The American Parkinson Disease Assn.	c/o Gladys Tiedman, CT Chapter APDA 1-888-400-2732
Oct. 16	Mandatory voter- registration sessions in all towns	Connecticut	Secretary of the State	860-508-6100 or 1-800-540- 3764
Oct. 17-19	AAMR X Region Conf. Quality of Services	Mystic, CT	AAMR X	
Oct. 19	Voter Registration Deadline			
Oct. 30	People First of CT Annual Conference	Bristol Radisson Inn	People First	Jean Bowen at WeCAHR 203-792-3540 <a href="mailto:advozealot@aol.com">advozealot@aol.com</a>
Nov. 2	Absentee ballots	By close of polls-mailed in person or by family member	State Registrar of Voters	
Nov. 2	Election Day!			

## **CRITICTICAL PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HOUSING AND MEDICAID**

The legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee is conducting a study of "Mixing Populations in State Elderly Housing Projects" and a study of the "Medicaid Eligibility Determination Process." The Committee will deliver a draft report on each study to the legislators on the Committee and conduct a briefing on Thursday, September 23, at 10:00 AM in Legislative Office Building hearing room 2D. There will be a public hearing that afternoon starting at 4:00 PM on these issues. The public hearing is an opportunity for people to tell legislators about the importance of continuing to allow non-elderly persons with disabilities to live in "senior-disabled housing" and also to address problems with the Medicaid eligibility determination process. I hope you can attend at least one of these important public hearings. For further background information contact Beth Leslie, Legislative and Regulations Specialist, Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, 860-297-4369, TDD 860-566-2102, beth.leslie@po.state.ct.us.

In addition, there will be three public hearings on these two studies as follows:

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2004 -Rose City Senior Center, 8 Mahan Drive, Norwich  
5:00 p.m. - 8 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING**

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2004 - Danbury City Hall, Council Chambers, 155 Deer Hill Avenue, Danbury 4:00 p.m. - 7 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2004 - Miller Memorial Public Library, Thornton Wilder Hall, 2901 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, 5:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING**

**"Vote as if your life depended upon it —  
because it does!"  
Justin Dart**

Many political observers believe that this coming election will have a profound impact on the future direction of public policy in the United States. Since one of the mottos of the independent living movement is "nothing about us without us," it is essential for us to be participants rather than bystanders at this decisive moment. We need to mobilize our community and demonstrate the power of voters with disabilities!

**The Power of One Vote – In 2003, the State Rep. from Torrington  
was elected by only ONE VOTE!**

## **New Jersey to Host First Ever Disabilities Convention**

In this election year, people with disabilities want the candidates to know that our issues belong in the political forefront. That's why thousands of us will gather in Atlantic City, NJ, on Saturday, September 18, 2004, (11 am – 5 pm) for the first national Americans with Disabilities Convention. The Council on Developmental Disabilities is sponsoring a bus leaving from Hartford early Saturday morning. To get more information, call Yvette Johnson at 860-418-6160.

President Bush and Sen. John Kerry have been invited to address the convention. Rally support for the Convention and spread the word in your town, city and state! Posters and flyers are available by contacting us. For more information contact the coordinators: Carole Tonks: 609.292.3453; [carole.tonks@njddc.org](mailto:carole.tonks@njddc.org) or Luke Koppisch: 609.777.3293; [luke.koppisch@njddc.org](mailto:luke.koppisch@njddc.org)

### **Disability Advocacy Collaborative “Advocacy in Action”**

The Disability Advocacy Collaborative invites one and all to a meeting on **September 30, 2004** to bring you up to date on the work of the Collaborative this spring and summer, and to encourage voter registration and political action in November. We also want to enlist your ideas and support in developing cross-disability self-advocacy training in 2005. A Planning Committee will be formed at the meeting to steer the future direction of the organization. The meeting will be held at the Wallingford Park and Recreation Center at 6 Fairfield Boulevard from 3-5 pm.

The vision for the Collaborative is to concentrate on voter education and voter registration this year, and devote Year 2 (2005) to cross-disability self-advocacy/empowerment training. The big event, the primary goal, would be a large scale disability convention in the fall of 2006, the next year we will elect state constitutional officers (i.e., Governor, Attorney General, Treasurer, Comptroller, Secretary of State).

*If you or your organization needs directions or has not yet indicated an interest in being a part of the Collaborative, please e-mail your interest to my address listed at the beginning of this Bulletin. Thank you. Jayne Kleinman.*

### **Your Community Needs your Vote**

Connecticut VOTES! If you are able to help volunteer or to help conduct voter registration please contact Democracy Works at (860) 727-1157 — Minaren Bozeman

## Presidential Views

Compare the presidential candidates' responses to the AAPD questionnaire on disability issues: <http://www.aapd-dc.org/campaign04/bushondis.html> and <http://www.aapd-dc.org/campaign04/kerryondis.html>

## Served your time?

In CT, a person who has been confined to a federal or state correctional institution or community residence can have his/her voting rights restored by submitting written proof to a city/town Registrar of Voters or other admitting official of their discharge from confinement and, if applicable parole.

### Five Considerations for Accommodating Voters with Disabilities:

1. Design an accessible website.
2. Accessible polling places.
3. Sensitivity training for Poll workers.
4. Feedback from voters with disabilities.
5. Public debriefing with disability organizations.

### Your non-profit organization may be able to register voters!

Most nonprofit organizations are tax exempt under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and therefore cannot engage in partisan political activity. But many organizations do not understand that they can register voters as long as voter registration activities are conducted in a non-partisan way. In fact, the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 encourages all nongovernmental entities to offer voter registration services. Nonpartisan means not influenced by, affiliated with, or supportive of the interests or policies of any political party or candidate.

As long as your organization is not engaging in partisan activity, you CAN: register voters, encourage registered voters to vote, and drive voters to the polls. You CANNOT: make statements in support or opposition to a particular candidate or party. (CABHN FEVER, June, 2004)

For more information about the do's and don'ts of voter registration for non-profit organizations, contact Americo Santiago at Democracy Works, 860-727-1157 or at [americo@democracyworksct.org](mailto:americo@democracyworksct.org).

**“Quality – from three perspectives: From the person served (& family), the agency providing the services and the funder”**  
October 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> at the Mystic Hilton in Mystic Ct.

This is a major conference on the subject of “Quality”. It presents a unique opportunity for learning about the national perspective on the subject as well as Regional (New England) practical approaches toward achieving it. This conference offers a unique blend of three perspectives on the subject. Opening and closing panels made up of representatives of all three perspectives will have their chance to be heard.

A Variety of Self advocates from and family members from Connecticut & Rhode Island define their own sense of what quality means to the consumer. Providers from nearly every state of the AAMR Region X present their latest quality initiatives, - concentration on translating theory to practice - from new consumer surveys, values based policies & procedures, Direct support professionals presentations, what quality means to students and educational systems. **Contact Terry Macy, Ph.D. 203-458-8532 xt 14 for more details.**

**Position Announcement: Executive Director  
Connecticut Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)**

Open Date: September 7, 2004 Close Date: October 1, 2004

Position: The Connecticut Statewide Independent Living Council is seeking a committed, dynamic individual to lead a not-for-profit planning council to work with Centers for Independent Living, government agencies, disability organizations, and people with disabilities to devise plans and strategies to enhance the provision of independent living services.

Qualifications: The successful candidate will have excellent communication and writing skills as well as administrative and organizational skills. He/She must be able to perform essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodations, and will meet or exceed the following requirements:

A minimum of five years of progressively responsible employment, two of which will include, supervisory experience.

Evidence of significant professional or personal involvement with disability organizations, particularly advocacy organizations.

Significant experience in resource development including grant writing and grant management.

Demonstrated ability to promote organizational goals and objectives, form strong working relationships with individuals in key decision-making positions that affect public policy decisions, and establish effective liaison relationships with private and public organizations.

Demonstrable evidence of proficient technical reporting skills.

Experience in public policy analysis including the ability to interpret disability related statutes and regulations are essential.

Selection Process: The assessment process is open to all applicants who meet the above qualifications. The assessment will include a rating of your

training and experience as described on your application and will also include an interview for those rated highly qualified.

Title: Executive Director

Supervisor: Chair, Board of Directors

Status: Full time probationary status, normally 6 Months Alternative work scheduled may be considered Salary: Commensurate with experience and

knowledge Benefits: Health, Dental, Life Insurance

**Send Cover Letter, Resume and writing sample to: Tom Connors Ph.D. Chair, Search Committee. Connecticut State Independent Living Council. 151 New Park Avenue, Suite B Hartford, Ct 06106**

## **HEALTH CARE/PRESCRIPTION ISSUES AND THREATS SAGA/Medicaid**

### **Important News for SAGA Clients!**

As of August 1, the State Administered General Assistance (SAGA) Medical program has become a “managed care system” run by the Community Health Network of Connecticut (CHNCT).

**What does this mean for you?** If you are a SAGA client, CHNCT will pay for the health care services you need, but you will have to get most of your medical care at one of the approved Community Health Centers in the state.

**What if your doctor is not listed on your new card? Call CHNCT at 1-866-361-SAGA (ext. 7242) and ask to change your Primary Care Provider (PCP). Ask CHNCT to enroll your doctor in their managed care plan. Find a new provider in your area that is already enrolled in the CHNCT plan. Ask your doctor to call CHNCT at 1-800-440-5071 and ask to enroll in their plan.**

**Through September 30, 2004** SAGA clients can continue to see their regular doctor and CHNCT will pay for the appointment, even if the provider is not part of the CHNCT SAGA network. But after that you will have to make sure that your doctor is a member of CHNCT, or that you change to a CHNCT provider so that your SAGA Health coverage continues.

### **Important Numbers to Remember:**

**SAGA Member Services** 1-866-361-7242 to change providers and ask questions.

**Statewide Legal Services** 1-800-453-3320 if you still have questions or problems.

**CT Alliance for Basic Human Needs** 1-860-278-5688 x 12 if you are having trouble with the new system.

## **PROVISIONS OF THE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN**

### **“A Summary of the major provisions of the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan”**

Below are the major provisions of the prescription drug benefits included in the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-173).

#### 1. Discount Drug Cards Effective 2004.

- Annual enrollment fee cannot exceed \$30.
- Access to negotiated prices at convenient pharmacies.
- \$600 in assistance to qualified low-income individuals.
- Eligible individuals are those entitled to benefits under or enrolled in Medicare Part A, or enrolled in Medicare part B, and who are not entitled to prescription drug assistance under Title XIX (Medicaid).

#### 2. New Prescription Drug Coverage Effective 2006.

- Estimated \$35 per month premium.
- \$250 annual deductible in 2006 (indexed to increases in expenditure, as determined by HHS Secretary, for future years).
- In 2006, 25% co-insurance up to \$2250 per year in out-of-pocket expenses (\$2250 figure is indexed for future years).
- Donut hole starting at \$2250 in incurred expenses. From this point, beneficiary is responsible for full cost of prescriptions until the \$3600 out-of-pocket spending cap is reached. \$3600 out-of-pocket does include already-paid deductible (\$250 in 2006) and co-insurance (\$500 in 2006) leaving beneficiary responsible for \$2850 in the doughnut hole in 2006. Only deductibles and co-pays toward drugs on a plan's formulary count toward the out-of-pocket limit. Beneficiaries would have to incur a total of \$5100 in such expenses to reach the out-of-pocket cap.
- In 2006, "catastrophic coverage" from \$5100 in expenses with 5% co-payment (\$3600 out-of-pocket indexed for future years).
- Individuals who are dually eligible for Medicare and full Medicaid benefits with incomes below 100% of poverty pay no premium and no deductible and have no gap in coverage. They pay \$1 co-payment for generic drugs and \$3 co-payment for brand-name drugs. There is no co-payment after they spend \$3600 out-of-pocket.
- "Dually eligible" individuals with incomes below 135% of poverty pay no premium and no deductible and have no gap in coverage. They pay \$2 co-payment for generic drugs and \$5 co-payment for brand-name drugs. There is no co-payment after they spend \$3600 out-of-pocket. Individuals with incomes below 135% of poverty who are not eligible for Medicaid must satisfy an asset test of \$6,000/individual or \$9,000/couple. They pay no premium and no deductible and have no gap in coverage. They pay \$2 co-payment for generic drugs and \$5 co-payment for brand-name drugs. There is no co-payment after they spend \$3600 out-of-pocket. Individuals with incomes below 150% of poverty who are not eligible under other low-income

categories must satisfy an asset test of \$10,000/individual or \$20,000/couple. They pay a premium of \$0-\$420 and a \$50 deductible. There is no gap in coverage. They pay a 15% co-payment (instead of the regular 25%) for all drugs up to the \$3600 spending limit. After that, they pay \$2 co-payment for generic drugs and \$5 co-payment for brand-name drugs, both co-payments indexed to the increase in price of Part D covered drugs.  
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## **The Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.**

The Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc. (CMA) is a private, non-profit organization which provides education, advocacy, and legal assistance to help elders and people with disabilities obtain necessary healthcare. CMA focuses on the needs of Medicare beneficiaries, people with chronic conditions, and those in need of long-term care. The organization is involved in writing, education, and litigation activities of importance to Medicare beneficiaries. Advice, written materials, and legal services are free to Connecticut residents and for a fee to others. Each year, CMA represents thousands of individuals in appeals of Medicare denials, particularly for home health care. The organization also provides the legal training and support for Connecticut's health insurance and assistance program, known as CHOICES. CMA's staff act as consultants and trainers for groups which are interested in learning about healthcare rights, Medicare coverage and appeals, and/or in developing Medicare advocacy projects. Write or call CMA toll free in Connecticut at 1-800-262-4414, or 860-456-7790 or in Washington, DC at 202-216-0028.

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policy analysis including the ability to interpret disability related statutes and regulations are essential.

Selection Process:

The assessment process is open to all applicants who meet the above qualifications. The assessment will include a rating of your training and experience as described on your application and will also include an interview for those rated highly qualified. All aspects of the candidate's assessment, including interview questions and ratings, will be related to the requirements of the position. Title: Executive Director, Supervisor: Chair, Board of Directors, Status: Full time probationary status, normally 6 Months Alternative work scheduled may be considered Salary: Commensurate with experience and knowledge Benefits: Health, Dental, Life Insurance. Send Cover Letter, Resume and writing sample to: Tom Connors Ph.D., Chair, Search Committee, Connecticut State Independent Living Council, 151 New Park Avenue, Suite B, Hartford, Ct 06106.

## **Support Transportation Bills**

Congress has sent to a House/Senate Conference Committee two transportation authorization bills. The process of coming up with final bill language will probably take several months. Call Maureen McCloskey of PVA (202-416-7696) or go to [Maureenm@pva.org](mailto:Maureenm@pva.org) for more information.

## **PCA Waiver Option**

Look for updates. Public hearings were recently held to update the state's PCA waiver option, and CT's participation in the Cash and Counseling service moved one step closer to reality in June with an "inverse site visit" with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Stay tuned!

## **The Family Opportunity Act (FOA) and the Money Follows the Person (MFP) legislation have stalled!**

Call, fax and send e-mails to Congress, President Bush and Dr. Mark McCellen and Dennis Smith at the Center for Medicaid/Medicare Services and ask them to find the means necessary for this legislation to pass. For more information go to [www.jfanow.org](http://www.jfanow.org).

## **Treaty to promote and protect the rights of the world's 600 million disabled being drafted**

UNITED NATIONS, June 4 (Reuters) - A U.N. panel drafting a treaty to promote and protect the rights of the world's 600 million disabled is moving at a fast pace and hopes to complete its work late next year, participants said. The pact would require nations ratifying it to adopt laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of any form of disability.

The pact would also promote equal opportunity for the disabled in all aspects of life, from voting to sports.

It would, for example, require governments — as resources permit over time — to build wheelchair ramps and guarantee medical treatment to newborn babies with physical or mental disabilities. "It is a very important convention because it guides a process of change, not only of legal change but also a change in societies — as to how we view and integrate people with disabilities into our societies," said Ambassador Luis Gallegos of Ecuador, chairman of the working group writing the treaty.

While success is not assured — work on the treaty began more than 20 years ago — "I think there is a willingness amongst the delegations and nongovernmental organizations to reach a consensus," Gallegos told reporters. His goal is to have a pact ready by September 2005 for signature and eventual ratification by the United Nations' 191 member-nations, he said. Delegates said the goal was a realistic one. The working group just completed a two-week drafting session and will formally resume its task on Aug. 23.

The main stumbling block has been to what extent the treaty will oblige wealthy nations to provide developing countries with the financial resources and technology they need to provide the disabled with equal opportunity, participants in the negotiations said. Another potential sticking point is the form and powers of the system to be set up to monitor abuses and ensure compliance with the treaty, they said. The European Union has been leading the fight to oppose new financial and legal obligations on governments, they said.

But the United States, which many rights activities had feared would work to water down the treaty during negotiations, has instead restricted its participation to offering technical advice, they said. The Bush administration announced from the start that it did not intend to become a party to the treaty. —Irwin Arieff

Contact AAPD for more information <http://www.aapd-dc.org>.

## **Website chronicles history of disability rights and independent living movement**

Nearly 100 in-depth oral histories and a collection of unique archival materials documenting the disability rights and independent living movement are now available online through a new website hosted by the University of California, Berkeley. The Bancroft Library's Regional Oral History Office (ROHO) has just launched the site to make its collection of interviews with movement leaders, participants and observers, along with documents, photographs and audio and video clips, widely accessible. The website provides entry to a rich historical resource for the study of the remarkable movement by people with disabilities to win legally defined civil rights and control over

their own lives. Beginning in the 1960s, with strong roots on the Berkeley campus, the movement changed not only the lives of people with disabilities but also the social, cultural and legal landscape of the nation.

Check it out: <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/collections/drilm/>.

## **Section 8 Housing under Attack**

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has released a new paper titled, "Frequently Asked Questions about the Administration's Fiscal Year 2004 Housing Voucher Proposal." The Administration's proposal, which would cut funding for Section 8 housing vouchers by \$1.6 billion and block grant the program to public housing agencies, would have a severe adverse impact on persons with disabilities as 22 percent of current voucher holders are "disability households." Experts estimate that approximately 50,000 voucher holders with disabilities could lose their voucher if this proposal is enacted. The Administration is proposing even deeper cuts for years after 2005. In 2009, the Administration is proposing to further reduce spending on the voucher program and a separate "project-based" housing assistance program about \$4.6 billion below the amount needed to maintain the current levels of assistance that these programs provide. The Center's report can be accessed at: <http://www.cbpp.org/7-9-4hours.htm>.

What can you do? Contact your U.S. Senators and Congressional representatives and urge them to: support funding, oppose retroactive reduction, oppose block granting, oppose budget-based funding, and oppose cutting other housing programs to pay for Section 8. For more information please contact Rafie Podolsky at the Legal Assistance Resource Center (LARCC) and CABHN (Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs), 80 Jefferson St., Hartford 06106, 860-278-5688 ext 13.

## **Christopher Reeve Paralysis Act Forum**

A forum with Congressman Rob Simmons was held at the NEAT (New England Assistive Technology) Market Place in Hartford on Aug 9, 2004. There were 25 to 30 people in attendance, including 7 or 8 wheelchair users. The subject of the discussion was the "Christopher Reeve Paralysis Act" which is a non-partisan bill currently winding its way through Congress. Congressman Simmons chairs a subcommittee of the Veterans Administration Committee that will be having hearings on this bill. Rep. Simmons suggested that it might get to the floor in the next session of Congress, and noted the Bill that passes may not include everything requested. He reiterated a number of times that if we want something passed we need to be sure to contact our elected representation. He pointed out that not all of our state representatives have signed on to the Bill and we in Connecticut still need to do some work.—*David Meneker*

**Landmark Disability Survey finds Pervasive Disadvantages  
N.O.D./Harris Survey Documents Trends Impacting 54 Million Americans**

WASHINGTON, D.C. JUNE 24, 2004 – Americans with disabilities are at a critical disadvantage compared to other Americans in ten key areas of life, according to the 2004 National Survey conducted for the National Organization on Disability by the Harris organization:

- Only 35 percent of people with disabilities reported being employed full or part time, compared to 78 percent of those who do not have disabilities.
- Three times as many live in poverty with annual household incomes below \$15,000 (26 percent versus 9 percent).
- People with disabilities remain twice as likely to drop out of high school (21 percent versus 10 percent).
- They are twice as likely to have inadequate transportation (31 percent versus 13 percent).

For more information go to: <http://www.nod.org/content.cfm?id=1537>

### **Lifespan Respite Care Act**

The CT Lifespan Respite Coalition is seeking support for the following legislative proposal now before the US Congress: HR 1083, S 538 “Lifespan Respite Care Act” This act supports funds for family caregivers and paid home care workers. Find more complete info at: <http://www.subnet.nga.org/ci/assets/4-Caregivers.pdf>

Congress adjourns in October for November elections this year so if this bill is not enacted by the end of September it will have to start all over again in January 2005. Steps you can still take: Mail Tracy Justesen, Associate Director for White House Policy Council at: [TJustesen@opd.eop.gov](mailto:TJustesen@opd.eop.gov) or call the White House at 202-456-1414 and urge support for the Lifespan Respite Care Act

### **Justice Department Finds State of California Contributes to Unnecessary Institutionalization at Laguna Honda Nursing Home**

On August 5 the Justice Department announced the results of its investigation into the State of California's role in the unnecessary institutionalization of residents at Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center ("Laguna Honda"), in San Francisco, California. The Department found evidence that the state is contributing to the unnecessary segregation of individuals with disabilities residing at the 1,200-bed nursing home. The Department's findings were transmitted in a letter from R. Alexander Acosta, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, to California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

### **Survey finds nursing home patients want out!**

The numbers are amazing: in a recent federal survey of nursing home residents, released June 30<sup>th</sup>, 276,333 people answered YES to the question: Resident

Expresses/Indicates Preference to Return to the Community. This is 1 in every 5 people in nursing homes who want community services. Since states are already spending Medicaid money on most of these people, the implementation of a "money follows the person" concept would allow these individuals to move into the community and obtain the supports they need. The total number of nursing home residents who responded nationally: 1,409,862. The total number who responded YES (I want out!): 276,333 (19.6%). In Connecticut 5,815 patients said yes to the question!

## **General Counsel of the Office of Compliance to review federal buildings**

By Kate Tapley, Senior Attorney, June 9, 2004

The Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), requires that the Office of the General Counsel of the Office of Compliance inspect, assess and report on disability access issues within the Legislative Branch of the U.S. government. The applicable standards that apply to Congress are substantially similar to the Title II (public access) and Title III (public accommodation) standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This office will examine the Capitol Hill Legislative Branch buildings, programs and activities over the next several months. As part of this effort, we would like to learn of specific access issues encountered by disabled members of the public in two general areas.

### **1. ACCESSIBILITY OF LEGISLATIVE BRANCH BUILDINGS ON CAPITOL HILL.**

We request information about problems encountered by disabled individuals while entering the buildings, on elevators, visiting offices and meeting rooms, or exiting the buildings during evacuation drills. We would also like to know if accessible routes have been maintained on sidewalks and ramps during construction projects and in the placement of security bollards. Finally, we would like to hear if maps, directions, and signs give accurate information about accessible routes, restrooms, and other building facilities.

### **2. EQUAL ACCESS TO THE PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES OF THE VARIOUS LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ENTITIES.**

The Legislative Branch entities us to study all committees, all Senate and House offices, the Capitol Guide Service, Capitol Police, building restaurants, the Office of Compliance and the Botanic Gardens. We are seeking information about communications barriers as well as physical barriers. We would like to hear of experiences requesting auxiliary aides and services as well as other types of accommodation. We would also like to hear of any instances in which disabled members of the public may have been excluded from participating in Legislative Branch activities or programs. As much as is possible, we request that you give specific examples and detailed descriptions of the barriers encountered. We may wish to share the examples with the parties responsible for correction so if you wish anonymity please let us know. If you are aware of other groups or individuals who have had disability access problems on Capitol Hill and who are not on the attached distribution list, We request that the comments be sent to this office by

fax (202-724-1663) or e-mail (ktap@loc.gov). If you have any questions please feel free to call me at 202-724-9248. Thank you very much for your time and your assistance.

## **ADA Game**

A new learning opportunity is now available on-line. The ADA Game is a fully accessible on-line game that is easy to play and a powerful training and advocacy tool for anyone interested in disability policy, personal advocacy, or community leadership. By answering multiple-choice questions about the law and how it applies to real-life situations, players earn points that can be applied to individual or group advocacy efforts. Players can use these points to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in a virtual city. Players can also discuss advocacy strategies or other ADA issues on the discussion boards. Go to <http://www.adagame.org>

## **Roll Models**

**By Lester Butt, [RehabPsych@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu](mailto:RehabPsych@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu)**

Recently I had the opportunity to review a new book, *Roll Models*, written by Richard Holicky. The book interviews dozens of folks with both new and old spinal cord injuries. It contains not only interviews, but attempts to extract seminal themes that assist successful accommodation to these types of injuries. I thought it was very useful and interesting.

## **Movie Recommendation: "America's Heart & Soul"**

**By AAPD President and CEO Andy Imperato <[ImparatoA@aol.com](mailto:ImparatoA@aol.com)>**

I recently had the opportunity to preview a film that opened July 2 in theatres across the country. I highly recommend the movie to anyone who supports disability rights or is simply looking for a refreshing portrait of the diverse communities that make up the fabric of America.

The film, *America's Heart & Soul*, is a documentary that crisscrosses the country to tell the story of interesting people. Several of the folks profiled are disabled, including Boston Marathoners and Spirit of ADA Torch bearers Rick and Dick Hoyt (father and son team, son has cerebral palsy); blind mountain climber Erik Weihenmayer; visionary artist Dan Klennert; and recovering alcoholic cowboy Roudy Roudebush.

What I particularly appreciated about this film was how disabled people were woven among stories of interesting people from all walks of life, including New York City bicycle messengers, people that dance on the face of cliffs, struggling rock musicians, gospel singers, aerobatic pilots, steel workers, Tlinget Indians, Olympic boxers, and wine growers.

This is a movie you can take your family to and talk about with your children. It is a welcome reminder of what truly makes this a great country, notwithstanding some of our recent behavior in the world.

## Resources

**Infoline** - Infoline can be reached at 2-1-1. They offer confidential, free human service information and referral assistance.

**Office of Managed Care Ombudsman** – 866-HMO-4466. Get help for services denied by your managed care provider.

**Housing assistance** - Conservation and home improvement loans as well as energy assistance are available to qualified applicants. If you know someone who wants to explore this opportunity further, contact the Connecticut Housing Investment Fund, Inc. (CHIF) at [www.chif.org](http://www.chif.org).—

**Elder Law** - If you're a senior 60 or over with questions about your rights as a consumer, call the Consumer Law Project for Elders hotline, M-F, 9am-5pm, 1-800-296-1467.

**Special ed rights** - Understand special education laws, identify your child's educational needs, communicate more effectively with professionals and participate in the educational decision-making process. To learn more call the CT Parent Advocacy Center at 860-739-3089 V/TDD or toll free at 1-800-445-CPAC.

## New Hours at Statewide Legal Services!

If you are low income and think you have a legal problem, help is available. Call Statewide Legal Services between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and the wait is shorter. NEW HOURS: Mon. & Wed. 9 AM-4 PM, Tues. & Thurs. 9 AM-7 PM, Fri. 9 AM- 3 PM. Call 860-344-0380 in the Middletown/Hartford areas. The toll free number is 1-800-453-3320. Se habla Espanola.

## Want to Write an Article?

These are just a few of the advocacy issues I would like to feature but I need your help. Let me know of your interest in writing an article about any of the following:

- Transportation
- Voting
- Medicaid/SAGA1`/Medicare cuts
- Housing opportunities (or lack thereof)
- Closed captioning
- Children with disabilities and their families

