



# Connecticut Disability Advocacy Collaborative Bulletin

“Enhancing the effectiveness of disability activism by organizing and

**Empowerment! Opportunity! Justice!**

***June-July 2007***

**Part 2**

***Need this newsletter in an alternative format? Please let us know.***

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## News on New State Budget!

Getting up-to-date and confirmable information about the new state budget has been hard to come by. But according to a document obtained from the legislative Office of Fiscal Analysis the following appropriations have been made for the next “biennium” (2007-08 and 2008-09 fiscal years):

- Additional funds for the PCA waiver service (which the Collaborative, CACIL, and over a dozen advocacy groups worked so hard on) – \$1.7 million for both years (translates into about 70 new waiver slots a year, not nearly enough to meet the need)
- Additional funds for the ABI waiver - \$1.2 million each year (enough for about 12 individuals)
- Fully Fund Katie Beckett waiver - \$550,000 each year
- Enhance the Connecticut Home Care Program (Elders) - \$7.7 million for 2007-08 and \$8.3 million for 2008-09
- Implement Money Follows the Person Medicaid Waiver - \$2,720,800 for 2007-08 and \$5,630,700 for 2008-09
- Establish Autism Division within DMR - \$0 for 2007-08 and \$1 million for 2008-09

We have also received word that the pilot Home Care Program for people 18-64, modeled after the Home Care for Elders Program, was funded for fifty slots, and 100% of the slots for individuals with intellectual disabilities who graduated from high school this past June were funded (earlier budgets had only appropriated funds for only 50% of the individuals).

The state House of Representatives and the state Senate adopted the two year budget in a Special Session during the last week of June. What follows below is a listing of some of the other programs and services that have been funded for the next two years. The first figure after the name of the program refers to expansions for 2007-2008 year and the second figure the increases for the 2008-2009 year. Please note that where the words “extend”, “expand”, “continue”, and “increase” are used, that does not reference the total budget for that service, but the increase over the previous year’s budget:

Extend HUSKY to Uninsured Newborns to 6 months -	\$3,900,000/\$8,290,000
Extend HUSKY Parents to 185% Federal Poverty Level (up from 150%) -	\$17,025,000/\$22,700,000
Children’s Behavioral Health -	\$1,337,500/\$1,337,500
Increase Funding in Birth-to-Three to Reflect Eligibility Changes -	\$913,507/\$2,181,419
Continue Funding of Supportive Housing -	\$3,739,900/\$6,292,300
Develop Additional Capacity for Young Adult Services -	\$5,000,000/\$11,000,000
Enhance Recovery Support Services -	\$1,800,000/\$1,800,000
Fund Services for Medically Fragile Children -	\$800,000/\$800,000
Increase Eligibility for the HUSKY Program -	\$17,025,000/\$22,700,000

Increase Access to the HUSKY Program -	\$10,985,627/\$18,232,399
Increase HUSKY Dental Rates -	\$20,000,000/\$20,000,000
Enhance Housing and Homeless Services	\$6,485,875/\$4,485,875
Increase Alzheimer's Respite Program	\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000
Redesign Specialized Foster Care	\$412,000/\$517,000
Expand Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services	\$937,500/\$937,500
Increase In-Home Services Capacity	\$400,000/\$400,000

If interested in previously passed legislation that was not budget related, please refer to Part 1 of the June – July Bulletin that was sent out last week. It included information about:

**RESTRICTION ON UNREASONABLE RESTRAINTS AND SECLUSIONS OF STUDENTS. Public Act 07-147**

**THE ILLEGAL USE OF HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES. Public Act 07-52**

**RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION. Public Act 07-73**

**LEGISLATIVE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF WAIVER APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY DSS TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. Public Act 07-83**

**CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR PERSONS PROVIDING INTERPRETER SERVICES. Public Act 07-15**

### **Disability Advocacy Collaborative Regional Contacts and Meeting Dates**

To get involved with a Regional Advocacy Network, contact the following:

Northwest -- contact: Bill Knight ([lackerman01@snet.net](mailto:lackerman01@snet.net)) – next meeting July 11 at 10:30 am at Litchfield ARC

Southwest –contact: Carol Kana ([pkana@snet.net](mailto:pkana@snet.net)) – July 25 at Norwalk Police Department – both meetings at 1 pm

Danbury Area -- contact Pam Arturi ([parturi@abilitybeyonddisability.org](mailto:parturi@abilitybeyonddisability.org)) – next meeting August 2<sup>nd</sup> from 6-8 pm – contact Pam for location

North Central — contact: Candace Low ([clow@independenceunlimited.org](mailto:clow@independenceunlimited.org)) – next meeting August 27 – 10 am – Independence Unlimited - Hartford

Waterbury Area –contact: Mike Valuckas ([mike.valuckas@independencenorthwest.org](mailto:mike.valuckas@independencenorthwest.org)) – contact Mike for information about next meeting

Northeast Area – contact: Carolyn Newcombe ([cnewcombe@charter.net](mailto:cnewcombe@charter.net)) – next meeting on July 10 at 6 pm – Mansfield Senior Center

## **Spirit of the ADA Celebration & Public Transportation Summit**

The Connecticut Developmental Disabilities Network and the PATHS project will host the Third Annual Spirit of the ADA Celebration on July 26 by honoring advocates who have gone above and beyond to promote access to public transportation. The agenda will include an update from the Connecticut Department of Transportation on coordination initiatives in Connecticut, response from members of the disability community, and information on model programs from around the U.S. There will also be an opportunity to hear more about how Colorado is doing it - "Better Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities: Colorado's Experience", with Julie Reiskin, Executive Director, Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition and Tom Mauser, Modal Planning Manager, Colorado Department of Transportation. For more information on the event, the PATHS project or the Connecticut Developmental Disabilities Network go to [www.uconnucedd.org/](http://www.uconnucedd.org/).

**CATCH THE SPIRIT!**  
**JOIN IN THE CELEBRATION:**  
**Thursday, July 26, 2007**  
1 pm to 4 pm  
Legislative Office Building - Room 1D  
300 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford

Contact Dave Martin at: [dpmartin@uchc.edu](mailto:dpmartin@uchc.edu) or call him at 860-679-1595 to RSVP & to request accommodations.

## **IU 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Collaborative extends its congratulations to Independence Unlimited in Hartford on the anniversary of its 25<sup>th</sup> year of service to individuals with disabilities in the north central region of the state. Executive Director Candace Low is to be recognized for the leadership she has provided the organization since her arrival here from Oklahoma several years ago. Candace has taken the lead in organizing Hartford area advocates into the North Central Regional Advocacy Network, and the Disability Collaborative is appreciative of her dedication in supporting the group.

At its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on June 7, IU recognized the following for exceptional service to the disability communities:

- Chairman's Award – Michele Jordan (BRS)
- Media Image Award – CT-N
- Advocacy Award – Royal Stark (Quinnipiac University School of Law)
- Above and Beyond Award - Barbara Titus (DSS)
- Helping Hand Award – Debbie Melaragno (CACIL and SILC)
- Carolyn Longo Award – Jose Concepcion

## **New Special Ed Regulations Proposed**

The State Department of Education has proposed new regulations governing the operation of special education services in Connecticut. Seven public hearings are scheduled around the state between now and October 22. For more info about the proposed regulations contact Theresa DeFrancis at: [theresa.defrancis@ct.gov](mailto:theresa.defrancis@ct.gov) or (860) 713-6933.

Written comments should be sent by July 21 to:

Theresa DeFrancis, Esq.  
State Department of Education  
P.O. Box 2219  
Hartford, CT 06145

## **Accessible Apartment Available in Manchester**

A unit at 54 Jennifer's Way in Manchester is available for rent. It's a low income, two bedroom, fully accessible unit. For information and applications, call Van Court at: 800-411-3397 or 203-294-9335.

## **Home for Sale in Glastonbury**

Four bedrooms, 3.5 bath on 3/4 acre lot with wood floors, huge sunroom, central air, four fireplaces, bay windows, eat-in kitchen with skylights, built-ins, and much more. Finished 1800 sq ft basement with fireplace and full bath. Has wheelchair accessible in-law suite with roll-in shower, full bath, kitchenette & separate entrance. Close to Glastonbury schools.

For further info or private tour call Fred Williams at 860-657-9541 office or 860-841-9333 cell.

## **Bookkeeper Wanted**

The ADA Coalition of Connecticut is seeking a part-time bookkeeper 5-10 hours per month to prepare and record monthly accounts payable, accounts receivable, bank reconciliations and budget updates, maintain the organization's general ledger, balance sheet, accounting reports and financial records through annual audit. Must have knowledge of Quickbooks and Excel. Competitive wage. Contact Lisa Caron at 860-297-4383 or [adacoalition@sbcglobal.net](mailto:adacoalition@sbcglobal.net).

## **Golf for Individuals Who are Blind or Visually Disabled**

The United States Blind Golf Association (USBGA) is trying to spread the word about golf for individuals who are blind. The goals of the Association include: to instill, promote and sustain a desire in individuals who are blind and visually impaired who might otherwise not imagine the possibilities available to them through the life long activity of golf; to provide information, resources and assistance to friends and family members who are ready to support a golfer who is blind or visually impaired; to assist in the delivery of high quality instruction at U. S. Blind Golf Association affiliated clinics throughout the U.S. and Canada; to collaborate with schools, commissions, and organizations for individuals who are blind to recruit participants, volunteers

and players dedicated to the goal of increasing the number of blind golfers; and to encourage individuals to consider membership in the U.S. Blind Golf Association and to compete in local or regional competition.

For more information go to [www.blindgolf.com](http://www.blindgolf.com) or contact Ron Plath, Golf Development, Director, United States Blind Golf Association, 503-635-3715, [rplath@easystreet.com](mailto:rplath@easystreet.com).

### **Kids in Nursing Homes?**

According to the Wall Street Journal, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services has reported that approximately 4,000 children currently live in nursing homes solely because Medicaid guarantees nursing home care but does not guarantee community-based services and supports. Many of these children are in nursing homes against the express wishes of their families.

See article in Wall Street Journal for follow up: [www.aapd.com/News/medicaid/070629wsj.htm](http://www.aapd.com/News/medicaid/070629wsj.htm)

### **Response to Another WSJ Article**

The National Down Syndrome Society has submitted a letter to the Wall Street Journal on behalf of a number of advocacy groups in response to an article published June 25 entitled "Mainstreaming Trend Tests Classroom Goals", which focused on reported challenges and frustrations of inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom. Their letter was accompanied by a document entitled "What the Research Says," which can be viewed at: [www.aapd.com/News/education/070626tash.htm](http://www.aapd.com/News/education/070626tash.htm)

Their letter to the Wall Street Journal follows below:

"We are appalled that this article focuses only on teachers who blame the children for their job frustrations without showcasing the many others who are avid supporters of inclusion. There are studies documenting the academic and social benefits of inclusion for students with and without disabilities, especially when positive behavioral supports and supplementary aids and services are provided. Students and teachers would also benefit from "universal design for learning," which focuses on designing curriculum, instructional materials, teaching methods and assessments for the diverse and inclusive classroom. The least restrictive environment provisions of IDEA have been in effect for many years, but some school systems have done nothing in those years to prepare their teachers. Instead of blaming children for the frustration of teachers who have received inadequate training and whose students are not receiving the appropriate supports, people should be outraged that these children have been denied their rights and teachers have been denied adequate tools with which to do their jobs."

### **Housing Vouchers Used for Home Ownership**

Latest Bulletin from advocate and Attorney Steve Gold: Even though Congress and HUD have authorized and encouraged Housing Authorities throughout the country to work with and assist low income persons in purchasing their homes, less than 800 Housing Authorities out of nearly 3,000 have used this program, and less than 10,000 eligible low-income families and individuals

have purchased their own homes.

When questioned about why so few Housing Authorities are participating in the home ownership program, the response was that the federal regulations are "too cumbersome" and the down payments too difficult to put together.

Even with these "barriers," of the 10,000 low-income families and individuals who purchased homes, nearly 7,000 did so with Section 8 / Housing Choice Vouchers. (The remaining 3,000 are under either the Moving to Work or Family Self-Sufficiency programs).

The following Housing Authorities in Connecticut participate in the Home Ownership Program, including the number of families who have used their Section 8/Housing Choice vouchers to purchase a home:

Ansonia Housing Authority 1  
Bristol Housing Authority 1  
New Haven Housing Authority 13  
West Hartford Housing Authority 2

If your Housing Authority is not listed, then it has chosen not to participate in a HUD Home Ownership program. Advocates might want to talk with your Housing Authority and ask why it does not participate.

### **Unspent HOME Funds Returned to HUD**

More news from Steve Gold: In the past seven years, nearly \$17 million dollars from the HOME Investment Partnership program was returned to HUD for failure of a participating jurisdiction to meet the statutory two-year commitment requirement. That is, each year HUD allocates HOME funds, and recipients - state and local participating jurisdictions - must commit how these funds will be actually spent within two years. If this requirement is not satisfied, the uncommitted HOME funds must be returned to HUD and they are lost by the participating jurisdiction.

HOME funds can be used as Tenant Based Rental Assistance grants for low income persons. These are like housing vouchers. Given the desperate need for housing vouchers, it is quite amazing and depressing that the following jurisdictions, rather than allocate the funds as Tenant Based Rental Assistance, returned these HOME funds to HUD:

\$136,297.50 Waterbury  
\$106,504.95 Bridgeport  
\$140,432.00 Bridgeport

### **Postsecondary Opportunities for Students with Cognitive/Intellectual Disabilities**

The Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI) is pleased to announce an upcoming Symposium on Postsecondary Opportunities on College Campuses for Students with Cognitive/Intellectual Disabilities. The first-ever event will take place November 5th, 2007 on the campus of the University of Michigan in Dearborn.

This Symposium brings together leading experts, researchers, practitioners and consumers on postsecondary education (PSE) to provide an overview of PSE opportunities and discuss current trends, issues, and solutions for PSE initiatives. Two of the pioneers and researchers in the field, Dr. Meg Grigal, Director of the Postsecondary Research Center (<http://www.transitioncollege.net/>) and Dr. Debra Hart, Educational Coordinator at the Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts will present at the Symposium. Exemplary models of learning on college campuses for students with cognitive/intellectual disabilities will be showcased.

For updates on the Symposium, visit [www.ddi.wayne.edu/postsecondary\\_symposium.php](http://www.ddi.wayne.edu/postsecondary_symposium.php). To request a conference brochure, contact Latosha Marshall at DDI at [du8586@wayne.edu](mailto:du8586@wayne.edu). For more information about the Symposium, please contact Janice Fialka, Symposium Coordinator, at [ruaw@aol.com](mailto:ruaw@aol.com) or phone (248) 546-4870.

## U.S. Census Bureau Releases Disability Statistics

The U.S. Census Bureau recently released a Fact Sheet on Disabilities in preparation for the 17th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Updated numbers show the following:

- \* 51.2 million people have some level of disability (18% of population).
- \* 32.5 million have a severe disability (12% of population).
- \* 4 million children have a disability (or 11% of children ages 6 to 14)

To view the entire fact sheet, go to: [www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/010102.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/010102.html)

Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: phone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or email: [pio@census.gov](mailto:pio@census.gov).

## Articles Repeated from Part 1 of the June/July Bulletin

### Inclusion Works

For the last two years, the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities has worked with CPTV on various episodes to educate the public about the lives of people with disabilities. These episodes demonstrated how people with various disabilities can live meaningful and productive lives.

This year, the Council and CPTV will produce one-minute vignettes called *Inclusion Works* on topics and issues that promote inclusive communities. These vignettes will be based on reality but will utilize satire, humor and wit to change perceptions about people living with disabilities.

*Inclusion Works* can be seen on Thursday nights at 7:59 p.m. on CPTV. In addition, you can view these vignettes on either YouTube.com or MySpace.com. Please enter the search words "Able Lives Connecticut."

If you have any questions, please contact Mary-Ann Langton at 860-418-6160 or at [mary.ann.langton@po.state.ct.us](mailto:mary.ann.langton@po.state.ct.us).

## **Autism Summer Institute to Be Held in New Hampshire**

“Raising Expectations: Presuming Competence! The Importance of High Expectations for Learning, Communication and Friendship” will be held on **August 13-16** at the University of New Hampshire, Holloway Commons, Durham, NH. The goal of the Autism Summer Institute is to provide strength-based perspectives about students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) to improve the quality of education in inclusive settings. Participants will gain skills and knowledge that will help support the full participation of students with ASD in their schools and communities.

Please contact the course instructor, Cheryl M. Jorgensen, Ph.D., at [cheryl.jorgensen@unh.edu](mailto:cheryl.jorgensen@unh.edu) with questions and permission to register. Full participation in the Autism Summer Institute qualifies for 22 Staff Development Hours.

### **Playing It Safe: Emergency Planning For People with Disabilities and Seniors**

Playing It Safe, the traveling personal emergency planning conference with a disability focus, will be in West Haven on Tuesday, **August 21** from 9:45 am – 3:00 pm at the Savin Rock Conference Center. People with disabilities, seniors and others interested in learning how to stay safe during emergencies are encouraged to attend. The focus of these events is personal responsibility and community involvement.

An additional conference is planned in Hartford on Saturday, **September 8** at the NEAT Marketplace, also from 9:45 am – 3:00 pm. A conference in the northwest section of the state will also be scheduled for the fall. For more information and to register, please contact Elanah Sherman at the State Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, 860-297-4322(V), 860-297-4380 (TTY), 800-842-7303 (V/TTY) or [Elanah.Sherman@po.state.ct.us](mailto:Elanah.Sherman@po.state.ct.us).

### **CACLD's Fall Conference—October 13**

The CT Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (CACLD) Annual Conference will be held on Saturday, **October 13**, 2007: at the Stamford Marriott Hotel. Check [www.caclld.org](http://www.caclld.org) for more info. Topics Include: Reading, Math, College, RTI, NLD, IDEA, Family Issues, Study Skills, Advocacy, Anxiety, Transition, Medications, Brain Modifiability, Social Skills, Assistive Technology, Executive Function, Tips and Strategies for Teachers, Neuropsychological Evaluations, and much more.

### **RESNA: Fundamentals Course in Assistive Technology**

The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Society of North America (RESNA) will be offering a “Fundamentals Course in Assistive Technology” on October 17-18 at the at 120 Holcomb Street in Hartford. The overall objective of the course is to provide a broad review of the various areas of assistive technology for professionals working in the AT field and to provide individuals who are interested in the field of AT with an overview. The course is designed for newcomers as well as experienced professionals looking to expand their perspective of AT. Continuing Education Units (1.4 CEU's) will be awarded. For further information about

registration please contact the Fundamentals Course Coordinator at 703/524-6686 x306, or via email at [fundamentalscourse@resna.org](mailto:fundamentalscourse@resna.org).

NEAT will also host RESNA'S ATP/ATS Exam on Friday, **October 19**. To register for this exam, please visit RESNA at: <http://resna.org/NewCertPract/GettingCertificate.php>.

### **Making Choice Real: Transforming Long Term Systems of Support**

On Wednesday, October 24 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm the University of New Hampshire will have a conference Center of New Hampshire, Radisson Hotel, Manchester, NH. The conference will highlight best practices in integrating person-centered supports across systems for persons who are aging. For more information contact: Susan Fox, 603-228-2084 or 800-238-2048, [swfox@unh.edu](mailto:swfox@unh.edu).

### **2007 Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention**

The Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention, "The Right to Be Disabled" will be held on Saturday, **November 10** at the Cromwell Plaza Hotel in Cromwell. Go to their website for more information at [www.ctdownsyndrome.org](http://www.ctdownsyndrome.org) or click on the link above to go directly to the "Convention Preview" page.