



Connecticut Disability Advocacy Collaborative Bulletin

“Enhancing the effectiveness of disability activism by organizing and empowering individuals, families, groups, and organizations!”

Empowerment! Opportunity! Justice!

November, 2009

To include information in next month’s Bulletin please contact us!

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<i>In This Issue</i>	<i>Page</i>
A tribute to Tom Connors	2
SILC seeking input from PCAs, & congrats to New Haven	3
ADACC recognition awards & New Horizons lawsuit settled	4
CEAN legislative wrap up & New State Building Code in the Offing	5
Coalition forms to oppose physician assisted suicide	6
Updates on health care services & YLF 2010 Applications are out	7
Walgreens and jobs, news from SW CT, & KTP celebrates	8
Brain injury and AT, funding for BIAC, EMPS, & visitability	9
National news: Medicare open enrollment period, Obama signs hate crime legislation, Express Lane to federal insurance programs, insurers seek to kill CLASS Act, housing bill moves forward, & fellowship announcement in Texas	10
Regional DAC contacts	12

A Tribute to Tom

On Saturday, October 17 Thomas James Connors, PhD left this world a sadder and poorer place. He left behind his wife, Maria with whom he shared 42 amazing years and his son, Christopher, as well as two granddaughters, Haley and Alyssa.

For those who did not know Tom, he led a extremely rich and full life. Having survived a diving accident which left him paralyzed at the age of 19, he proceeded to Fairfield University where he received BA degrees in both History and Philosophy and obtained his MA in Counseling. He then went on to the University of Connecticut earning his Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Research in 1976. As Chief of Rehabilitation Services for the Connecticut State Department of Education (1978 to 1988), Tom administered the statewide provision of rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities.

In addition to this work, Tom had a long career as an advocate and rehabilitation consultant, serving on numerous boards and commissions relating to disability issues. At various times, he served as the President of the Connecticut Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, the Chairperson of the City of Hartford Commission on Disability Issues, as well as the President of Personal Services Enabling Independence, Inc. His lifelong achievements have been recognized by multiple local, state, and national awards, a sample of which include the Secretary of State's Public Service Award (2003), National Spinal Cord Injury Association, CT Chapter Award (1999), the Gaylord Lyman Gold Medal (1983), and the Fairfield University Alumni Association, Man of the Year Award (1978). Tom was selected by President Jimmy Carter as a recipient of the Outstanding Handicapped Federal Employees of the Year Award, an honor presented to him in a 1978 ceremony in Washington, DC.

In retirement, Tom remained vibrant and active. A lifetime learner, Tom attended Southern Connecticut State University where he studied Creative Writing and Poetry. He also participated in the Institute for Social and Policy Bioethics Working Group on Disability at Yale University and was the Chair of the Connecticut Statewide Independent Living Council. As a poet and humanitarian, Tom used his tremendous gifts for the benefit of others. As a patron of the arts, he supported various local theaters such as the Long Wharf and Yale Repertory Theaters. A devotee of all musical and visual art forms, Tom was most particularly drawn to music, not only as a listener but also quite often as a rowdy, joyous performer.

Three features of Tom's personality stand out in this writer's mind – his warmth toward others, his strong belief in the independent living philosophy, and his ability to analyze complex issues and articulate a well thought out rationale for positions he would take. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Contributions in Tom's name may be made to the Connecticut Youth Leadership Project (CT-YLP), c/o John Bendoraitis, Treasurer, 370 Levita Road, Lebanon, CT 06249. CT YLP empowers young adults with disabilities to become leaders of tomorrow.

SILC Looking for Ideas from PCAs and Their Employers

The Connecticut State Independent Living Council (CT-SILC) and its partners are collecting information from PCAs and their employers on the needs and issues facing PCAs, in order to develop strategies to strengthen the overall home care system.

There are three ways individuals may participate:

1. Attend a brainstorming session:
 - November 3, 2009, 2-4 p.m., New Park Office and Conference Center, 151 New Park, Hartford. RSVP by October 30th.
 - November 12, 2009, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Rose City Senior Center, 8 Mahan Drive, Norwich. RSVP by November 9th.
 - November 19, 2009, 2-4 p.m. Center for Disability Rights, 764A Campbell Ave., West Haven. RSVP by November 16th.
2. Share your thoughts at: <http://ct-pca.blogspot.com/>
3. Call the SILC toll-free number at 1-800-426-1641 and answer the following questions:
 - Who are you? PCA? Person with a disability who employs a PCA? Please describe. If PCA or employer, how long?
 - Given your experience(s), what are the strengths and weaknesses of CT's PCA program?
 - Envision an ideal CT PCA system, please describe what it should include.
 - Do you want to join our efforts? If so, please provide your name, mailing address, phone number(s) and email.

Sign language interpreters will be available at all three brainstorming sessions. If additional accommodations are needed, please call or email CT-SILC one (1) week prior to the session. Also, all sessions are fragrance free. The Connecticut State Independent Living Council is located at 151 New Park Avenue in Hartford, CT 06106. Its phone number is (860) 523-0126, and its Email address is isndeb.ctsilc@gmail.com.

Congratulations New Haven!

Representatives from the City of New Haven's Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities and the owners of Metro Taxi, Connecticut's largest, full-service taxi company, held a press conference on October 14 to launch the state's first wheelchair-accessible taxi. The press conference was held to inform the public about how accessible taxis offer new freedom for people who use wheelchairs and scooters for mobility, and fill a significant gap that exists in Connecticut's public and paratransit transportation system. Michelle Duprey and her assistant Kristen Barber deserve kudos for pursuing this initiative with a combination of dogged determination and thorough research. For more information about the service contact Karin A.

Nobile at Metro Taxi: 203-444-2851 or Karin@NobileCommIntl.com , or go to www.cityofnewhaven.com/DisabilityServices/index.asp.

ADACC Recognizes ADA Advocates

The ADA Coalition of Connecticut held its 16th Annual Meeting and Recognition Luncheon on October 29, and the following deserving individuals were recognized for promoting the spirit of the ADA:

Jean Bowen
WeCAHR, Retired Director

Robert Farwell
Otis Library (Norwich), Director

Linda Wheeler Donahue
Polio Outreach of CT, President

Matt Hamlett
St. Paul Travelers Insurance/
Connecticut Business Leadership Network

Michelle Duprey, Esq.
Department of Services for Persons with
Disabilities
(New Haven), Director

Gabrielle Kitchener
(Posthumously)
Mental Health Advocate

The event, presided over by ADACC Board President Jan VanTassel, featured a presentation by Linda Wheeler Donahue, President of Polio Outreach of Connecticut, who shared her personal reflections on the signing of the ADA in 1990, at which she was one of 3,000 people in attendance.

Consent Decree signed in New Horizons Case

Four years after filing a federal lawsuit, the Connecticut Fair Housing Center and the State Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities have settled a landmark housing discrimination case with New Horizons Village, an apartment complex in Unionville. New Horizons markets itself as providing independent housing for people with significant physical disabilities.

Under the consent decree, New Horizons will cease requiring tenants to open their private medical records for review and to show that they can “live independently”. New Horizons will also pay damages and attorney’s fees of \$600,000 to a former tenant who challenged its discriminatory policies. This is believed to be the largest settlement in a case challenging independent living requirements in Connecticut.

In April of this year, Judge Janet Bond Arterton, of the Connecticut Federal Court, held that New Horizons’ independent living policy, which included a requirement that tenants and applicants disclose medical records, violated the Fair Housing Act. NHV used these medical records to screen out individuals it considered “too disabled” to live independently and disclosed applicants’ medical information to other tenants as part of the application process.

The settlement further requires that determinations regarding needs for personal care assistance are to be decided on a case-by-case basis, and that any request for additional personal care assistance by a tenant must be considered a request for reasonable accommodation. Under a unique statutory arrangement, New Horizons receives and allocates state funds for personal care assistance for its residents. While New Horizons markets itself to people with disabilities regardless of their ages, the Court's ruling could also have significant implications for the challenges seniors face when seeking quality housing.

CEAN Legislative Wrap-Up

On October 22 the Connecticut Elder Action Network (CEAN) held an End-of-Session wrap up to review the new state budget and other pieces of legislation passed by the state General Assembly this year. Many of the items discussed were relevant to a broad age span population, including people with physical and mental disabilities. CEAN is facilitated by Julie Evans-Starr, Executive Director of the State Commission on Aging, whose budget sustained a cut of 53%.

Interest in the material presented at the session has been such that PDF versions of the handouts have been posted on the Commission's website www.cga.ct.gov/coa/ceanlegsummaries.asp. The web site also includes a hyperlink to the CT-N archived broadcast of the event.

Please feel free to give the Commission's office a call if you have any questions about the 2009 state legislative session at 860-240-5200.

New State Building Code in the Offing

State Building Inspector Lisa Humble and the Department of Public Safety's Codes and Standards Committee have begun initial work on the next major revision to the State Building Code. Formally adopted as a regulation by the Department of Public Safety, the State Code addresses a myriad of issues, including requirements affecting the accessibility of buildings that are being constructed or undergoing extensive renovation or changes in use.

The State Code is based on the general requirements and standards contained in an international "family" of codes – a continually evolving set of standards recommended by national and international experts. However, there is also a substantial "Connecticut Supplement" that contains state-specific requirements, some of which have a considerable impact on accessibility. The State Code is revised every four to five years to stay current with evolving standards.

Interested parties may submit recommendations regarding the revised code by visiting the website of the Department of Public Safety, downloading and printing out the form "Code Change Form" found at <http://www.ct.gov/dps/cwp/view.asp?a=2148&q=308964>. Fill out the form and mail it to the designated address. (Note – this is not a "fallible form" – it must be printed out and mailed separately.)

Coalition Forms to Oppose Physician Assisted Suicide

In response to several legislative proposals that would legalize physician assisted suicide, a group of disability advocates, health care professionals and religious leaders from New England states recently met in Boston to discuss ways to share information and support each other in opposing such measures. The proposals they are concerned about are based on language originally adopted in Oregon, and have been raised in a number of New England states, most recently in New Hampshire. (Similar proposals have been defeated in Maine and Vermont, at least for now.) Opposition from disability rights advocates has been spearheaded by the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF), independent living centers, and Not Dead Yet, a grass roots advocacy organization concerned with the effects of unconsciously held prejudices on medical decision making for people with disabilities.

Not everyone in the disability community agrees on this subject, but most leading disability-rights advocacy groups oppose this direction. Their opposition centers on several key issues and questions:

- it is not uncommon for people who become disabled to experience a considerable period of depression before coming to realize they can still lead good, contributing lives. While the proposals for physician assisted suicide speak of “terminal illness” as a threshold requirement, the distinction between terminal illness and progressive disabilities is sometimes a grey area, and it is difficult to see how decision-making based on that distinction could be effectively policed. Doctors in at least one European country that has accepted this practice have begun to categorize long-term disabilities with “poor prognoses” as “terminal”, including some psychiatric diagnoses like anorexia nervosa.
- In addition to concern over a “slippery slope” of definitions, criteria, unconscious prejudices and self-justifying rationalizations, questions also arise regarding the impact that legalizing physician assisted suicide would have on social norms and personal expectations. Would the fact that a doctor authorizes and actively assists in taking human life signal a fundamental change in the core ethic of a profession heretofore committed to saving and protecting life? Would the involvement of “professionals” to whom we traditionally turn for advice, confer legitimacy on a practice that society has long discouraged? If we begin to accept suicide as an “understandable choice” in response to at least certain types of disabilities, will we ever learn to value the lives of all people and invest adequately in approaches that enhance quality of living (including end-of-life care)?
- And, lastly, what message would legalization send to a person who has just been diagnosed with a progressive disability? At what point would the availability of this “option” cease to be a choice and become a “felt duty” to ease the “burden” and cost of care for family members or for society generally?

For further information, you can access the DREDF webpage on physician assisted suicide and euthanasia at: www.dredf.org/assisted_suicide/index.shtml. If you wish to become better

informed about physician assisted suicide from a disability perspective, contact Stan Kosloski at stankosloski@att.net, or 860-614-8351.

Updates to Programs that can Help People Access Health Care Services

The State MS Society has shared some useful news for those on Medicare:

“Medicare Savings Program: Save Money on Medicare Part B Premiums.” There may be steps you can take to help reduce some of your health care costs if you are a low income individual on Medicare. The Medicare Savings Program offers a way to help pay your Medicare premium. The program has a variety of levels of assistance, depending on a person’s financial resources. Sometimes known as the QMB/SLMB program, it has been available for a number of years. For more information, visit the Connecticut Department of Social Services Web site: www.ct.gov/dss/lib/dss/pdfs/msp.pdf.

“Low Income Subsidy in the Medicare Part D Program.” You may qualify for help with the cost of premiums and medications under your Medicare Prescription Drug Plan. Medicare prescription drug coverage is available to everyone with Medicare, regardless of income and resources, health status, or current prescription expenses. There is also “extra help” (also called a “low-income subsidy”) to help people with Medicare who have limited income and resources pay for Medicare prescription drug coverage. If you qualify for extra help, you can get help paying for your Medicare drug plan’s monthly premium and for some of the costs you would normally pay for your prescriptions. The amount of extra help you can receive is based on your income and resources. You can apply for extra help by calling the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or visiting www.socialsecurity.gov.

“Changes and Cuts to State-Funded Health Care Programs in Connecticut.” As the state faces a huge budget deficit, many cuts and changes are being made to Medicaid, ConnPACE and other programs that are funded in part with state dollars. Starting on June 1, the “Medicare Part D Wrap Around” has been eliminated for ConnPACE and dually eligible Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. This means that the Connecticut Department of Social Services Pharmacy Programs will no longer pay for any new prescriptions that are not on the client’s Medicare Part D plan formulary. Pharmacies and prescribers are being encouraged to work with the client’s Prescription Drug Plan to pursue obtaining an exception to the formulary due to medical necessity or identify a formulary alternative.

YLF 2010 Applications Now Available

Applications are now available for the twelfth annual Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (YLF) scheduled for July 26-July 29, 2010 at the University of Connecticut, Storrs campus. The program will bring together forty high school students with disabilities from throughout Connecticut for a four-day training forum focusing on enhancing community leadership skills. The forum will provide a concentrated educational and motivational experience for the students selected through a formal, competitive process.

The delegates will explore personal leadership skills, define career goals and leave the forum with a very specific action plan that describes what they will do back in their local communities

to enhance the lives of people with disabilities. Students who are accepted to YLF will be required to attend follow-up sessions after the forum to implement their Community Action Plans.

You may download the application by logging onto the YLP website: www.ctylp.org. If you have any questions about the program, please feel free to contact Karen Halliday at (860) 633-8403 or KarenH1203@aol.com or Kathleen Kabara at (860) 424-5068 or Kathleen.kabara@ct.gov.

Walgreens May Have Employment for You

The Walgreens General Warehouse in Windsor has made a commitment to hiring individuals with disabilities, and there may be a position available that suits your interests. Kathy Gorman and Leslie Waite are BRS employees who are serving as liaisons to the Human Resource Department at Walgreens. Individuals who are interested in working at the warehouse should contact either Kathy or Leslie to learn about the application process. Kathy can be contacted at 860-723-1416 (or kathleen.gorman@ct.gov) and Leslie is at 860-424-5622.

News from SW CT

The SouthWest Disability Advocacy Network hosted their yearly advocacy seminar on October 21 at the Norwalk Inn and Conference Center on East Avenue in Norwalk. Three workshops were offered, one on self-advocacy, one on federal legislation, and one on the recently passed ADA Amendments Act. Contact regional coordinator.

Carol Kana is the Coordinator of the SouthWest Network and she welcomes new members to join their network. She can be reached at pkana@snet.net.

KTP Celebrates Ten Years of Legislative Advocacy

The Keep the Promise Coalition will celebrate ten years of legislative advocacy on Thursday, November 5 from 11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the St. Thomas Seminary, 467 Bloomfield Avenue in Bloomfield. There will be well-deserved awards presentations, a delicious lunch, and entertainment.

Keep the Promise Coalition is a Connecticut coalition of activists (people living with mental illness, family members and mental health professionals) dedicated to advocating for the "Blue Ribbon Solutions" necessary to maintain and expand critical community mental health services and housing options for adults and children with mental illness. People with mental illness need Connecticut to "Keep The Promises" made when mental health institutions were closed in the 80s and 90s.

The KTP Coalition is located at 241 Main Street (5th Floor), in Hartford. Its phone numbers (for Cheri and Maura) are 860-882-0236 and 1-800-215-3021 (toll free), and its Fax is 860-882-0240. You may also reach them by e-Mail at: keepthepromise@namict.org. The KTP Website is www.ctkeepthepromise.org.

Working it Out: AT and Individuals with Brain Injury

The Office of Protection and Advocacy, the CT Tech Act Project, and the NEAT Marketplace are combining their resources to produce a workshop on Assistive Technology and individuals with brain injury. Do you know what assistive technology options exist? Do you know what it is you need and how to get it? Do you want to be able to test the different products?

November 19 is the date and 9 am-1 pm is the time for this important event. Enjoy snacks, giveaways, and resource information all in a fun and accessible environment. The NEAT Marketplace is at 33 Coventry Street in Hartford. Space is limited, so RSVP to Jessica Rival at P&A at (860) 297-4362 (local voice) or 1-800-842-7303 (Toll free Voice or TTY).

And on the subject of brain injury....

Julie Peters, Executive Director of the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut (BIAC) shares the following good news:

“I am pleased to report that the Department of Social Services has agreed to a contract with the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut. The contract will include \$100,000 of the \$200,000 that was taken by the legislature in May. This is thanks to the work of Representative Geragosian, chair of the Appropriations Committee. With the diligent persistence of David Evans, our lobbyist, Representative Geragosian and state legislators were able to restore funding in the State Budget. While our state funding and total revenue are both still projected to be significantly lower than last year, it is because of the work of so many of our supporters that we have the funding we do.”

Julie thanks everyone who wrote letters, called and sent emails on behalf of BIAC over the past few months.

Connecticut's Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS)

United Way 2-1-1 is now the statewide access number for the state's Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS). EMPS provides emergency services for children and youth under 18 who are experiencing a behavioral crisis. When an EMPS call comes into 2-1-1, a trained call specialist completes a brief assessment and connects the caller to a licensed EMPS clinician. EMPS clinicians are immediately available in person or by phone to help resolve a behavioral or emotional crisis wherever help is needed. Dial 2-1-1 to access EMPS.

A Conversation on Visitability

The North Central Disability Advocacy Network, an affiliate of the Disability Advocacy Collaborative, hosted a breakfast conversation on the topic of visitability on October 5 at the New Park Office and Conference Center in Hartford. The NC Network is facilitated by Independence Unlimited, where Candace Low is Executive Director. Sue Salters is the staff person assigned to the Network, which is affiliated with the Disability Advocacy Collaborative.

Visitability is a movement to change home construction practices so that virtually all new homes - not merely those custom-built for occupants who currently have disabilities - offer a few specific features that make the home easier for people who develop mobility disabilities to live in, and to make it possible for them to visit family and friends.

The spirit of visitability is as important as the list of features. That spirit says it's not just unwise but unacceptable that new homes continue to be built with barriers - unacceptable, given how easy it is to build basic access in the great majority of new homes, and unacceptable given the harsh effects major barriers have on so many people's lives, especially the ever-increasing population of those who are aging in place. These easily-avoided barriers cause unsafe living conditions, social isolation, and forced institutionalization.

The features list must be partly rigid and partly flexible. The inflexible features are:

- Wide passage doors (32" clear space)
- At least a half bath/powder room on the main floor
- At least one zero-step entrance approached by an accessible route on a firm surface no steeper than 1:12, proceeding from a driveway or public sidewalk.

For more information on visitability and its implementation in various states and communities go to: www.concretechange.org/.

Medicare Open Enrollment Begins November 15th

Each year Medicare plans change what they cost and what they cover. The next general open enrollment starts on November 15, 2009. During this time, people with Medicare can add, drop or change their prescription drug coverage. They can also select a health plan for their 2010 coverage. Visit www.medicare.gov/my-medicare-tools.asp for more information and resources.

President Signs Hate Crimes Legislation

On October 29, President Barack Obama signed legislation that expands federal hate crimes to include those committed against people because of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. It also loosens limits on when federal law enforcement can intervene and prosecute crimes, amounting to the biggest expansion of the civil-rights era law in decades.

"No one in America should ever be afraid to walk down the street holding the hands of the person they love," Mr. Obama said in East Room reception, surrounded by joyous supporters. "No one in America should be forced to look over their shoulder because of who they are, or because they live with a disability."

Civil rights groups and their backers on Capitol Hill have tried for a decade to expand the hate crimes law, but fell short because of a lack of coordination between the House and Senate, or opposition from President George W. Bush. This time, the bill got through when the legislation was attached to a must-pass \$680 billion defense measure.

The bill is named for Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, whose family members stood with Mr. Obama. Shepard, a gay college student, was murdered and found tied to a fence in Wyoming in 1998. The same year, Byrd, a black man, was chained to a pickup by three white men and dragged to his death in Texas.

Some 45 states have hate crimes statutes, and the bill would not change current practices where hate crimes are generally investigated and prosecuted by state and local officials. But it does broaden the narrow range of actions — such as attending school or voting — that can trigger federal involvement and allows the federal government to step in if the Justice Department certifies that a state is unwilling or unable to follow through on an alleged hate crime.

Express Lane

The Children's Partnership and The Kaiser Family Foundation are pleased to release two new publications designed to help states chart their way forward in light of new federal Medicaid and CHIP opportunities. The Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA) provides states new options to reach and enroll eligible but uninsured low-income children into Medicaid and CHIP. The law's Express Lane Eligibility (ELE) provisions enable state Medicaid and CHIP agencies to identify, enroll, and recertify children by relying on eligibility findings from other programs, such as Head Start or Food Stamps, rather than having to re-analyze eligibility under their own rules. Further, CHIPRA authorizes greater use of electronic means to demonstrate eligibility. They invite you to sign up for The Children's Partnership online publications, the "Express Lane Update--Express lane eligibility efforts: Lessons learned from early state cross-program enrollment initiatives" and the "Newsblast," -- a weekly e-mail with news stories about how information and communications technology is being used to benefit America's children and families.

To learn more about Express Lane Eligibility and keep up with related developments, visit www.childrenspartnership.org/ExpressLane. They can also be contacted at 202-429-0033 or at frontdoorc@childrenspartnership.org.

Insurance Industry Seeks to Kill CLASS Act

The life and long-term care insurance industry is pulling out all the stops to kill the CLASS Act provision in the U.S. Senate health care bill. Certain Senators are opposed to the CLASS Act and their opposition appears to be based on incorrect information supplied by the life and long term care insurance industry.

The Arc of the United States urges powerful grassroots action to the Senators who do not support the inclusion of the CLASS Act in health care reform. One of our Senators – Joe Lieberman – needs to hear from us now (phone- 202-224-2823; fax-202-224-1083). Time is of the essence, so please call or fax your message as soon as possible.

What will the CLASS Act do? The CLASS Act is a voluntary public insurance program for long-term care services that will be available to working adults. The benefit can be used to pay for services and supports such as home modifications or personal care services that assist with continued community living. The CLASS Act will be fully financed by enrollee premiums, so it will not add to the federal deficit. Benefits will vary by level of disability. With an average cash benefit level of \$75 a day, the program will be sustainable with monthly premiums that average \$123. For full-time students and those with incomes below the poverty level, the premiums will be much lower.

For more information, see www.passtheclassact.org.

Housing Bill Moves Forward

On October 30, the Senate Banking Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development, held a hearing on the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act. The subcommittee is chaired by Senator Chris Dodd and this hearing was an important first step in getting this legislation through the Senate.

On Wednesday the 28th, a group of statewide advocates met with Senator Dodd's housing staff in Connecticut and in DC (by conference call) and they both commented on the support for this legislation that was shown through the letters they received from across the state. The Collaborative urges continued advocacy on behalf this important bill.

For more information about the hearing and the testimony that was given please go to the CT Partnership for Strong Communities website:
www.ctpartnershiphousing.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1261&Itemid=40.

Fellowship Announcement

The University of Texas School of Health Information Sciences at Houston (SHIS) will award a comprehensive fellowship in disability informatics and policy to a post-doctoral recruit, or tuition and part-time salary with benefits to a graduate research assistant. The award recipient will work under the direction of Professor Lex Frieden on a variety of tasks related to health policy, long-term services and supports, and independent living by people with disabilities and seniors. UT/SHIS will function as the academic home for the research and training carried out as part of this program. Practical research and training carried out under this program will be done in conjunction with the ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization) program at TIRR Memorial Hermann (The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research), in Houston.

This unique educational and research program will provide an unprecedented experience for one, or more, well qualified, highly motivated individuals to gain valuable training, to engage in important research, and to participate in the health care and disability policy arena. Award recipients will gain valuable practical experience in an enriched academic environment.

The award will be for up to 12 months, and the award amount will be commensurate with training and experience. Certain ancillary support will be provided for awardees. Applicants should forward a curriculum vita, a single-authored writing sample, and a statement about why this program is of interest to them and would benefit them to Dr. Frieden at lex.frieden@uth.tmc.edu . Applications will be reviewed as they are received and an award will be announced by November 15, 2009.

Disability Advocacy Collaborative Regional Contacts

To get involved with one of the Collaborative's Regional Advocacy Networks, contact the following:

Northwest – contact: Bill Knight (lackerman01@snet.net) – meetings are held at the Litchfield Arc

Southwest – contact: Carol Kana (pkana@snet.net) – meetings are held at the Norwalk Police Department

Danbury Area – contact Dale Brown (dbrown@wecahr.org) – meetings are held at Ability Beyond Disability in Bethel

North Central – contact: Candace Low (clow@independenceunlimited.org) – meetings are held at 151 New Park Avenue in Hartford

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

Northeast Area – contact: Carolyn Newcombe (cnewcombe@charter.net) – meetings are held at the Mansfield Senior Center

Bridgeport Area – contact: Tony LaCava (tlacava@drcfc.org) – meetings are on the third Thursday of the month at various sites.

For four years the Collaborative was supported in a number of different ways by Communitas, Inc. To George, Pat and Bev we extend our deep appreciation.