



Connecticut Disability Advocacy Collaborative Bulletin

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

Empowerment! Opportunity! Justice!

May-June, 2010

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

Stan Kosloski, 860-614-8351 or StanKosloski@ct-dac.org
Jayne Kleinman, 203-631-4800 or JayneKleinman@ct-dac.org
Website: <http://www.ct-dac.org/contactus.htm>

In This Issue	Page
Want to exhibit at the 2010 Disability Convention and Expo?	2
CT’s budget for 2010-11 & other state legislation issues	2
Visitability bill passes and is signed into law by Governor Rell	3
Long Term Care & Health Care Reform – community living options increased	4
DAC regional contacts & workshops for parents in Danbury, Hartford, Trumbull, and Cromwell	5
Melville Trust Celebrates Supportive Housing & Therapy Rec Fair to be held in Southbury	6
CCCI sponsors emergency prep conference in Norwich & Transportation news	7
ADA signing commemoration on July 26 at State Capitol & more news on Richard LaPointe	8
New ConnSENSE web site developed, artists with disabilities show works, SERC publishes Directory of Summer Camps, & BIAC finally has contract approval with the state	9
National news: Poll supports community living, DOJ settles case in Illinois and sues Arkansas over unnecessary segregation, and veterans legislation signed by President	10

Want to Exhibit at the 2010 Disability Convention and Expo on August 28?

Make sure your business, agency, or organization is there – go to: www.ct-dac.org and download an exhibitor's booth registration form. Although the registration deadline is not until July 24, sign up now to ensure you get a prime location.

Over 800 individuals with disabilities and their families attended the last Convention and Expo in 2008. Don't miss this opportunity to put your service or product before them this year.

Next Year's State Budget

News from a variety of organizations about the outcome of the 2010 session of the CT General Assembly:

The legislature showed strong support for **supportive housing** as a way to end chronic homelessness by providing new funding and protecting existing resources in its budget agreement with Gov. Rell:

- The Department of Social Services budget contains a net increase of \$2.96 million in Housing/Homeless Services, including \$450,000 in funding for 50 new Rental Assistance Payment certificates for permanent supportive housing for people with mental illness.
- The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services budget includes \$3 million in supportive housing. These new resources are a result of the Reaching Home Campaign's advocacy on behalf of housing solutions for frequent users of high cost systems - people with mental illness, and people in and out of corrections and other institutional care.
- The budget also establishes a new Homeless Youth Account, a \$1 million account in the Department of Children and Families.
- The budget also preserves HOMEConnecticut funding and carries forward the unallocated balance of approximately \$1 million.

A key budget priority of the Area Agencies on Aging, the state Commission on Aging, and CT Community Care, Inc. (CCCI) was a reduction in the 15% **cost-sharing requirement** for the CT Home Care Program for Elders (CHCPE). The final budget for 2010-11 reduced the requirement to 6%, still problematic for many elders, but much less than the 15% originally proposed. Advocates had pointed out that if older adults drop off the program because they cannot afford the co-payment, they will be at risk of inappropriate and much more costly nursing facility placement. The legislature responded to the common sense plea.

The CT Association for **Community Transportation** reports that funding for the year 2010-11 for Bus Operations, ADA Para Transit services, and non-ADA Dial-A-Ride remains at the levels appropriated by the General Assembly on October 2, 2009 and signed by Governor Rell. In addition, the legislature restored \$ 3,155,532 to the Transportation for Employment Independence Program in FY 2011.

Transportation advocates are reminded of the celebration and recognition of the people who have helped promote and improve public transportation in Connecticut at the CACT Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon on June 23. See article below. For more information contact Gloria Mills (gills.cact@snet.net).

2010 Legislative Session Wrap-up

On Thursday, May 27, the CT Elder Action Network (CEAN) will host “The 2010 Legislative Session: What Happened?” from 10:00 am– 11:30 am at the Legislative Office Building, Room 2A. Come learn about how older adults, including many individuals with disabilities, will be affected by the state budget and other legislation passed this session. Topics to be covered include changes to health care, the safeguarding of home care and respite programs, keeping contact information private, and energy reform and rates...and more!

Please RSVP via email: coa@cga.ct.gov, or call the Connecticut Commission on Aging: (860) 240-5200.

Visitability Legislation Passes!

On May 12, 2010 Governor M. Jodi Rell signed P.A. 10-56, An Act Concerning Visitable Housing, to be effective October 1, 2010. "Visitable housing" means one-to-four family homes that are constructed with three basic architectural features to allow persons with disabilities to enter and move through the house: (1) interior doorways that provide a minimum thirty-two inch wide unobstructed opening, (2) an accessible means of entering the house and (3) a full or half bathroom on the first floor that contains accessibility features.

Under the Act, the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), in consultation with the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, may establish a program to encourage the development of visitable housing in the state. The program shall (1) provide a single point of contact for any person seeking financial or technical assistance from the state to construct visitable housing, (2) identify financial incentives for developers who construct visitable housing, and (3) include public education about such housing. In addition, the DECD shall establish an informational web page on the department's Internet web site with a list of links to available visitable housing resources.

Visitability is a movement to change home construction practices so that new single family 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 individuals with disabilities to visit family and friends.

For more information about visitability in Connecticut call Sue Salters at Independence Unlimited – 860-523-5021. The visitability initiative is being advocated by the North Central Disability Advocacy Network which is an arm of Independence Unlimited. The Network is a local affiliate of the Disability Advocacy Collaborative.

Long Term Care Under Health Care Reform

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has shared useful information about how the new health care reform legislation might impact community living opportunities and home and community based services. More detailed information can be found at www.aarp.org/getthefacts:

Medicaid Community First Choice Option

- a new state plan option to provide Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), attendant services and supports to individuals needing institutional level of care
- must be offered statewide; no limits on number of participants; assistance provided with ADLs, IADLs, health-related tasks, etc.
- Incentive for states to participate: 6% enhanced federal Medicaid matching rate (FMAP)
- Begins Oct. 1, 2011

State Balancing Incentives Payments Program (BIPP)

- Goal: help states balance long-term services and supports (LTSS) systems (HCBS over institutional care)
- States apply for grant and agree to develop: a statewide single entry point; conflict-free case management; standardized assessment; data collection
- Grants through temporary (5 year) enhanced federal match
- State maintenance of effort on eligibility required
- Begins Oct. 1, 2011

Medicaid HCBS State Plan Option – Immediate Changes to Current Law

Since 2006, State Medicaid plan option available to expand HCBS without a waiver to individuals who need less than institutional level of care, but few states have taken up the option States now:

- Can include services not listed in statute with CMS approval (expanded scope of services)
- Can't limit coverage to a specific geographic area
- Can't limit the number of individuals covered
- May target individuals with particular conditions
- May tighten functional eligibility, but individuals already receiving coverage are protected.
- Began: April 1, 2010

Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration

- Grants awarded to states to transition Medicaid enrolled nursing home residents to homes or community settings through FY 2016
- Minimum Nursing Home residency requirement reduced from 6 months to 90 days—rehab days are not counted
- Began: April 22, 2010

Other HCBS Related Provisions

- \$10 million available per year for five years starting in 2010 for Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) – “one-stop shops” for information and other assistance regarding long-term services and supports

The legislation also provides better and easier access to information on nursing home ownership, organizational structure, staffing, complaints, etc.; and modifications to the CMS Nursing Home Compare Website to include timely updates of inspection information, links to state government nursing home websites and inspection forms, and a consumer rights page with state specific information.

In addition, states must establish complaint resolution processes that meet specified criteria, some Medicare and Medicaid fines may be used to benefit residents or support consumer involvement, and there are new requirements (and penalties) in the event of facility closure.

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
- North Central – contact: Candace Low (clow@independenceunlimited.org) – meetings are held at 151 New Park Avenue in Hartford
- Bridgeport Area – contact: Tony LaCava (tlacava@drfc.org) – meetings are on the third Thursday of the month at various sites.

Nutrition Workshop for Parents of Children with Disabilities

The Greater Danbury Child and Family Network and the Birth-to-Three LICC are presenting a workshop for parents of children with disabilities and the providers and professionals who work with them. “Toilet Training Your Child” will be presented by Anne Mead, Director, Early Care and Education Training Institute, on Wednesday, June 9 from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm at the Early Care and Education Training Institute Seminar Room, 30 Main Street, Danbury. Food and childcare will be provided on site. Childcare stipends are also available for those who need childcare in their homes.

RSVP by calling Caroline LaFleur at Danbury Children First at 203-797-8088 or emailing carolinel@danburychildrenfirst.org.

More Parent Workshops

Two workshops on transition services will be held in Trumbull and Hartford in June. The Trumbull workshop will take place on Thursday, June 3 at St. Vincent’s Feroletto Children’s Development Center, 95 Merritt Boulevard, Trumbull, Connecticut from 5:00 – 9:00 pm, and the

Hartford workshop will take place on Monday, June 7 at HARC, Inc. - 900 Asylum Ave. Hartford CT, 06105 also from 5:00 – 9:00 pm. To RSVP: call 1-800-399-7284 or email: pathp2pct@pathct.org

The workshops are being sponsored by PATH Parent -to-Parent/Family Voices of CT and the Connecticut Medical Home Initiative for Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs. Translation services for the two workshops are being provided by UCONN UCEDD and Family-to-Family Health Information Centers.

Workshop on Dental Care for Children with Disabilities

On Wednesday, June 2, from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm, the CT Family Support Network will present “Supporting Children with Special Health Care Needs in a Dental Home” at the Courtyard Marriott on Sebethe Street in Cromwell. Topics to be covered include: Why early dental services are important for children with disabilities. What is the Home by One Program? How to connect families you work with to a Dental Home. The intended audience are: DDS Case Managers, DDS Nurses, Birth to Three System Service Coordinators, School Nurses, Pediatric Dentists, Dental Hygienists, parents and anyone who works directly with families raising children with disabilities. Breakfast and lunch are included. To register for this event, go to <http://ctfsn.eventbrite.com> or call 203-710-3041.

Melville Trust Celebrates Supportive Housing

On Thursday, June 3, 2010, the Melville Charitable Trust will celebrate the success of Connecticut's supportive housing movement at the 5th Annual Reaching Home Celebration Dinner and Awards celebration. The event will be held at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center in Cromwell. Contact Kate Kelly at 860-244-0066 or kate@ctpartnershiphousing.com with any questions. Individual tickets cost \$50.

The progress of the supportive housing movement is due to the hard work and dedication of hundreds of people across the state who work every day with the belief that we can end homelessness in Connecticut. At a time when the need is so great, it is important to come together to honor, celebrate and pledge renewed commitment to this profound, transformative work.

Therapy and Recreation Fair in Southbury

The 2nd Annual Therapy and Recreation Fair, hosted by the Region 15 Special Education PTA, will be held Friday, June 4th from 6:00-10:00 pm at the Heritage Hotel in Southbury. Admission is free.

Do you have a child with a disability? Are you constantly looking for qualified therapists, educators and appropriate recreational activities? Come learn more about your area resources for Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapy, Psychology, Neurology, Sensory-motor Tutoring, Assistive Technology, Summer Camps, Estate Planning, Social

Skills Groups, Child Studies, Grants, Naturopathic Medicine, Vitamins, Yoga Classes, GFCE foods, Medical Equipment, Counseling, Service Animals, Sports, Toys, Books and more. Contact JenWeitz (jenweitz@sbcglobal.net) or Jacqueline McMahon (jacquelinemc@charter.net) for more information.

Emergency Prep Conference

CT Community Care, Inc. (CCCI) is hosting the Myra Kerr Memorial Educational Conference on June 10, 2010 at the Mystic Marriott Hotel and Spa, Route 117 in Mystic. "On the Path of Emergency Preparedness" will cover where we've been, where we are, and where we need to go. Featured speakers will be LT. General Russell Honore, Commanding General of the First United States Army, and CT native Marcie Roth, Director of Disability Integration and Coordination for FEMA. The event will run from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. The conference fee is \$50 and the registration deadline is June 3, 2010. For further information call Jolene at 860-314-2247 or e-mail Jolene@ctcommunityre.org.

Transportation News

Gloria Mills, Executive Director of the CT Association for Community Transportation, reports that the association's Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon will be held June 23, 2010 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at the Indian Hill Country Club, 111 Golf St., Newington. The event provides an opportunity to celebrate and recognize the people who have helped promote and improve public transportation in Connecticut. The Friend of Public Transportation Award will be given in recognition of outstanding leadership and dedication to the enhancement of public transportation in the State of Connecticut. The Excellence in Transportation Award will be given to persons who excel at their jobs in transportation at CACT member organizations. To register, or if you have any questions, contact Gloria Mills at (860) 844-8594 or email her at [gmills.cact@snet.net](mailto:g mills.cact@snet.net). The cost to attend, including lunch, is \$35.

On May 25, 2010 a workshop entitled "Understanding Public Transportation" will be offered at the Groton Public Library, 25 Newtown Road in Groton at 1 pm. This free workshop, conducted by The Kennedy Center in conjunction with the Connecticut Association for Community Transportation (CACT) and Connect-Ability, is designed to teach social services professionals about public transit in the Groton area: the accessibility of service; understanding how transit service is funded; and how to increase public transportation. Similar workshops will be held on June 8, 2010 at the New Haven Public Library, 133 Elm Street in New Haven at 1 pm and June 16, 2010 at the East Hartford Public Library, 840 Main Street, East Hartford, also at 1 pm. To register for either workshop contact Gloria DeFreitas at (203) 365-8522 ext. 263 or email her at gdefreitas@kennedyctr.org.

More Transportation News: A New Accessible Taxi Service!

Executive 2000 Transportation announces a new freedom for persons with disabilities in the Greater Middlesex County Area! Now, individuals with disabilities can go out for dinner, movies, shopping, visiting...whatever and whenever they wish. The new service covers the towns of Middletown, Cromwell, Portland, East Hampton, Middlefield, Durham, Rocky Hill,

and Berlin.

Executive 2000 Transportation is located at 11 Alcap Ridge, Suite D in Cromwell and can be reached at 860-635-8555.

Seventy-Five Days to the ADA Commemoration

The ADA Coalition of CT is arranging a special activity the afternoon of Monday, July 26 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Former U.S. Senator and CT Governor Lowell Weicker will be in attendance to share his perspective on the ADA twenty years after he worked so hard as a U.S. Senator to see it passed. A panel presentation is also being planned, and a challenge will be put forward to urge us all to continue to work to make the promise of the ADA a reality. A reception will follow the afternoon's activities. The event will be held at the State Capitol in the Hall of Flags and North Portico (first floor).

Other ADA anniversary news: A blog on the federal government's web site "Disability.gov" will examine the ramifications of the ADA, historical points leading up to its creation, and how supporting the rights of individuals with disabilities supports all Americans. You are invited to present your personal perspectives on how your life has been touched by the ADA. Link: <http://blog.govdelivery.com/usodep/2010/04/countdown-100-days-to-the-ada.html>.

More on Richard LaPointe

Last month the Collaborative published information about Richard LaPointe and his bid for a new trial. Richard was in court the first week of May, and he will return to court July 6 in Rockville to continue to plead his case. Richard is a middle-aged man with Dandy Walker syndrome who has spent 18 years in prison for a crime that supporters say he never could have even begun to commit.

As a follow up to his May court date, advocate Bob Perske and a friend of Richard's, shares the following:

Go to www.friendsofrichardlapointe.com and see what Webmaster and Attorney Anne Eason has done for all of us! She performed this feat as a caring citizen volunteer and friend of Richard.

- On the Home Page, click on "For the Latest Articles. Is It Ever Too Late To Do the Right Thing." Before your eyes, ALL of the articles ever discovered will unfurl.*
- On the Home Page, click on "To Find a Copy of the [Appellate Court] Decision" and this new life-giving breakthrough will pop up in its entirety.*
- Then click on the tab heading "Court Documents" and you will find all of the documents printed in this case.*
- Click on the tab, "Documents" and you will see copies of the confessions the officers received from Richard and Karen (two hand printed by officers and one typed for Richard and one hand printed by an officer for Karen). After that, you will find investigator Morrisey's*

typed report.

New ConnSense Bulletin Website Created

The new ConnSENSE Bulletin (www.connsensebulletin.com) has under-gone an extensive design update and is now a collaborative partnership brought to you by the University of Connecticut, the Pappanikou Center for Developmental Disabilities, The Connecticut Tech Act Project and the New England Assistive Technology (NEAT) Center at Oak Hill. The new website is dedicated to bringing you practical assistive technology resources that will aid professionals, individuals with disabilities and their families in accessing the assistive technology they need.

The ConnSENSE Bulletin began in 1984 by Chauncy Rucker, Ph.D. ConnSENSE is an acronym for Connecticut Special Education Network for Software Evaluation and was originally established as a printed newsletter dedicated to reviewing and evaluating software for students with disabilities. The original ConnSENSE Bulletin website was established in 1999. The new updated and revised website has expanded its focus to include all types of assistive technology and is dedicated to becoming an essential resource for professionals, individuals and families.

Artists with Disabilities to Show their Works

A Juried Exhibition of visual art created by artists with disabilities will be held from June 11th – August 20th, 2010 at the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism Gallery, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06103. The exhibit can be seen Monday - Friday from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. An Opening Reception will be held Thursday, June 17th from 4:30-6:30 pm. Visitors should sign in at security desk and take the elevator to the 2nd Floor. For more information go to the Commission's web site: www.cultureandtourism.org.

SERC Releases Directory of Summer Camps

The State Education Resource Center has published its 2010 edition of the Directory of Summer Camps and Programs for children with disabilities in Connecticut. SERC Director Marianne Kirner notes that inclusion in the directory does not indicate that the camp has been reviewed and/or approved by SERC or the Connecticut State Department of Education. The listings are provided solely as a resource for general information. To order a directory call SERC, which is located at 25 Industrial Park Road in Middletown, at (860) 632-1485.

BIAC Finally has an Operation Agreement with OPM

After nine months of struggle, the Office of Policy and Management has approved the Brain Jury Association of CT's (BIAC's) contract for 2009/2010, including their operating grant. This victory was made possible through the successful lobbying efforts of BIAC's loyal supporters. Although the total grant for this fiscal year is \$83,000 less than last year, the organization is relieved to have a portion of their funding reinstated. Executive Director Julie Peters has noted

that supporter calls, letters and emails to legislators were critical. And thanks to those efforts, legislators listened.

If anyone would like to receive the BIAC monthly newsletter, visit their website at: www.biact.org.

Poll Supports Community Living

A Harris Interactive poll released in late April indicates that a majority of Americans support legislation that would allow people with disabilities to choose community-based care over nursing homes. The poll, commissioned ADAPT and the Coalition for Community Integration, gauged opinions on the Community Choice Act, a bill proposed in Congress that would mandate that states offer people with disabilities the option to use Medicaid funding to pay for community-based rather than institutional care.

Findings from the poll indicate that 66 percent of Americans support the legislation without knowing what it would cost. When informed that the measure would likely add no more than \$6 to a middle class taxpayer's bill, 89 percent of respondents were supportive. Just 8 percent of those polled said they would not support the Community Choice Act.

Cost estimates for the measure range between \$1.44 billion and \$3.81 billion annually, according to a 2007 study published in the Journal of Aging & Social Policy. Organizers of the poll used these figures along with the average tax paid by middle income Americans as compared to the federal budget to determine that the proposed law would likely add \$2.40 to \$6.35 to the average taxpayer's bill in 2010 dollars. The poll was conducted in April after health care reform was signed into law.

Initially, advocates had hoped the Community Choice Act would be included in the health care reform legislation. But while the new law does give states an incentive to offer people the opportunity to live in the community, it falls short of the mandate in the Community Choice Act. Under health care reform, a provision known as the Community First Choice Option allows states to receive increased federal matching funds if they agree to eliminate caps on the number of individuals who can live in the community.

Disability advocates say the option is a step in the right direction, but the mandate in the Community Choice Act is needed to ensure that the civil rights of individuals in all states are met.

DOJ Files Lawsuit Against State of Arkansas

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a lawsuit alleging that the state of Arkansas is systemically violating the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). DOJ filed the ADA action against the state of Arkansas due to its segregation of over 1,000 individuals in six intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DOJ believes that many of these people could live in more integrated community-based settings.

This action is indicative of the new approach being taken by DOJ in assuring disability rights protections for individuals who reside in large state institutions. Arkansas' current waiting list for community-based services is about 1,400 and moves very slowly. Read DOJ's press release at: <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/May/10-crt-538.html>

DOJ also reached a settlement agreement under Title II of the ADA with St. Clair County, Illinois to improve access to its facilities, programs and services, including the county's polling places and emergency services. Title II applies to state and local governments. For additional information, see www.ada.gov/stclare_pca/stclare_sa.htm.

President Obama Signs Veterans, Caregivers Legislation

President Barack Obama has signed legislation to improve health care for veterans and to recognize the important role that family caregivers play in the recovery of wounded personnel. The new law increases support for veterans in rural areas with the transportation and housing needed to reach VA hospitals and clinics. It also expands health care for women veterans to meet their unique needs, including maternity care for newborn children, and it allows VA to launch a pilot program to provide child care for Veterans receiving intensive medical care. For more information go to: http://www.disability.gov/health/specific_populations/veterans_&_military

**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.**