

THE Colorado Independent

March/April 2009

This newsletter is published by the Provider Relations Unit of the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and edited by Judy Neal, Independent Living Program Coordinator. The goal is to share information among the ten Colorado Centers for Independent Living, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and DVR staff. The submission of information or articles from all affiliated with these organizations is both encouraged and welcomed. Please e-mail any articles of interest to judy.neal@state.co.us If you have questions, please phone me at (303) 866-4645.

Hard times call for:

By Nancy Smith, Director
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

No doubt about it, we are all living through hard times. I arrive at the office not knowing what the day might bring. Some days we lose resources, other days we gain them. Still, there's never enough money or enough people. Everyone around me is stressed out and panicking. I have become very conscious about recognizing the traits needed to live through these times.

Creativity- when there's not enough of anything and we still have people clamoring for service, creativity is what will work. Can we look differently at how we have been providing service? Can we frame the times in some sort of positive light so that getting through it is not like slogging through a Louisiana swamp? Last summer DVR became a long campaign of finding other ways to do things in an environment of limited resources. We have been very successful and I sense some excitement and delight when people discover another way to provide service with out a lot of resources.

Sense of humor – I have to find something to laugh at every day, even if it's me. My dogs are also sources of humor. Colleagues find the light side and I am grateful for that. Laughing with someone else is even better.

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Mental toughness – Survival means toughing out the really ugly stuff and having a thick skin when people get unpleasant. It also means to me that I need to be able to shake off some of the things at the end of the day so I can rest.

Ability to relieve stress – I know people have different ways of doing this, what matters is that you do it. I work out, play with my dogs, talk to dear friends, and remember to take deep breaths. I clean house, work in the garden (when it's not winter), and volunteer.

Eyes on the prize (wherever it is) – It can be very tough to stay focused when everyone is panicking or just really angry about the changes. It isn't fair or reasonable to balance budgets on the backs of those most in need of assistance, but the powers that be do it anyway. We have to stay focused on our vision, mission, and goals. When Congress was looking for cuts in the Stimulus Package, we heard they had decided to cut all of the funds for VR, CILs, IL, OIB and IDEA. The end result looks quite different, thanks to the community mobilizing across the country to express our outrage to our senators.

Collaborative Spirit – The temptation when resources are slim is for all of us to compete for what is available. Instead, I like to think about

ways in which we can work together to get things done. Ken Schmidt, DVR's Field Administrator, is putting together a meeting of organizations across the state that have a vested interest in serving people with disabilities. We want to support and encourage collaboration and sharing of resources for clients in whatever ways we can.

Knowing what keeps you going and doing that – Everyone has a different kind of motivator. For some its other people, for some its anger, others have a spiritual wellspring that moves them. I know for me that during tough times it's vital to nurture that motivational core.

Taking care of your health (no really, I mean this!) – I check in with my staff regularly about how they are taking care of themselves. It's an easy thing to forget when things are not going well. You have to sleep well, eat right, rest, take care of yourself when you don't feel well, move around, and see a doctor. No ifs, you have to do it. And please, no heroics. Don't come to work when you are sick. No one else wants what you've got!

Having patience when it seems like someone got on your last ½ nerve – I have had some of those days lately. There isn't enough of me to go around and

everyone wants a piece. Talk a short breather, go for a walk, close the door to your workspace, turn off the phone, and/or ignore your e-mails. Sometimes I have to have a day just for me – alone, reading, napping, and watching old movies. Do whatever it takes to get back in balance.

Staying flexible – This has been my watchword lately: flexibility. Sometimes the news about the deficit, the stimulus, the budget shortfalls, the loss of staff, the need to respond immediately just takes away any possibility to plan my day or accomplish anything on the to-do list. I have learned to stay loose and be flexible. The to-do list will still be there tomorrow, or next week.

Tuning out the noise (the news, people worrying out loud, etc) – I work in an area of our building that has constant activity. On the days when I have something needing to get done that requires

concentration, I have to shut my office door. I typically will rarely shut my door. Another tactic I have employed is to find a quiet place somewhere else. I also shut off the news, change the subject, and refuse to look at e-mails when I know people will be begging for reassurance that I cannot yet provide. Some people tune into I-pods all day. If it's important to stay focused and calm as leaders, then we have to find ways to do that. Shutting out the noise is one way.

I hope all of you have strategies for dealing with hard times that help you preserve your health, both mental and physical. I hope you teach these strategies to your staff and others with whom you work. We will get through this time. It won't be easy or short. I hope you all take care of yourselves while you are moving your organizations through these hard times.



DIVISION of
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

State of Colorado

“Bridging business and ability”

Look for the 2008 DVR Annual Report at

http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/dvr/PDFs/2008_Annual_Report.pdf



From the SILC

**By
Debbie Petersen**

2009 has already been very busy for the Colorado SILC. We started the New Year by sending 2 representatives to SILC congress. At SILC congress we had an opportunity to meet wonderful representatives from Region 8. We found that the SILCS in Region 8 have a good relationship with the CILs in their state; as well as DVR and RSA. It was also a good opportunity for us to learn about NCIL activities. The primary focus for NCIL in 2009 is reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act. SILC Congress agreed to support this effort. During congress we spent some time identifying recommendations from SILCs to NCIL related to SILC requirements defined in the Rehabilitation Act.

The Public Policy Committee finalized our first issue brief. It is focused on emergency planning and the challenges facing those with functional limitations. The primary goal of the issue brief is to alert Legislators and other agencies that there is no coordination in planning for the needs of people with disabilities and functional limitations; and that there are a half million people in Colorado who need specialized methods of alert, transportation and sheltering. This

issue brief is on our website at www.coloradosilc.org.

The state plan committee is working with a company that can provide demographic statistics. This is the beginning of our needs assessment. It sounds very promising that we will be able to have data that will help identify areas of need for people with disabilities. The state plan committee is asking CIL directors to submit questions they would like the survey to address.

As you can see we have a SILC that is truly “Paving Pathways to full participation for the community of people with disabilities serviced by Colorado Centers for Independent Living.” If you are interested in being a member of this very dynamic council you can download an application by going to: http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/govnr_dir/bc/index.htm or contacting the office of Boards and Commissions at (303- 866-6328



From the ACCIL

**By
Evelyn Tileston**



2009 A Year of Hope and Opportunity

March 10 is our chance to meet with State Legislators. ACCIL is sponsoring a day at the Capitol. Beth Danielson of Connections (in Greeley) is heading this. Contact her at (970) 352-8682 or 800-887-5828.

Right now, I am counting my blessings; it's a tried and true way to focus away from depressing things such as the unemployment rate among people with disabilities, the struggle for funds to pay our staff, and our inability to refer folks to DVR for employment-related services they so desperately need. It would be easy to let anxiety and panic take over, cover our heads, and wait about how the sky is falling. Clouds too close to the ground, fog, may tend to make one think so; but really now, has the sky ever fallen?

In spite of all the negatives, all ten IL Centers in Colorado are still functioning and even growing. The Colorado Springs IL Center has even moved into a new building. The IL Center in Craig has taken on two new programs with different income

streams and our DVR counselor stationed in Steamboat Springs is leading a transitions class for 109 students at Moffat County High. Students with disabilities are included in this group. Each student who finishes the classes is rewarded with a new lap-top.

Soon, each of the ten IL centers in Colorado will begin receiving new funds as a result of the Reinvestment and Recovery Act, meaning that we will be able to provide even more services for our consumers.

We have two new Senators and some new Congressmen. Let's get busy and educate them as well as our State Legislators.

Colorado Senators:

Mark Udall (D-CO)
B40E Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D. C 20510
(202) 224-5941
<http://markudall.senate.gov/contact/contact.cfm>

Michael F. Bennett (D-CO)
702 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

(202) 224-5852
senator_bennet@bennet.senate.gov

Colorado Representatives:

Diana DeGette (D-01) (202) 225-4431
http://www.house.gov/formdegette/zip_auth.htm

Jared Polis (D-02) (202) 225-2161
<https://forms.house.gov/polis/contact-form.sh>
Jared Polis (D-02) (202) 225-2161
<https://forms.house.gov/polis/contact-form.shtml>

John Salazar (D-03) (202) 226-9669
<http://www.house.gov/salazar/contact.shtml>

Betsy Markey (D-04) (202) 225-4676
<https://forms.house.gov/betsymarkey/contact-form.shtml>

Doug Lamborn (R-05) (202) 225-4422
<http://lamborn.house.gov/ZipAuth.aspx>

Mike Coffmann (R-06) (202) 225-7882
<https://forms.house.gov/coffman/contact-form.shtml>

Ed Perlmutter (D-07) (202) 225-2645
http://perlmutter.house.gov/IMA/issue_subscribe.htm

Congratulations

to – Elizabeth Erhmann

Elizabeth received an Advocacy Award from the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition (CCDC). Elizabeth is an itinerant Independent Living Specialist at Connections. Her territory includes all, or part, of five counties outside of Greeley. She is known for her advocacy with a number of school systems on behalf of students with disabilities.

Colorado CIL Websites

www.atlantiscommunity.net
Atlantis, Denver

www.cfigj.org
Center for Independence,
Grand Junction

www.cpwd-ilc.org
Center for People with
Disabilities, Boulder

www.dcilwebsite.org
Disability Center for
Independent Living, Denver

www.fortnet.org/drs
Disabled Resource Service
Fort Collins

www.swcidur.org
Southwest Center for
Independence, Durango



The SILC is doing a great job of establishing connections with the community, working through the goals of the State Plan for Independent Living, and bringing some much-needed talent to the table. So, I posed the question: What makes you proud to be a SILC Member? Here are some of the answers:

...simply being a small part of creating some resources which will be helpful to others. **Linda LaPinte**

I like being a SILC member because I might be able to make a difference in the world, or maybe just in one person's life because of the decisions that we make at the state level.

Hope Krause

I've thought long and hard about this question. I'm proud to be a SILC because board members are comprised of amazingly awesome people. who offer a wide range of diverse opinions and knowledge.

As a SILC member I am getting out in my community and talking about the IL centers to encourage seniors and other people with disabilities to learn what their IL center can do for them. But I also realize that this is bigger than just my community. It encompasses all of Colorado.

I feel, as SILC members, we can make a difference for all IL centers in Colorado and for seniors and people with disabilities. **Jan Ward**

I'm proud of having taken the opportunity as a SILC member, to have a positive impact on the system of IL providers in Colorado; and having successfully helped in facilitating a better relationship between the SILC and DVR and the SILC and ACCIL. **Faith Gross**

It makes me proud to know I can contribute towards greater inclusion for all cross-disabilities and general population together as one without dissent towards each other.

Billy Allen

I am a part of a group dedicated to the independent living movement will work tirelessly to pave pathways so people with disabilities can experience full participation.

Debbie Petersen, SILC Chair

Next SILC Meetings

**Wednesday, March 18
Pueblo**

**Wednesday, May 20
Greeley**

All meetings include a public comment section, typically around 1:00 p.m. ASL interpreters are available during public comment. To request other accessible formats, contact Judy Neal at 303 866-4645 or judy.neal@state.co.us.

Coping With Hard Times

Recently, I posed a question to our CILs: What are you doing to economize during the current economic crisis? I got the following answer from **Nancy Jackson**, executive director of Disabled Resource Services (DRS) in Fort Collins.

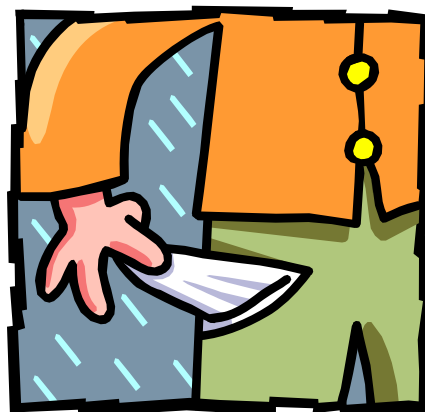
We're a pretty frugal agency to begin with so there hasn't been much we've done to pinch pennies. Long before now we've been using the blank back side of printed paper as scrap paper and reuse mailing envelopes to courier paperwork between our two offices and to our bookkeeping/accounting firm. We use business reply envelopes from advertisers to put payroll checks and other confidential information in for staff members. Places we do business with that advertise with pens for customer use as giveaway items are taken to keep our supply costs down. We recently began purchasing postage stamps on-line rather than traveling to the post office and waiting in line which seems to be more cost effective and reduces mileage reimbursement. Ordering office supplies on-line and having them delivered is also a cost-savings in staff time and travel expenses. Recently we leased a credit card machine to make it easier for people to pay the fees for medical equipment

from our Loan Closet. An added benefit is it eliminates the risk of bounced/bad checks and bank fees thus saving our CIL time and money.

Some tips from **Marcella Young** who works at DRS –

One idea I use to get stuff like rags for Ted in the DME shop, a vacuum cleaner for our office, computer parts for our clients, and a variety of things for my own home, is by using freecycle.com. It is specific to areas/towns and regions. I also post things I don't need that someone else might be able to use. I have made nice friends as a result of this practice.

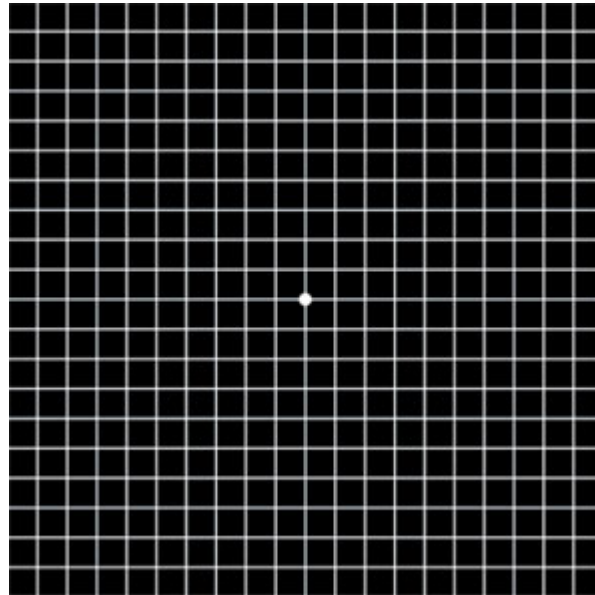
Another thing I am learning to do is to only purchase what I need for a few days, instead of thinking I must buy larger amounts I find that I could live prosperously on what is in my freezer, but still bought stuff fresh, and put it on hold. I found that I was throwing food away because I hadn't used it in time.



“VISION MATTERS, 2009”

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ADA Definition Of Disability Part 3

By Cindy Powell

Though the ADA protects people with disabilities from being discriminated against on the basis of their disability, **the ADA does not entitle people with disabilities to jobs, benefits, programs or services for which they are not otherwise qualified.**

For example, a Meals on Wheels program requiring that participants who receive meals must be 55 years or older is not required to serve a 30-year-old person who is quadriplegic, regardless of how much that person might need the service.

Also protected from disability-based discrimination are people who are **associated with** individuals with disabilities. For example, if a sports arena refuses to admit a person as a result of her mobility impairment and her sister, the arena would be discriminating against both individuals.

Under the ADA, a **qualified person with a disability** is someone who meets a program's eligibility requirements with or without:

- reasonable modifications to rules, policies or practices,
- auxiliary (communications) aids and services, or
- removal of architectural, communications or transportation barriers.

The ADA requires employers to focus on the **essential functions** of a job to determine whether an applicant or employee with a disability is qualified. A qualified individual with a disability is someone who "satisfies the skills, experience, educational and other job-related requirements of the position, and who, **with or without reasonable accommodation**, can perform the essential functions of such position." Once again, an employer is not required to hire or retain an individual with a disability who is not qualified to perform the job.

The ADA prohibits retaliation or coercion after a qualified person with a disability or their associate has filed a discrimination complaint with Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or Department of Justice (DOJ). For example, if a state tax office delays a tax refund for an individual who filed a complaint regarding inaccessibility of their office, the state has illegally retaliated against the complainant.

Another example of unlawful retaliation is a restaurant refusing to serve a customer who filed an ADA complaint against the restaurant. EEOC and DOJ's enforcement of the ADA will be featured in the next newsletter.

For informal ADA guidance, information or materials, please contact DBTAC Rocky Mountain ADA Center at (800) 949-4232 between 8 am to 5 pm weekdays. 3630 Sinton Road, #103, Colorado Springs, CO 80907; www.adainformation.org

Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) - Rocky Mountain ADA Center is one of ten regional "one-stop" comprehensive Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) resource centers. Located in Colorado Springs, DBTAC - Rocky Mountain ADA Center serves a six state region: Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

DBTAC - Rocky Mountain ADA Center provides

- *technical assistance,*
- *education and training,*
- *public awareness,*
- *materials dissemination, and*
- *information and referral*

to employers, businesses, state and local government agencies, disability and rehabilitation programs, people with disabilities, architects, code

officials, schools and many other entities with rights and responsibilities under the ADA.

Message from

Kareem Dale

*Special Assistant for
Disability Policy
to President Obama*

Mr. Dale would like any personal stories from any person with a disability who has gone back to work, or has been rehired as a result of the economic recovery plan. This is an important request and is time sensitive. Mr. Dale is asking the disability community for your help in responding to this request, as it will assist him in facilitating full inclusion during the current administration. You can contact Kareem at kareemdale@sbcglobal.net

Thanks for your input

UPCOMING TRAINING

Enroll in a CTAT Teletraining now!

A teletraining provides you with the opportunity to obtain valuable information from the comfort of your home, office, or other location. Teletrainings support the professional development of individuals and agencies for less than the cost of sending staff to a comparable training event. Teletrainings offer an efficient and effective means to expand your knowledge and skills.

To participate in a teletraining, you simply need access to a telephone and either: 1) access to the Internet to follow the session on line, or 2) a printed copy of the presentation materials that are emailed to you in advance. Most teletrainings offer an opportunity for a question-and-answer exchange between participants and the instructor, and they accommodate multiple participants from a single location.

All times are from
1:00-2:30 pm Mountain Time
Registration fees :\$35 per phone line
Easy On Line Enrollment

**March 23, 2009 A Community-
Based Concussion Management
Plan; What Parents, Schools and
Physicians Need to Know to Best**

Manage Pediatric Concussion

Based upon lessons learned from a three year study of adolescent concussion in a local high school (for the Center for Disease Control), **Dr. Karen McAvoy** presents data and anecdotal information that suggests that "good management" is the key to successful post-concussion recovery. "Good management" is enhanced by parents, schools and physicians having a clear understanding of their piece in the recovery. This presentation will help to outline ideas for implementation of "Best Practices."

March 31, 2009 Family Concerns after Traumatic Brain Injury: How Professionals Can Help

At the conclusion of the presentation by **Kenny Hosack, MA**, conference attendees will be able to: discuss why family services and involvement are important throughout the continuum of care after traumatic brain injury; discuss what families typically experience are acute care, rehabilitation, and long term in the community; discuss how professionals can help families along the continuum from acute care to the community.

**April 7, 2009 Getting Ready to
Write: The Beginning of a
Successful Grant**

Grants can fund activities and services that are crucial for the success of your company and your customers. With growing limitations on traditional funding, grant opportunities give non-profits new capacity. With four relatively easy steps you can prepare for a successful grant proposal. Join **Gayann Brandenburg** for 90 minutes of instruction and examples, and prepare to build your capacity!

April 23, 2009 It Takes a Village...Empowering Youth through Collaboration

Do you want to successfully serve youth with disabilities? **Julie Ballinger** is here to help you learn about the CHIRP! The University of Arkansas CURRENTS' Centers Hatching Initiatives for Realizing Potential project promotes Centers for Independent Living to coordinate services and develop working collaborative relationships with the State VR Program to assist and sustain youth with disabilities as they make the transition from school to living productively in the community. CHIRP is currently being beta tested

in Texas and has developed training/strategies that are being implemented at eleven sites. These sites are serving as the core for larger community collaboration including schools, education centers, parents, youth, and other service providers, as well as for youth leadership development.

May 13, 2009 Dealing with Depression and Fatigue in People with Cognitive Disabilities

We are thrilled to welcome expert guest presenter **Kim A. Gorgens, Ph.D.**, Clinical Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Professional Psychology University of Denver. This important training will provide an overview of the most current research related to depression for people with cognitive disabilities. Clinical and behavioral interventions for the treatment of depression and promotion of wellness will also be highlighted.

To register complete the attached form or visit us on-line at www.ctat-training.com

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Computer Navigation
using Scanning
Examples of PC and MAC
scanning software

**Presented by Becky Breaux and
Aleaza Goldberg**



Assistive Technology Partners

BREAKING BARRIERS, CHANGING LIVES

Assistive Technology Learning Lab

Assistive Technology users that depend on single switch or two-switch step scanning have special challenges when it comes to the functional use of a computer. This Learning Lab will outline several different scanning programs that provide mouse emulation and pointer/cursor navigation using switches for these AT consumers.

Denver:

March 12, 09 from 2:30 – 4:30pm
Denver Assistive Technology Partners
601 E. 18th Ave.
Suite 130
Denver, CO 80203
303-315-1280

Grand Junction:

April 15, 09 from 2:30 - 4:30
The Workforce Center
2897 North Avenue
Modular 3A
Grand Junction, CO 81501
970-248-0876

IMPORTANT NOTE: The format of the ATP Learning Labs will change this year to provide more hands-on experience with assistive technology. Our labs will remain FREE and we will continue to offer them on a monthly basis. Featured discussions led by a skilled AT specialist will take 20 to 30 minutes. Q & A sessions and hands on exploration of AT will follow for the remaining session time. You MUST REGISTER in advance to attend due to space limitations. We look forward to seeing you throughout 2009.

Join us for our Learning Lab with **Becky Breaux, MS, OTR, ATP,** and **Aleaza Goldberg, MA, CCC-SLP** who will be leading this discussion.

After the brief 20-30 minute overview, participants will have the opportunity for hands-on exploration and Q & A. This discussion is open to professionals as well as individuals with disabilities and their caregivers.