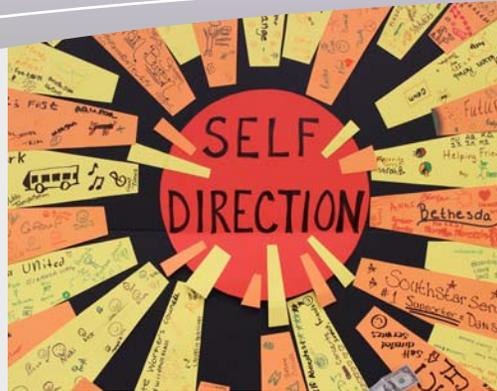


The Alliance News



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Vision

Our vision is for self-advocates to work together to get the support we need to live the life we want in the community.

Mission

Our mission is to speak up for ourselves and each other while working together to make changes in our communities and in Illinois.

An Initiative of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

It's My LIFE...It's My Direction Rally

Self-direction Game



"Lottery" Skit



Creating the SUNBURST

Speeches



The Alliance News

LOCAL ISSUES

Call to Action: A Discussion

By Megan Norlin

Some of you may have heard about some new bus passes which are now being used in certain cities around Illinois. The strange thing about these bus passes is, if a passenger has a disability, the word "Disabled" is printed across the front. The CIA in Bloomington brought this to my attention, and they have started a letter writing campaign to change this identification system.



When I read about this, I started thinking: what does that word "Disabled" really mean? Where did that word come from? Why is it here? What bad things come from using that word? Are there any good things that come

from that word? I ended up coming up with a series of questions that I hope will help us have a good discussion.

The list of questions includes information about disability rights and important figures in the movement. My goal with this project is to start a discussion that will help us with the bus pass issue and with every issue we take on.

So that's it, a simple discussion, which can be done inside and away from this terrible heat. If you would like the project, please email me at hottwheelz702@yahoo.com. I will also pass on the information on the letter writing campaign.

See you next time and thanks for reading!

Group Profile: The Network

By Megan Norlin



Members of the Network do a skit at the Alliance rally in June

The Network is a group of 15-20 self-advocates based in Alton, Illinois. They are dedicated to educating one another and the community about disability rights and advocacy. The group spends much of its meeting time planning trips to events, such as rallies at the capitol, the Speak Up, Speak Out, Summit, and Alliance rallies. The group's major goal is to hold their own conference at their local community college where they will educate their members, gain support for self-direction in Illinois, and boost morale. This won't be an easy task, but the group is very proud of their ability to work together to get things done, and is grateful to all those who help them in the process.

In addition to working hard, these advocates love to plan social events and fundraisers, such as their April Fools Day Dance, which they held this past April. But even when they are having fun and letting loose, they never lose sight of their cause, as this dance also served as a fundraiser for their group. Clearly the advocates of The Network know how to do what they love and love what they do!



The Alliance News

AROUND ILLINOIS

Introducing Tara Wickey



The Alliance is proud to introduce Tara Wickey, our new Community Organizer. Tara is from the Chicago area, and brings excitement and passion to the self-advocacy movement.

Tara holds a Master's degree in Public Service Management from DePaul University and has had several opportunities to study abroad. She studied in England, Ireland, and Kenya! Her graduate thesis "Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for the Disabled" focused on examining quality of life for people with disabilities.

Tara's own disability, Muscular Dystrophy, was the inspiration for her thesis project. Her personal experiences of growing up "different" and often sick, have taught Tara to make use of good days and remain grateful during the bad ones.

Tara's disability also provided her some awesome opportunities including participating in

a Transition to Adult Summer Work Program. She gained valuable work experience and learned to see beyond herself and her own disability.

Tara's job with the Alliance will include working with the Board of Directors and self-advocate staff, supporting local groups, working on state action, and administrative and fundraising duties.

Tara is honored to work with such an amazing group of advocates, and is ready for the challenges ahead. She believes anything is possible. Tara says, "Although we have a lot of work to do in the coming months and years, change is on the horizon. We will fight for equal rights and opportunities. Our voices will be heard!"

Do you have questions about **Social Security?**

Email jen.advocacy@gmail.com with your questions. We will put the questions together, and have an expert answer them at the Speak Up Speak Out Summit in November!

**SPEAK UP AND
SPEAK OUT
summit**

SAVE THE DATE!

November 15-16, 2011

Hilton Hotel, Springfield, IL

Questions? 815-464-1832 janet@thearcofil.org



The Alliance News

FUN PAGE

More rally pictures...



The Alliance is offering

Leadership Training

**September 14
Springfield area**

**September 21
Chicago area**

More information and registration forms will be emailed on August 8.



We would like to say a huge THANK YOU to Krescene Beck (pictured here with Courtney Buchanan, Board President) for all her hard work planning the June rally!

Thanks, Krescene!