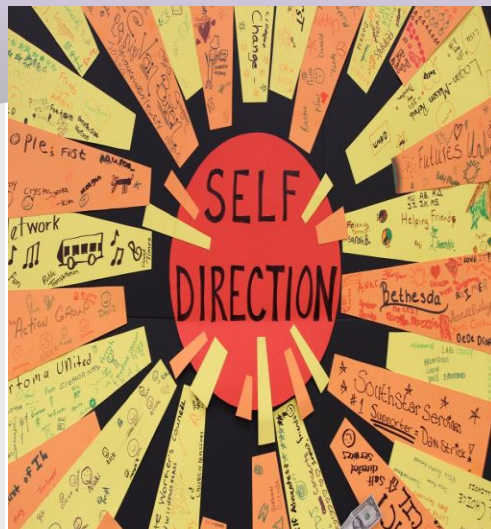


# The Alliance News

November 2014



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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.

The Alliance is proud to be an Initiative of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities



### Retiring Alliance Board Members Celebrated

John G., Beth D., Tia N., Brian D.

At the November 3, 2014 Alliance Board Meeting, retiring board members were celebrated and recognized for their years of service and dedication. John recently served as Treasurer while Beth served as Vice-Chair and Brian as Secretary. Their leadership over the past years helped build a strong foundation on which to continue the vision and mission of The Alliance. Thank you for your service!

Illinois Self-Advocacy Alliance

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Email: [info@selfadvocacyalliance.org](mailto:info@selfadvocacyalliance.org) Website: [www.selfadvocacyalliance.org](http://www.selfadvocacyalliance.org)

Find us on Facebook at Illinois Self-Advocacy Alliance



Project Independence featuring DHS DDD Director Kevin Casey hosted by Livingston County Advocates in Action (LCAA) from Futures Unlimited, Inc. in Pontiac, Illinois October 24, 2014





## Supportive Housing Finale

CSH will host the first Supportive Housing Institute Finale focused on creating **integrated affordable and supportive housing** solutions designed to incorporate the needs and desires of **persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities**.

<b>WHAT</b>	<b>Supportive Housing Institute Finale</b>
<b>WHEN</b>	<b>Wednesday, November 19th, 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM</b>
<b>WHERE</b>	<b>Prairie Capital Convention Center,</b> <b>1 Convention Center Plaza Room B11A</b>  <b>Springfield, IL 62701</b>

We hope that you will [join us](#) to learn about plans and ideas to integrate and support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities into future supportive and affordable housing. This event is free.

Please e-mail [stephanie.sideman@csh.org](mailto:stephanie.sideman@csh.org) or call  
312-332-6690 ext. 25 to RSVP

Check out [www.csh.org/il/dd](http://www.csh.org/il/dd) to learn more

**Funded in partnership with the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities**



Please register for The Alliance's November webinar ~

Normal is a Setting on a Dryer: Reframing How We View People with Disabilities

November 21, 2014 1:00pm at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/539355895405223170>

About the Webinar: There are different ways in which society views individuals with disabilities; stories and our view of disabilities as well as the many factors play into this. Problems that these views have for people with disabilities and practical changes that everyone can do will be discussed. Stories will be shared to provide a relatable perspective of all of this information and how our lives have been affected.

From the Presenter: Hello! My name is Caitlin. I am currently a sophomore at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. I am pursuing a degree in Human Development & Family Studies with a concentration in children and adolescence. I hope to use my degree in order to get a job in a hospital as a Certified Child Life Specialist. In my free time, I enjoy reading, journaling, dancing, soaking in the sunshine, and horseback riding. I was diagnosed with spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy at around three years of age; I have a twin sister who is completely able-bodied. I have always been quite determined & spunky. However, in the last year or so, I have been learning a lot about myself and what it means to have my own voice. Living independently in the college environment has opened up a door to an entirely new world for me, and I am so honored to be able to use my voice for great things such as sharing a little bit of my experience to encourage and empower others.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. To receive the registration information by e-mail, please contact Krescene Beck at [krescenebeck@gmail.com](mailto:krescenebeck@gmail.com) and put "November Webinar Registration" in the Subject Line.

### **Self-Advocacy:**

**Know yourself.**

**Know what you need.**

**Know how to get it.**

### **The Alliance Staff Contact Information**

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Jennifer Knapp, Organizational Consultant  
jen.advocacy@gmail.com

**We want to hear your story!**



Please tell us a little about yourself and your life in the community. A family or friend can help you fill out this form if needed. Your experience will be shared with the public and policy makers to educate them about the need to support people with disabilities living in the community. We look forward to learning more about you!

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address or Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Where do you currently live? \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you lived there? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you lived anywhere else? If so, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever lived in a State-Operated Developmental Center (SODC)? If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you live alone or with roommates? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you like most about where you are living? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe a fun time you've had recently with family or friends. \_\_\_\_\_

What are your favorite things to do in the community? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a job? If so, where do you work? Please tell us about it. \_\_\_\_\_

What are your dreams for your life? \_\_\_\_\_

To submit your success story online and to share this form with family and friends, please visit [www.goinghomeillinois.org](http://www.goinghomeillinois.org) and click "Tell Your Story". After submitting your story, please email your photo(s) to Morgan Tomko at [mtomko@morrealecomm.com](mailto:mtomko@morrealecomm.com). You can also mail your story to Morgan at Morreale Communications, 8770 West Bryn Mawr Avenue, Suite 1300, Chicago, IL 60631.

Going Home is an advocacy campaign dedicated to full inclusion and equality for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. For more information visit: [www.goinghomeillinois.org](http://www.goinghomeillinois.org).

Hi folks! Tara here!

Megan Norlin & I had the privilege of attending this years SABE conference (Self Advocates Becoming Empowered) in Oklahoma City, OK this October. It was SUCH a blast! Megan and I met so many awesome self advocates and professionals in the field of Developmental Disability from around the country, as well as some folks from Canada & the US territories.

I enjoyed all the sessions I attended but a few stuck with me. In part 1, I will talk about a session called "Taking Charge of My Health: Partners in Health Transition" presented by The Westchester Institute for Human Development & The Special Hope Foundation. These awesome folks from upstate New York designed an interactive website that provides information and resources to young adults with I/DD & their families in an effort to achieve successful transition from pediatric to adult health care. It focuses on the transition period from ages 14-28 when people have questions and concerns about health transition and may experience difficulty finding answers.

I know many, if not MOST of you are past transition however, I think we can all remember the struggles we had in aging out of pediatric care, challenges in exiting the high school system and finding adequate and QUALITY adult services. Many of you are still looking for good quality living arrangements, jobs in the community and decent support services. This website helps prepare young adults for the road ahead and get their families thinking about what the next steps should be. If you know someone who is approaching transition, have them check out the website at: <http://www.takingchargeofmyhealth.org/>

The second breakout session I want to tell you about was titled, "Converting Sheltered Workshops to Employment Programs that Get People Real Jobs" & was presented by Maxwell Burrows, Chester Finn & Nicole LeBlanc. We all know the realities & perils of our state. Compared to the other states, IL has low rankings & funding for community based supports & services. Vermont on the other hand, are paving the way as a model for state funded community-based employment programs. It all began in the 1980's, when the University of Vermont received a grant to build programs for integrated employment in partnership with state disability agencies. The movement grew and eventually policymakers decided sheltered workshops no longer fit the states values on the treatment of people with disabilities. Vermont closed its last sheltered workshop in 2002. They also eliminated enclaves, which are work programs that take people with disabilities into regular workplaces with close supervision.

***Did this process go smoothly you ask?***

No! Naturally, families were initially scared for their adult children and couldn't envision the necessary community support & safety that would be required for this to work. Those leading this process worked hard to help all parties involved see the value that inclusion would bring to individuals with I/DD as well as benefits to their families & communities. Within three years, 80 percent of people who'd worked in the last workshop had found jobs. Those who didn't get jobs received other services based in the community.

***So how did this work?***

Funny you should ask! Vermont has a supported employment program in each county to help people with disabilities find, apply for and learn their job duties. *\*The support of a job coach has no time limit in Vermont, which helps improve retention rates\** Beyond this, there are groups and agencies who have made it their mission to do local outreach in an attempt to eliminate fear amongst businesses.

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***What about the critics who say VT is too small to compare to a larger state?***

Where there is a will there is a way!! People representing many entities, groups, organizations, members of the community, self advocates & their families, agencies and the state have to work together if you want anything to change. Challenging supported employment programs to develop new approaches to employment of people with disabilities is essential.

I look forward to seeing many of you at SUSO this week! Don't forget to vote!

Hey Advocates! I am beyond thrilled this month because I was privileged enough to be able to attend the Self-Advocates Being Empowered Conference of 2014 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma! Tara and I were not the only ones lucky enough to attend, though, as we ran into folks from Ray of Hope Self-Advocates, and CTF Tigers. Our own Tia Nelis was there too, and she was elected as the President of SABE. Go Tia!

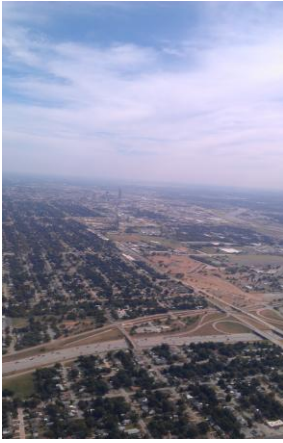
We met a lot of new people too. We spent a lot of time with folks from People First of Canada, and New Jersey. I was lucky enough to hear stories from self-advocates from Guam, Maryland, and Maine. I learned about sexual sex-advocacy for Green Mountain Self Advocates. And I got to brush up on my disability rights history with a young man from Texas. Everybody was absolutely amazing, and they all reminded me that we have come quite a long way. It wasn't that long ago that the very idea of a person with a disability receiving an education seemed foolish to some people outside of the disability community, and even to some within it. Now, it is illegal to deny a disabled person an education, and as a result, more people, slowly and surely, are finding jobs, and keeping them.

Almost every single person I heard speak, or held a private conversation with said the same basic things. They said they wanted jobs, better transportation, better housing choices, and more opportunities to be out in the community. They wanted to close institutions and were in the process of doing so. (If I remember right, advocates from Oklahoma said they had one institution left open in the state of Oklahoma, and they hoped it would be closed sometime next year). And those who had already achieved all those things? Well, they all said the same things too. They said getting those jobs took years, getting better transportation took years, and that it was hard not to get discouraged and depressed. But they also said that those years of hard work, waiting, and hoping eventually paid off. Now some of you may be thinking, that's all well and good Megan, but I don't have a job yet, and I've already been trying for years, and my transpiration system stinks, so how is all this going to help me? Well, I hope that it's a reminder that we really are all in the same boat. We all want the same things, and we can get them if we hold on, work hard, stand together, and keep doing what we do. I for one cannot wait to see the new world we create together.

Stay proud everybody! Stay proud.

Keep advocating!

Megan Norlin  
Self-Advocacy Coordinaator



Did you miss the Alliance's October webinar, A Life Through Imagines, presented by international self-advocate/artist/speaker Riia Talve? Not to worry...we recorded it! Request a copy of the recorded webinar by e-mailing Krescene Beck at [krescenebeck@gmail.com](mailto:krescenebeck@gmail.com) and putting "October 2014 Webinar Recording" in the Subject Line.

Visit Riia's photography blog at [Riialtalve.WordPress.com](http://Riialtalve.WordPress.com) and her artwork blog at [riialtalve.blogspot.com](http://riialtalve.blogspot.com). You can also connect with Riia by e-mail at [Drivenr@hotmail.com](mailto:Drivenr@hotmail.com).





**Be a Part of Advocacy in Action by attending your local Advisory Council Meeting****Northwest**

Tuesday, November 11, 2014

4.30pm

Milestone Training Center

4504 Shepherd Trail

Rockford, IL

**North Central**

Tuesday, January 6, 2015

10am

Freedom Hall (Morton Park District building)

349 W. Birchwood

Morton, IL

**Central Region**

Thursday, November 13, 2014

12.30pm

Centrum Building

319 East Madison

Springfield, IL

**City of Chicago**

Tuesday, November 18, 2014

10am

UIC's Institute on Disabilities and Human Development (Auditorium)

1640 W. Roosevelt Road

Chicago, IL

**Southern Region**

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

10.30am

Bel-Air Bowl (downstairs meeting room)

200 South Belt West

Belleville, IL

**South Suburban**

Next Meeting To Be Announced

Suburban Access

900 Maplewood Avenue

Homewood, IL