

# Illinois Self-Advocacy Alliance

## The Alliance News

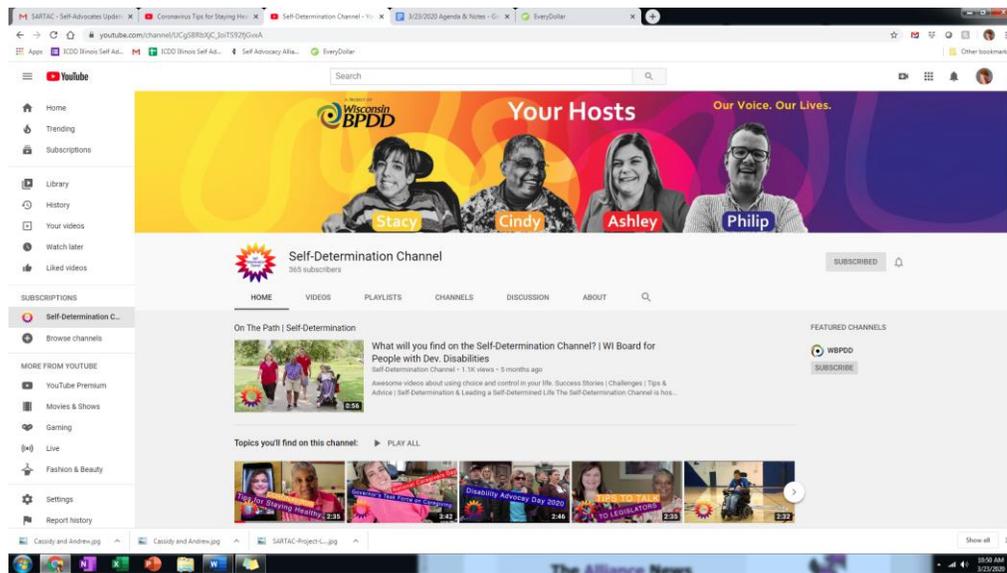
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### Self-Determination Channel, a project of Wisconsin BPDD (Board for People with Developmental Disabilities)

The Self-Determination Channel is hosted by self-advocates and the content is decided by self-advocates. Self-determination is where YOU decide your life. A self-advocate is when YOU speak up for yourself and what YOU need.



[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgSBRbXjC\\_IoiTS92fjGvxA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgSBRbXjC_IoiTS92fjGvxA)

### Our Vision

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

### Our Mission

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



This newsletter was developed under an investment by the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

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Find us on Facebook at Illinois Self-Advocacy Alliance



## Self-Advocacy Spotlight!

My name is Wanda Frye and I am a member of the Alliance Group at MRI in Decatur, Illinois.



My gifts and talents include coloring and doing word searches. My hopes and dreams are having my own apartment and learning to achieve my goals so that I can live on my own.

To me, self-advocacy means I have rights and people should listen.

Self-Advocate Interview: Joe

"Self-advocacy means freedom. I spoke out about living on my own; I told my case manager and Prairieland (Independent Service Coordination). I hope to do bigger and better things."

Self-Advocate Interview: Amara

"Self-advocacy means getting people to listen to me. I enjoy coloring and would like to have a job in the community. I told people that that I did not want to be by myself and that I have the right to have people over."

Staff Interview: Cathy

"Self-Advocacy is that you have the right to speak up and be heard. I support self-advocacy by saying:

- Tell me how you feel.
- How can we accomplish what you want to do?
- Do you need to talk with your Prairieland (Independent Service Coordination) staff?"

Staff Interview: Lauren

"Self-Advocacy means having the right to do the things you enjoy doing. I am able to go visit friends and family when I want. I have the right to be able to drive myself places to go out to eat and shop when I please. Everyone has those rights."

## **Welcome CANS (Chicago Coalition for Autistic and Neurodivergent Students)**

Welcome to The Alliance's newest member group, CANS! As part of University of Chicago's Institute on Disability and Human Development, CANS is 12 members strong and meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month.

Having goals is an important part of a self-advocacy group, and CANS has several:

- Promote Autism/neurodivergent acceptance and authenticity
- Make friends and connect students with peers
- Share strategies and resources for navigating college

CANS is represented on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ChicagoCANS/>

Welcome CANS; we are excited to learn with and from you!

## **Upcoming Webinar**

### **"Tres Fridas Project: Reimagining Art Through the Disability Lens"**

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

11am – 12noon



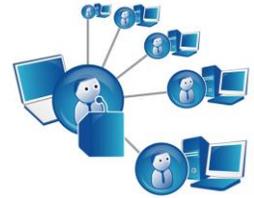
A collaborative project created by Reveca Torres, Mariam Paré and Tara Ahern, all female artists with disabilities, Tres Fridas Project explores the many facets of disability by recreating iconic art works with a disabled person at the forefront. Join Tres Fridas co-creators as they share about the project's journey from dream and reality.

Register at

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7357429742263023117>

## Recently Recorded Webinars

**“All You Need to Know About Illinois Centers for Independent Living (CILS)”** recorded live on Tuesday, March 24, 2020.



“All You Need to Know About Illinois CILs” will cover what a Center For Independent Living is, and a little bit about how they came to be. Participants will also learn about the various programs offered by CILs across the state, and how to go about finding the CIL closest to you.

View the recording at

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/6766732513182707459>

**“Friday Fun-Day - Stay and Play: All About Games”** recorded live on Friday, April 10, 2020

Video Games and Card Games and Board Games...Oh My! Join TJ Gordon, Co-chair of the Chicagoland Disabled People of Color Coalition (DPOCC), as he talks all things games during this time of "stay and play" (coined by TJ himself). Discover new games and share the games you enjoy. You'll even be challenged to send in a picture of you enjoying a game for The Alliance to post on Facebook.

View the recording at

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/5238320091485412610?assets=true>



Tim Cook, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Apple, Inc., has had a huge impact on Apple products being universally accessible. Watch “History of Apple Accessibility” at

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ti\\_qqjWilPA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ti_qqjWilPA).

It covers the changes that Apple has made to make their technology include everyone. It shows all the new technologies that exist to help individuals with disabilities.

## The Arc of Illinois Assistive Technology Fund



The Arc of Illinois has developed an Assistive Technology Fund. This program will fund, or partially fund, the purchase of assistive technology for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who have received an evaluation/assessment from a qualified provider, but the purchase is not subsidized by Medicaid, Medicare or Private Insurance. Our goal through the Assistive Technology Fund is to enhance and improve the quality of life for persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities by providing opportunities for individuals to receive technology to help with education, employment, community living and independence.

The maximum amount funded will be \$500.00 per person or family. In order to help more people, we will only fund one device or software. Upon approval, the device will be shipped directly to the applicant.

### Who Can Apply?

- A person with an intellectual or developmental disability
- Family member on behalf of a person with an intellectual or developmental disability
- Must be an Illinois resident

### How Do I Apply?

- The application form (<http://www.thearcofil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/AT-Flyer.pdf?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=fa572e8f-9a99-4007-b560-646c93eaa2e0>) must be completed and returned to The Arc of Illinois
- You must include a letter from a doctor, health care provider, or someone else who works closely with the individual to show the need for the assistive technology device, how it would benefit the individual, and what type of device is needed.

To learn more, visit <https://www.thearcofil.org/assistive-technology-program/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=fa572e8f-9a99-4007-b560-646c93eaa2e0>



**Welcome to Community Connections, where we share awareness, information, and celebrations relating to the disability community.**

## **Famous People with Disabilities – May Spotlight**

### **Robert Michael Hensel (May 1969 - present)**

Robert Michael Hensel was born with Spina Bifida in Oswego, New York in 1969. Spina Bifida is a birth defect in which the spine and spinal cord don't form properly. Robert is an athlete, an activist, a poet, and a writer.



Robert is a Guinness World Records holder for the longest non-stop wheelie in a wheelchair, covering a total distance of 6.178 miles.

In 2000, realizing the need to focus more on one's abilities and less on their disabilities, Robert sought to have a week designated that would bring to light the many talents and accomplishments being made by individuals with disabilities. Due to his efforts, Oswego County passed a motion that year recognizing October 1-7 as Beyond Limitations week.

As an international poet and writer, Hensel has never let his disability come in the way of his artistic mind.

“There were many times that my schoolmates would laugh at me and call me names simply because of their lack of understanding of why I was a little different”.

**Disability Inclusion Awareness in May**

ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) Awareness Month

Arthritis Awareness Month

Better Hearing and Speech Month

Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month

Health Vision Awareness Month

Mental Health Month

National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

Stroke Awareness Month

**Disability Inclusion Awareness Ideas for May**

Mental Health Awareness Month

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. During May, NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) and the rest of the country are raising awareness of mental health.

<https://www.nami.org/mentalhealthmonth>

May 15 - June 15 – Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month

Check out 5 easy ways to raise awareness, foster acceptance and support our mission to make life better for all people affected by Tourette and Tic Disorders!

<https://tourette.org/about-us/5-ways-raise-awareness/>

May 21 – Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD)

The purpose of GAAD is to get everyone talking, thinking and learning about digital (web, software, mobile, etc.) access/inclusion and people with different disabilities.

<https://globalaccessibilityawarenessday.org/>

May 21 – World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

A diverse world is not only more peaceful, it is also more prosperous and more equitable. The day provides an opportunity to deepen understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to advance the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

<https://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/index.shtml>

**Don't be afraid to "think outside of the box" and come up with your own Disability Inclusion Awareness Ideas for the month.**