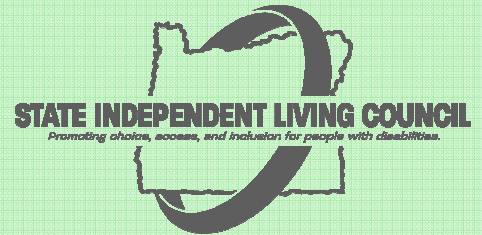


Oregon Independent Living



Issue #39 – August 2009

What is the SILC?

The Oregon State Independent Living Council (SILC) is a council of up to 21 Governor-appointed disability advocates, most of whom have disabilities. Oregon's SILC was established in 1992 based on Rehabilitation Act amendments that made funds available to states that create a SILC.

The SILC's legal responsibilities include the following main functions:

- ♦ Work with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Oregon Commission for the Blind to develop, sign, and implement the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) - a 3 year plan that sets goals and priorities for IL services, funding, and systems change.
- ♦ Monitor, review, and evaluate implementation of the SPIL.
- ♦ Submit required reports to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) – the federal agency that oversees national IL programs.
- ♦ Coordinate activities with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and councils that address needs of specific disability populations and issues.
- ♦ Conduct public SILC meetings with sufficient advance notice provided.

The SILC partners with Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and other agencies to further our mission and support independence of Oregonians with disabilities.



Executive Director Update • Tina Treasure

This quarter was busy with varying levels of uncertainty, delays, and challenges in some of our programs, funding plans, amendment to the SPIL, and in our transition to focus on core legal responsibilities, with more partner involvement in SPIL activities.

In spite of delays and obstacles, significant accomplishments and progress has been made, with more work underway. That seems to be an ongoing life and work theme lately. Perseverance is a virtue we're practicing a lot!

That theme is exemplified sadly this quarter. Scott Lay, a disability advocate and dear friend to many, passed away on July 31st. Having known, worked with, and been privileged to be a close friend of Scott's for 25 years, I can say that he had something special that words cannot explain.

In spite of health, advocacy obstacles, and other challenges, Scott always persevered. He dedicated his life to promoting change through his advocacy, mentoring, and spirit.

It's a bittersweet silver lining that the lives of others will reap the benefits of Scott's life and work. We stand ever grateful for the difference you made in so many lives, Scott. You will live on in our hearts forever.

The Mission of the SILC is to promote choice, equal access, and full inclusion of people with disabilities, throughout the state of Oregon.

Oregon IL News

Legislative Update • Legislators are making plans to hold interim committee meetings in Salem for three days during the fall and winter: September 29 – October 1, 2009; November 17 – 19, 2009; January 12 – 14, 2010. The Senate and House Revenue Committees will also meet August 27th to hear the next state revenue forecast.

In the past, committees met at various places and times between sessions. This plan consolidates the meetings as a way to enable easier and more cost effective travel and logistics – a necessity during these times of tight funds and numerous budget cuts.

Legislative Summaries • Disability agencies are working to create legislative summary and wrap up reports. Although legislative highlights are too lengthy to include in a newsletter, O4AD has an initial summary available, with a more detailed report upcoming:

<http://capwiz.com/o4ad/issues/alert/?alertid=13656021&PROCESS=Read+More>

We'll share links to other legislative summaries via our email list as more reports become available.

Oregon Advocate to Work on IL Program Improvements! • Wendy Howard, Executive Director of SPOKES Unlimited in Klamath Falls, has been selected to work with RSA and a small committee to consider ways to improve IL data consistency, tracking, and reporting; insure that IL outcomes can be effectively demonstrated; share best practices; and develop customer satisfaction questions that reflect outcomes and improve reporting consistency. Way to go, Wendy!



Celebration of Life • Friends and family gathered in Salem on August 17th to share food and memories to celebrate Scott Lay's life. Scott made it his life mission to make his dream a reality of people with disabilities working and living in the communities of their choosing.

With past rules, employment earnings disqualified many people with disabilities from Medicaid eligibility - often the only option for Personal Attendant Services. Scott set out to change the system based on his belief that being able to work and maintain Medicaid coverage was an essential first step to end the cycle of poverty and move towards self-sufficiency.

Scott had a leadership role in the Ticket To Work and Work Improvement Act and also served on Oregon's Work Incentives committee that designed a program to enable people with disabilities to work without losing Medicaid coverage. Scott wrote more than 17 drafts of what eventually became the first Medicaid Buy-In program in our country—"Employed Persons with Disabilities".

Later, Scott coordinated funding to train disability and employment agencies on ways for people to access work incentives, including the Buy-In. Beyond his many advocacy and systems change accomplishments, Scott's life, work, and spirit touched friends, family, and peers. His passion and courage sparked change and inspired enthusiasm, confidence, and passion in others. Friends, family, and advocates mourn the loss of Scott, while re-dedicating themselves to carry on his work, his passion, and his dreams.

Courage is the capacity to hear what others say is impossible and believe you are the one to make it happen. ~ Nancy Shugart

Resources!

At various conferences, the input we consistently hear from people is that they need more information and resources to keep up with technology, opportunities, and information that enable people with disabilities to persevere in their paths to find and enjoy more personal choice, inclusion, accessibility, and independence in their lives. In order to address this widespread need, we share some resources in each newsletter. Centers for Independent Living (CILs) have additional resources that are specific to their area, so check out the CIL Directory if you are interested in local resources.

Asperger's Syndrome resources and information • www.parentingkidswithaspergers.com/

Disability Law Handbook • This 50 page FAQ style downloadable handbook answers questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act and other disability legislation. Website: www.swdbtac.org/html/publications/dlh/index.html • Podcast: <http://dll.ada-podcast.com>"

Incight • This organization offers resources, scholarships, and other opportunities and programs to empower young people with disabilities to become contributing members of society. Program topics: Education, Employment, Networking and Independence. <http://www.incight.org/>

Disability products and services • An extensive list of disability related products and services: <http://www.makoa.org/cmpyinfo.htm#assistive>

Disability is Natural • A website that shares extensive disability information, resources, and articles to spark thinking, ideas, and empowerment! www.disabilityisnatural.com/

Oregon Parent Training and Information Center • Oregon PTI's mission is to educate and support parents, families, and professionals in building partnerships that meet the needs of children and youth with the full range of disabilities ages birth through twenty six. Their website offers diverse information and resources. www.orpti.org

Conferences and Events!

Connecting Communities 2009 • Celebrate people living with disabilities and create a powerful coalition of community partners who represent and advocate with and for those with disabilities. Keynote speaker: Ollie Cantos!

When: October 15, 2009 • 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Where: Doubletree Hotel 1000 NE Multnomah Street, Portland

Cost: FREE! • Website: <http://www.phcnw.com/cc09/>

Building Futures Conference • This conference offers tools, resources, information, strategies, philosophies, employment ideas, and work incentive options, to empower students with disabilities to transition to college and employment. Individuals with disabilities, their families, and professionals are encouraged to attend.

When: October 26 & 27, 2009 • Where: Salem Conference Center

Cost: Registration fees vary; some scholarships are available

Website: <http://www.orpti.org/buildingfutures09.htm>

September Meetings!

The SILC generally meets on the first Friday of every third month: March, June, September, and December, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The September 2009 meetings are scheduled differently to avoid conflicting with the Labor Day holiday, and to conduct an Annual SILC Retreat in addition to the quarterly meeting.

The September SILC meetings will be held at the Red Lion Hotel in Pendleton, Oregon at 304 SE Nye Avenue • Phone: 541-276-6111.

Thursday, September 10, 2009

8:30 a.m. ~ 2:00 p.m. SILC meeting

Opportunity for Public Input!

Thursday, September 10, 2009
1:00 p.m.

Friday, September 11, 2009

9:00 a.m. ~ 3:00 p.m. Annual SILC Retreat

ACCOMMODATIONS/INCLUSION

Accommodations, including provision of interpreters, assistive listening devices, and materials in alternate formats, are available upon request. Efforts will be made to arrange accommodations with 48 hours notice, but the SILC requests 2 weeks notice to ensure accommodations.

We request that people refrain from wearing perfumes or other scents, so that people with chemical sensitivities may attend and participate comfortably. Service and companion animals must be in control throughout the meetings.

GUESTS • Guests are welcome to attend SILC meetings. You may speak or share materials during the Public Input section of the meeting; materials must be available in alternate formats.

Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are non-profit organizations, run by people with disabilities, for people with disabilities. Each CIL provides four core IL Services: 1) individual and systems advocacy, 2) information and referral, 3) independent living skills training, and 4) peer counseling.

CIL services are provided with the Independent Living (IL) philosophy of informed choice, personal responsibility, self-determination, equal access, full inclusion ~ all contributing to increasing opportunities and independence of people with disabilities. Oregon has 7 CILs.

CORIL • 541-388-8103

Deschutes, Crook & Jefferson Counties

EOCIL • 541-889-3119 • www.eocil.org

EOCIL Pendleton Office • 541-235-2224
Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wheeler Counties

HASL • 541-479-4275 •

www.haslonline.org

Josephine and Jackson Counties

ILR • 503-232-7411(V); 503-232-8408(TTY) www.ilr.org

Multnomah, Washington & Clackamas Counties

LILA • 541-607-7020 • www.lilaoregon.org

Lane County

SPOKES Unlimited • 541-883-7547

www.spokesunlimited.org

Klamath & Lake Counties

UVdN • 541-672-6336(V); 541-440-2882 (TTY)

Douglas County

The National Scene

Although it would take volumes to share federal updates in detail, here's a snapshot of some national highlights.

Independent Living funding increase is one step closer! • On July 30th, the Senate Appropriations Committee met and approved a bill that would provide an increase of \$3,000,000 over the Fiscal Year 2009 amounts for Centers for Independent Living. The full Senate has yet to vote on this bill, and will have the opportunity to offer amendments to add or remove allocations made in this bill. If the Senate approves the bill, it will have to be merged with the bill passed in the full House in July. Advocates believe that the Senate bill is likely to pass, since the House and President Obama both included the same increase in their respective budgets. Interested advocates may contact their Senators to offer opinions about maintaining the increase for the Independent Living Program in the 2010 Appropriations bill.



Healthcare Update • Conflicting opinions on this topic continue to create controversy about health care reform. The legislature and the Obama administration continue to discuss compromises on specific issues, with progress that resulted in work to mark up the proposed legislation. This activity was short-lived, as the House adjourned for recess and will not resume until September 8th. Members of Congress are reaching out to constituents to find out what they want in healthcare reform....and Constituents are reaching out to them! As always, advocates are encouraged to contact their legislators to offer input about what should be in the healthcare reform legislation. Six senators are involved in the Senate Finance Committee. This committee has set September 15th as the deadline to have a Senate draft of health care reform legislation ready for mark-up. Once the Senate passes a healthcare bill, it will be compared to whatever bill comes out of the House of Representatives (which still needs to pass the third and final Committee), and a final version will need to be developed and passed by both chambers before it can go to the President's desk.



Many believe including Long-Term Care Reforms in whatever Health Care Reform legislation results may be the only chance in the next several years to seriously address the institutional bias in Medicaid, create long-term care insurance that doesn't require people to be or become impoverished, eliminate the unfair 2-year wait period for Medicare, and ensure access to medical and diagnostic equipment in medical offices along with the cultural competency of medical and dental professionals. The political and financial costs of overhauling our healthcare system will leave little or no ability to take this on later and reforming our healthcare system is not complete unless we address the problems and inequities that exist for people with disabilities in the current healthcare and long-term care systems.

ADA • On Friday, July 24, 2009, President Barack Obama hosted a historic event commemorating the 19th Anniversary of the signing of the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and announcing the intent of the United States to join 140 other nations in signing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.