



Connecticut Disability Advocacy Collaborative Bulletin

“Enhancing the effectiveness of disability activism by organizing and

Empowerment! Opportunity! Justice!

June-July 2007

Part 1

Part 2 will follow in a few days and will include information on new state budget and additional articles

Need this newsletter in an alternative format? Please let us know.

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This Bulletin is supported by a grant that the Disability Advocacy Collaborative has received from the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities. In addition, in-kind support is being provided by the UCONN Center on Disabilities, and Communitas, Inc. serves as the project's fiscal agent. To all three we extend our deep appreciation.

Disability Advocacy Collaborative Regional Contacts and Meeting Dates

To get involved with a Regional Advocacy Network, contact the following:

Northwest — contact: Bill Knight (lackerman01@snet.net) – next meeting July 11 at 10:30 am at Litchfield ARC

Southwest –contact: Carol Kana (pkana@snet.net) – meetings on June 27 and July 25 at Norwalk Police Department – both meetings at 1 pm

Danbury Area — contact Pam Arturi (parturi@abilitybeyonddisability.org) – next meeting July 5 at 4 pm – contact Pam for location

North Central — contact: Candace Low (clow@independenceunlimited.org) – next meeting August 27 – 10 am – Independence Unlimited - Hartford

Waterbury Area –contact: Mike Valuckas (mike.valuckas@independencenorthwest.org) – contact Mike for information about next meeting

Northeast Area – contact: Carolyn Newcombe (cnewcombe@charter.net) – next meeting on July 10 at 6 pm – Mansfield Senior Center

Important! Access to Housing Waiting Lists Opens

Waiting lists for Connecticut's two major housing assistance programs have been opened for the first time since 2001, a move expected to generate thousands of applications from low-income residents seeking help in affording their monthly rent.

The application period – from June 18 to July 2 – will be used to fill up waiting lists for 1) the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program and 2) the state Rental Assistance Program (RAP). Getting on a waiting list is the **first step** toward qualifying for a rent subsidy as they become available through turnover and increased funding.

There is currently no waiting list for RAP subsidies, which means that rental assistance will be readily available as soon as new households become eligible. Section 8, however, has about 1,000 households on its waiting list. People already on this list do not have to apply again as their position in line for a rent subsidy is protected. The number of eligible households, however, may actually be much less than 1,000 because the waiting list is six years old.

Readers should note that the application process will not make people eligible for the waiting list, but for waiting list lotteries. People who apply by July 2 will be entered into a lottery to select 7,000 for placement on the Section 8 waiting list and a lottery to select 5,000 for placement on the Rental Assistance Program waiting list. The Department of Social Services, administering agency for these rental assistance programs, expects the lotteries to be held by the end of July, after which selected households will be notified of their waiting list position.

Interested people must obtain, fill out and mail a “pre-application” form for the waiting list lotteries. The form, **which must be postmarked by Monday, July 2**, is available at:

- Department of Social Services website at www.ct.gov/dss
- Local offices of the Department of Social Services (for referral to the nearest office, call 2-1-1 Infoline; see the blue government pages of phone books; or visit www.ct.gov/dss and click on Regional Offices)

The forms are also being distributed to social service networks through the Connecticut Housing Coalition, Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, Legal Assistance Resource Center of Connecticut and other organizations.

As openings become available, households will be selected off the waiting lists in the order determined by the lotteries. A full eligibility determination process follows selection from a waiting list. It could take several years for every eligible household on the waiting lists to receive a rent subsidy.

Eligibility for Rent Subsidies: To be eligible for the federally-funded Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program or the state-funded Rental Assistance Program, household income must be at or below 50% of the state median income for the area of the state where the family lives.

For example:

- Income for a single person cannot exceed \$40,700 in the Stamford/Norwalk area; \$28,100 in the Hartford area; and \$26,550 in the Norwich/New London area.
- Income for a family of two cannot exceed \$46,500 in the Stamford/Norwalk area; \$32,100 in the Hartford area; and \$30,350 in the Norwich/New London area.
- Income for a family of three cannot exceed \$52,350 in the Stamford/Norwalk area; \$36,150 in the Hartford area; and \$34,150 in the Norwich/New London area.
- Income for a family of four cannot exceed \$58,150 in the Stamford area; \$40,150 in the Hartford area; and \$37,950 in the Norwich area.

Legislative Update

(watch for information on new state budget in Part 2 of the June – July Bulletin, coming out before the end of the week)

To review the text of any bill noted below:

- 1) open www.cga.ct.gov;
- 2) type in the bill number next to “Number” at top of screen, then click “GO”.

NOTE: Both HB 7144 (AN ACT ESTABLISHING A BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SERVICES FOR CITIZENS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS AND AN ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION AND CONCERNING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES) and HB 7279 (AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON PROGRAM) did not pass, but they are budget related and may be approved during the Special Session.

LEGISLATION PASSED BY BOTH THE HOUSE AND SENATE

SB 977 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESTRICTION ON UNREASONABLE RESTRAINTS AND SECLUSIONS OF STUDENTS. **Public Act 07-147**

SB 1439 AN ACT CONCERNING CONSERVATORS AND APPEALS OF CONSERVATORSHIPS AND GUARDIANSHIPS. **Public Act 07-116**

SB 1451 AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT HOMECARE OPTION PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY. **Public Act 07-130**

HB 5186 AN ACT CONCERNING THE EVACUATION OF PETS AND SERVICE ANIMALS. **Public Act 07-11**

HB 5508 AN ACT AUTHORIZING COMMITMENT TO A CHRONIC DISEASE HOSPITAL UNDER A PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY CERTIFICATE. **Public Act 07-49**

HB 5537 AN ACT CONCERNING WHEELCHAIR TRANSFER SAFETY. **Public Act 07-134**

HB 6370 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ILLEGAL USE OF HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES. **Public Act 07-52**

HB 6390 AN ACT CONCERNING TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR DEFENDANTS FOUND NOT COMPETENT TO STAND TRIAL. **Public Act 07-153**

HB 6391 AN ACT CONCERNING INVOLUNTARY ADMINISTRATION OF PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATION FOR PURPOSES OF COMPETENCY TO STAND TRIAL. **Public Act 07-71**

HB 7007 AN ACT RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION. **Public Act 07-73**

HB 7055 AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAL NECESSITY AND EXTERNAL APPEALS. **Public Act 07-75**

HB 7065 AN ACT CONCERNING LEGISLATIVE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF WAIVER APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. **Public Act 07-83**

HB 7067 AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT AND POWERS OF CONSERVATORS AND SPECIAL LIMITED CONSERVATORS WITH RESPECT TO PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT. **Public Act 07-117**

HB 7109 AN ACT CONCERNING CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR PERSONS PROVIDING INTERPRETER SERVICES. **Public Act 07-15**

HB 7191 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE STATE-WIDE RESPITE CARE PROGRAM. **Public Act 07-86**

HB 7407 AN ACT CONCERNING A DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION CITIZENS ADVISORY GROUP AND THE RIGHTS OF INMATES WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.

**ITEMS NOT ACTED UPON PRIOR TO THE END OF THE SESSION ON 6/6
(please note that these items *may have re-surfaced* in the final state budget)**

Senate Bill 1128, An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations with Respect to Social Services Programs, which sought, among other things, to increase from 100 to 700 the number of individuals to be served by the Money Follows the Person

Raised House Bill 7279 (5/2/07 File No. 709), which also sought to expand participation in Money Follows the Person to 700 slots

Raised House Bill 7130, which sought to appropriate \$600,000 in support of a money management program for low-income older adults and individuals with disabilities

Raised Senate Bill 1144, which sought 1) to create an advance directives index housed by the Office of the Secretary of State; and 2) to specify that health care providers are not required to use the index

Spirit of the ADA Celebration & Public Transportation Summit

On Thursday, July 26 the Connecticut Developmental Disabilities Network (which includes the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities (CCD), the Connecticut Office of Protection & Advocacy (P&A) and the University of Connecticut A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities) and the Plan for the Achievement of Transportation Coordination in Human Services (PATHS) Project (funded under a grant from the Connecticut Developmental Disabilities Council) are hosting the Third Annual Spirit of the ADA Celebration & Public Transportation Summit. The celebration will run from 1 pm to 4 pm in Room 1D of the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. This year advocates who have gone above and beyond to promote accessible, inclusive transportation will be honored. There will also be presentations on current and future initiatives for coordinated transportation in Connecticut. To nominate a transportation advocate or for more information about the event, call Dave Martin at 860-679-1595, *Toll-free* 1-866-623-1315 or send an email to dpmartin@uchc.edu.

Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Hits the Airwaves

From Cathy Ludlum, on behalf of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) and DSS: "Many of Connecticut's citizens have never thought about how important it is for people with disabilities to have full and equal access to employment. Many employers have not recognized people with disabilities as a talented but largely untapped labor pool. Many people have never heard about The Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, a five-year, multimillion dollar federal grant to the

Connecticut Department of Social Services which is focused on reducing barriers to employment for people with disabilities.

But all of this about to change!

Over the last few months, MIG project staff, committee members, and volunteers have been working with our public relations firm to develop an extensive media campaign. This effort has involved numerous meetings, focus groups, writing sessions, and rewriting sessions, and now the product is nearly ready. Print advertising will begin the last week of June in publications such as the Fairfield County Business Journal, the New Haven Register, and Hartford Magazine. Spots will also run on Connecticut television including CPTV and cable networks, WNPR radio, and in cyberspace on the Dow Jones Online Network and other sites.

Hand-in-hand with the marketing campaign is the development of a comprehensive web site. Innovative resources and tools will be made available to employers, jobseekers with disabilities, providers of employment services, and family members. The site itself will be studied and changed according to people's responses and needs.

For questions about volunteering, please contact Cathy Ludlum at cathyludlum@cox.net or 860-649-7110. For general information about the MIG, please contact Amy Porter at amy.porter@ct.gov or 1-800-773-4636.”

Inclusion Works

For the last two years, the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities has worked with CPTV on various episodes to educate the public about the lives of people with disabilities. These episodes demonstrated how people with various disabilities can live meaningful and productive lives.

This year, the Council and CPTV will produce one-minute vignettes called ***Inclusion Works*** on topics and issues that promote inclusive communities. These vignettes will be based on reality but will utilize satire, humor and wit to change perceptions about people living with disabilities.

Inclusion Works can be seen on Thursday nights at 7:59 p.m. on CPTV. In addition, you can view these vignettes on either YouTube.com or MySpace.com. Please enter the search words “Able Lives Connecticut.”

If you have any questions, please contact Mary-Ann Langton at 860-418-6160 or at mary.ann.langton@po.state.ct.us.

Positions Available

The ADA Coalition of Connecticut is seeking a part-time bookkeeper 5-10 hours per month to prepare and record monthly accounts payable, accounts receivable, bank reconciliations and budget updates, maintain the organization's general ledger, balance sheet, accounting reports and financial records through annual audit. Must have knowledge of Quickbooks and Excel. Competitive wage.

FAVOR Inc, in Rocky Hill is looking for two exceptional people to become part of their team. They are actively recruiting for:

Family Advocate Supervisor
Family Advocate – North Central Region

Please email, mail or fax a resume, salary requirements and cover letter to: Cristy R Jones - Director of Operations - FAVOR, Inc. - 2138 Silas Deane Highway - Rocky Hill, CT 06067 - crjones@favor-ct.org - (860)563-3232 x103.

FOCUS is opening a Therapeutic Group Home in Barkhamsted for five young men ages 14-21 who are on the Autism Spectrum. The group home under construction and they hope to be licensed and have the program operational by the end of July. They are looking for candidates the following positions:

Clinician: This person needs to have a Master's Degree and be licensed and able to provide counseling to four of the young men. This is a full-time position with excellent benefits and pays \$50,000 a year.

Direct Care Staff: This position requires an Associates Degree as a minimum and pays \$14 an hour.

Day Staff: Full-time, benefits. One slot is 7a-3p with Sat & Sun off and the other slot is 8a-4p with Thurs & Fri off.

Overnight Staff: One slot is 11p-7a with Fri & Sat off and the other slot is 12mn-8a with Sun & Mon off.

FOCUS also has two part-time positions (16 hours) for the day shift and the overnight shift and one position (24 hours) for the 3-11 pm shift.

Anyone interested should call FOCUS at 860-693-8809 and ask for Donna, Jess or Ginger.

National MS Society, Greater Connecticut Chapter Open House—June 28

The Greater Connecticut Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, formerly located in Newington, re-located in January to the North Campus of Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Hartford. The chapter plans to open its doors to the surrounding communities and beyond, hosting an Open House and ribbon cutting on Thursday, **June 28**, from 4 to 7 p.m. The public is invited to attend but asked to confirm attendance. The open house includes a photography exhibit, featuring chapter event photographs captured by MS Ambassador and spokesperson John LeBlanc. Those planning to attend should RSVP to info@ctfightsMS.org or by phone at 860-714-2300, ext. 228. Visit their new Website at www.ctfightsMS.org.

Estate Planning For Families of Individuals with Disabilities

UCP of Eastern CT, Families United, and The Arc of New London County will be hosting Anthony Recck, MetDESK Specialist, on Tuesday, **July 17** at 6:30 p.m. The event will be held at UCP of Eastern CT, 42 Norwich Road (Route 32), Quaker Hill.

Mr. Recck will be presenting information about Estate Planning for Individuals with Disabilities. MetDESK is a division of MetLife Financial Services and focuses on the concerns

of families of children or other dependents with special needs. The workshop includes preserving government benefits and providing insurance and other financial solutions which can help provide a lifetime of quality care. For more information or to reserve your seat please call Cheryl at 443-3800 ext 11.

Playing It Safe: Emergency Planning For People with Disabilities and Seniors

Playing It Safe, the traveling personal emergency planning conference with a disability focus, will be in West Haven on Tuesday, **August 21** from 9:45 am – 3:00 pm at the Savin Rock Conference Center. People with disabilities, seniors and others interested in learning how to stay safe during emergencies are encouraged to attend. The focus of these events is personal responsibility and community involvement.

An additional conference is planned in Hartford on Saturday, **September 8** at the NEAT Marketplace, also from 9:45 am – 3:00 pm. A conference in the northwest section of the state will also be scheduled for the fall. For more information and to register, please contact Elanah Sherman at the State Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, 860-297-4322(V), 860-297-4380 (TTY), 800-842-7303 (V/TTY) or Elanah.Sherman@po.state.ct.us.

CACLD's Fall Conference—October 13

The CT Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (CACLD) Annual Conference will be held on Saturday, **October 13**, 2007: at the Stamford Marriott Hotel. Check www.caclld.org for more info. Topics Include: Reading, Math, College, RTI, NLD, IDEA, Family Issues, Study Skills, Advocacy, Anxiety, Transition, Medications, Brain Modifiability, Social Skills, Assistive Technology, Executive Function, Tips and Strategies for Teachers, Neuropsychological Evaluations, and much more.

2007 Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention

The Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention, “The Right to Be Disabled” will be held on Saturday, **November 10** at the Cromwell Plaza Hotel in Cromwell. Go to their website for more information at www.ctdownsyndrome.org or click on the link above to go directly to the “Convention Preview” page.

RESNA: Fundamentals Course in Assistive Technology

The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Society of North America (RESNA) will be offering a “Fundamentals Course in Assistive Technology” on October 17-18 at the New England Assistive Technology Marketplace (NEAT), 120 Holcomb Street, Hartford, CT 06112. The overall objective of the course is to provide a broad review of the various areas of assistive technology for professionals working in the AT field and to provide individuals who are interested in the field of AT with an overview. The course is designed for newcomers as well as experienced professionals looking to expand their perspective of AT. Continuing Education Units (1.4 CEU's) will be awarded. For further information about registration please contact the Fundamentals Course Coordinator at 703/524-6686 x306, or via email at fundamentalscourse@resna.org.

NEAT will also host RESNA'S ATP/ATS Exam on Friday, **October 19**. To register for this exam, please visit RESNA at: <http://resna.org/NewCertPract/GettingCertificate.php>.

Making Choice Real: Transforming Long Term Systems of Support

On Wednesday, October 24 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm the University of New Hampshire will have a conference Center of New Hampshire, Radisson Hotel, Manchester, NH. The conference will highlight best practices in integrating person-centered supports across systems for persons who are aging. For more information contact: Susan Fox, 603-228-2084 or 800-238-2048, swfox@unh.edu.

Project Action to Host Web Event

Easter Seals Project ACTION is offering a complimentary distance learning event entitled "You Can't Get There From Here: Increasing Access in Pedestrian Circulation to and from Public Transportation." During this 1 hour 15 minute program, accessibility expert Dennis Cannon of the U.S. Access Board will discuss approaches to addressing access to pedestrian circulation paths for people with disabilities.

When: Wednesday, **July 11**, from 2 to 3:15 pm EDT

Where: via telephone, as an audio conference call

Who: Dennis Cannon, Transportation Accessibility Specialist, Office of Technical and Information Services, US Access Board, Washington, DC.

Register: visit the ESPA Web site and sign up online for this complimentary distance learning opportunity: <http://projectaction.easterseals.com/>

Autism Summer Institute to Be Held in New Hampshire

"Raising Expectations: Presuming Competence! The Importance of High Expectations for Learning, Communication and Friendship" will be held on **August 13-16** at the University of New Hampshire, Holloway Commons, Durham, NH. The goal of the Autism Summer Institute is to provide strength-based perspectives about students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) to improve the quality of education in inclusive settings. Participants will gain skills and knowledge that will help support the full participation of students with ASD in their schools and communities.

This Institute offers a unique combination of keynote presentations and workgroups. The registration fee includes participation in all four days activities. A separate fee has been established for those interested in attending one or more keynote presentations. Participants may earn four academic credits by attending the Autism Summer Institute and registering for the associated class in the fall 2007 semester. Please contact the course instructor, Cheryl M. Jorgensen, Ph.D., at cheryl.jorgensen@unh.edu with questions and permission to register. Full participation in the Autism Summer Institute qualifies for 22 Staff Development Hours.

Kids As Self Advocates (KASA) Publishes Report!

Do you want to know what young people with disabilities have to say about the high school exit exam (a standardized test a student must pass to get a high school diploma) as well as other standardized tests? This report shares:

- Youth voice – [many quotes from youth]
- Cutting edge ideas to improve test accessibility and knowledge of rights
- standardized testing has affected people with disabilities in history

It can also be used to educate policy makers, school boards, state officials, education and special education departments!

Order now from: www.fvkasa.org [where you can download an order form to mail in], or online from the Family Voices catalog at: <http://www.familyvoices.org/catalog.php>

Skip's List: New Web Site for People with Disabilities

People with disabilities have a new Web site: Skip's List (<http://www.skipslist.org>). Think of it as a "Craig's List" for people with disabilities, their families and friends, and rehab professionals. The List has been designed by Alfred H. "Skip" DeGraff, Ph.D., who, for over 40 years, has been a spinal cord injured quadriplegic using motorized wheelchair mobility. His advisory board includes people with sight, hearing, mobility, and other impairments.

The site hosts over 500 daily visitors and is attracting inquiries from a variety of advertisers. DeGraff's mission for Skip's List is to provide a world-class, user-friendly, apolitical, and *free* information exchange that serves—and is accessible to—all people with disabilities as well as their families and friends