

Select a grant award

90IL0315

Select a form

	2016
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2016

Sections

**704 Part
II**

**Section 8. Training and Technical
Assistance**

Approved

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Approved

Grant Number: **90IL0315**

Federal Agency: **Administration For Community
Living**

Grantee Organization: **DISABILITY LINK**

Award Grant Number: **90IL0315-02-00**

Grantee State: **GA**

Grantee Address: **Street Address: 1901 Montreal Rd
Ste 102
City: Tucker
State: GA
County: DeKalb
Zip: 300845223**

Agency Information

Fiscal Year:

October 1, 2015 through Sept. 30th, 2016

Grant #:

90IL0315

Name of Center:

Disability Action Center of Georgia Inc dba
disABILITY LINK

Acronym for Center (if applicable):

Counties Served:

Cherokee Clayton Cobb Coweta Dekalb Douglas
Fayette Fulton Gwinnet Henry Newton Rockdale

Section 1. General Funding Information

1.1 Sources and Amounts of Funds and Resources * - Required field

1.1.1 All Federal Funds Received

Federal Funds	Current Year
Title VII, Ch. 1, Part B*	144234
Title VII, Ch. 1, Part C*	507681
Title VII, Ch. 2*	0
Other Federal Funds*	29524
Subtotal – All Federal Funds	681439

1.1.2 Other Government Funds

Government Funds	Current Year
State Government Funds*	14700
Local Government Funds*	47678
Subtotal – State and Local Government Funds	62378

1.1.3 Private Resources

Private Resources	Current Year
Foundations, Corporations, or Trust Grants*	0
Donations from Individuals*	35439
Membership Fees*	0
Investment Income/Endowment*	0
Fees for Service (program income, etc.)*	100981
Other Resources (in-kind, fundraising, etc.)*	117609
Subtotal – Private Resources	254029

1.1.4 Total Income

Total Income	Current Year
Total Income	997846

1.1.5 Pass Through Funds

Pass Through Funds	Current Year
Amount of other government funds received as pass through funds to consumers (include funds, received on behalf of consumers, that are subsequently passed on to consumers, e.g., personal assistance services, representative payee funds, or Medicaid funds)*	147640

1.1.6 Net Operating Resources

Net Operating Resources	Current Year
Net Operating Resources	850206

1.2 Resource Development Activities * - Required field

Briefly describe the CIL's resource development activities conducted during the reporting year to expand funding from sources other than chapter 1 of Title VII of the Act. *

Resource development efforts and sources include: Atlanta Regional Commission grant which provides travel vouchers and mobility training to consumers who are seeking employment, consumers coming out nursing facilities or other institutions, and consumers with limited transportation options. The grant ended during the year. Department of Labor (transferred to the Department of Human Services) -providing Nursing Home Transition services, outreach, independent living services, etc. Fee for service through the Independent Care Waiver Program (ICWP) for providing service coordination. Fee for Service -

Money Follows the Person (MFP) - providing Peer Support to consumers transitioning out of nursing facilities. Fee for service – facilitation of Peer Support Trainings in Atlanta, Augusta, South Carolina, etc. Successfully applied to Department of Labor (VR – transferred to Department of Human Services) for fee for service – providing employment, job coaching and career counseling. Successfully applied to Department of Labor (VR – transferred to Department of Human Services) for fee for service – providing employment services and paid internships. Successfully applied to become an Employment Network through Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program – for employment services. Successfully applied for grant from the Georgia Department on Aging Services – providing nursing facility consultation services. Grant with the Balancing Incentives Program for information and referral for individuals with disabilities and nursing home transition. Home modifications contract with the Department of Community Affairs Home Access Program. Applied to Fulton County Grant-the grant was cancelled by the organization as they didn't receive funds, Applied for Christopher Reeves Foundation on employment and received funding. Applied for continuation grant with University of Montana, Applied and received grant with SNAP, second year of receiving. Other grant opportunities were applied for but not successful. disABILITY LINK has initiated and continued working with partnerships and developing sustainable donors. Held activities such as Doggie Day for awareness, participated in the State of Georgia Charitable Giving Campaign, held a fundraising event at a sponsor location in September, Held a Comedy show event with over 200 attendees in the Spring. Participated in Amazon Smile Program and Kroger Rewards. In addition, we worked with the other Centers for Independent Living, Vocational Rehabilitation and GA State Independent Living Council on increasing funding and base level funding.

Section 2. Compliance Indicator 1: Philosophy

2.1 Board Member Composition * - Required field

(A) Number of board members

10

(B) Number of board members with significant disabilities

8

(C) Percentage of board members with significant disabilities

80

2.2 Staff Composition * - Required field

Staff Composition

Staff	Total FTEs	FTEs filled by individuals with disabilities	FTE's filled by individuals from minority populations
Decisionmaking staff*	6	5	2
Other Staff*	10	9	8
Total number of employees	16	14	10

2.2.1 Percentage of Staff with Disabilities

87.5

Section 3. Individuals Receiving Services

3.1 Number of Consumers Served During the Reporting Year * - Required field

Number of Consumers Served During the Reporting Year

Consumer Type	# of CSRs
Enter the number of active CSRs carried over from September 30 of the preceding reporting year*	427
Enter the number of new CSRs opened since October 1 of the reporting year*	142
Total number of consumers served	569

3.2 Independent Living Plans and Waivers * - Required field

Independent Living Plans and Waivers

Consumer Type	Number of Consumers
Number of consumers who signed a waiver*	35
Number of consumers with whom an ILP was developed*	534

Consumer Type	Number of Consumers
Total number of consumers served during the reporting year	569

3.3 Number of Consumer Service Records Closed by September 30 of the Reporting Year
 * - Required field

Number of Consumer Service Records Closed by September 30 of the Reporting Year

Record Type	# of CSRs
Moved*	1
Withdrawn*	21
Died*	5
Completed all goals set*	120
Other*	23
Total number of CSRs closed	170

3.4 Age * - Required field

Age

Age Period	# of Consumers
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Age Period	# of Consumers
Under 5 years old*	4
Ages 5-19*	6
Ages 20-24*	24
Ages 25-59*	380
Age 60 and Older*	155
Age unavailable*	0
Total numbers of consumers by age	569

3.5 Sex

* - Required field

Sex

Sex	# of Consumers
Number of Females served*	305
Number of Males served*	264
Total number of consumers by gender	569

3.6 Race and Ethnicity

* - Required field

Race and Ethnicity

Race	# of Consumers
American Indian or Alaska Native*	6
Asian*	9
Black or African American*	389
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander*	0
White*	134
Hispanic/Latino of any race or Hispanic/ Latino only*	15
Two or more races*	3
Race and ethnicity unknown*	13
Total number of consumers served by race/ethnicity	569

3.7 Disability

* - Required field

Disability

Disability Type	# of Consumers
Cognitive*	39
Mental/Emotional*	98
Physical*	293
Hearing*	9
Vision*	56
Multiple Disabilities*	74
Other*	0

3.8 Individuals Served by County During the Reporting Year * - Required field

List each county within the CIL's service area, as indicated in the CIL's application for Part C funds and the approved SPIL. Add additional rows as necessary. For each county, indicate how many individuals residing in that county were served by the CIL during the reporting year.

3.8.1 Individuals Served by County During the Reporting Year

County Name	Number of County Residents Served
Cherokee	11

County Name	Number of County Residents Served
Clayton	45
Cobb	38
Coweta	4
Dekalb	231
Douglas	7
Fayette	6
Fulton	130
Gwinnet	60
Henry	18
Newton	14
Rockdale	5

Section 4. Individual Services and Achievements

4.1 Individual Services * - Required field

Individual Services

Other IL Services	Consumers Requesting Services	Consumers Receiving Services
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Other IL Services	Consumers Requesting Services	Consumers Receiving Services
Advocacy/Legal Services*	243	137
Assistive Technology*	65	39
Children's Services*	15	14
Communication Services*	202	147
Counseling and Related Services*	216	157
Family Services*	50	46
Housing, Home Modifications, and Shelter Services*	95	76
IL Skills Training and Life Skills Training*	238	148
Information and Referral Services*	4528	4472

Other IL Services	Consumers Requesting Services	Consumers Receiving Services
Mental Restoration Services*	12	12
Mobility Training*	96	25
Peer Counseling Services*	266	156
Personal Assistance Services*	46	42
Physical Restoration Services*	14	13
Preventive Services*	66	34
Prostheses, Orthotics, and Other Appliances*	14	14
Recreational Services*	56	25
Rehabilitation Technology Services*	10	9

Other IL Services	Consumers Requesting Services	Consumers Receiving Services
Therapeutic Treatment*	9	9
Transportation Services*	155	73
Youth/Transition Services*	17	13
Vocational Services*	98	81
Other Services*	62	54
	Specify	Specify
	Nursing Home	Nursing Home

4.2 I&R Information

* - Required field

To inform RSA how many service providers engage in I&R follow-up contacts regarding access to transportation, health care services or assistive technology, please indicate the following:

The service provider did engage in follow-up contacts with I&R recipients to document access gained to previously unavailable transportation, health care or assistive technology

Yes No

Describe how information and referral services and the other IL core and other IL services are provided to those who request such services in formats accessible to the individual requesting the services. Describe any innovative practices (not mentioned elsewhere in this report) to enhance the availability and effectiveness of IL services.
*

disABILITY LINK continues to provide IL core and other IL services in a variety of ways. Requests of accessible formats are handled on a case by case basis which have included interpreter services on a regular basis to assist in job classes, peer groups and provision of core services. In addition, for most of the year we had one staff member who was able to utilize sign language for communication on an as needed basis as well as staff who were fluent in Spanish and Mandarin. Staff is available to make home visits, meet consumers in their community, video conference, telecommute, email or voice. disABILITY LINK attracts a high number of people with disabilities looking for employment. In addition to referring to proper resources we also have an employment program which includes working with individuals on a one to one basis or in a group. The program also assists in setting up internships which are paid in order to gain skills. Several consumers have been hired by the organization they did the internship at. We have several individuals who are working at the CIL as part of the internship. We also have employees through the AARP. An important aspect of the employment program includes applying for and successfully receiving fee for service for providing job coaching, career counseling, employment services and paid internships. disABILITY LINK hosts a monthly event that educates individuals on disability rights and advocacy. The event is called "Nothing About Us Without Us" and has held topics that included local legislators to come in and talk about the importance and best way to advocate to them, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors on their process, local

schools and working with IEP. It has allowed individuals to learn different methods of advocating for different situations while being informed. disABILITY LINK staff, volunteers and board members continue to be members of transportation and housing boards as well as other disability related organizations. disABILITY LINK and staff continue to work with housing authorities and rental assistance programs. disABILITY LINK has initiated a program that will reach out to the Veteran and Youth populations. disABILITY LINK continues to work with consumers and advocating for their rights on transportation issues. A major issue continues to get the local public transit provider to include people with disabilities when planning and developing activities related to transportation and people with disabilities. Staff and consumers participated in many meetings, hearings and trainings relevant to the issues and advocacy of accessible transportation. disABILITY LINK continues to host a health and wellness program and has applied and received a grant for further development that we participate in. We provide wellness to staff, consumers and board members. disABILITY LINK continues to work with consumers in the Nursing Home Transition program who want to live in the community. It assists in providing rent, deposits, furnishings, and groceries as well as other needed items in order to move into the community of their choice. disABILITY LINK has partnered with the balancing incentive program through the state and provides information and referral to individuals through their system as well as having a specific information and referral specialist who answers the telephones. This individual is highly trained on the I&R process and can answer many questions and direct them to the resources and/or staff that can assist further in the process. In addition, we have developed an inter-office resource guide for staff to be able to easily access for resources. disABILITY LINK made great improvements to the assistive technology program to include monthly Tech Talks, instructions on computer technology, smartphone technology and other assistive devices on a one to one basis as well as in group settings. We currently have an assistive technology display and continue looking at developing an internet café. disABILITY LINK engaged in Emergency Preparedness in the means of meetings, community events and advocacy. To ensure safety and education, disABILITY LINK held

classes on Emergency Preparedness. This was especially important with the hurricane that hit Georgia. We passed along information about emergency shelters, interpreters, food resources and volunteer attendants. We coordinated with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, Get Ready Gwinnett and Dekalb Emergency Management Agency to disseminate this information via social media. disABILITY LINK continued efforts for getting out to vote for elections while working with local voting polls on accessibility features.

4.3 Peer Relationships and Peer Role Models

* - Required field

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL promoted the development of peer relationships and peer role models among individuals with significant disabilities. *

Our IL specialists represent a variety of disabilities as do our board members. They are readily available to assist and support a consumer with a similar disability or situation. The establishment of relationships with outside agencies has been beneficial in creating peer relationships with consumers who have a disability or recently acquired a disability and needs support services and peer mentoring directly after to resume independence. Referrals are made to support groups and documented in the case notes, disABILITY LINK often makes presentations to such peer support groups. The advantages of such connections are continually promoted. The specialists also promote consumers working with each other. disABILITY LINK offers classes that are targeted towards developing relationships while using peer role models. These are conducted in private one on one meetings and group meetings. Examples include job classes, tech talks, Empowering Our Youth, Georgia Radio

Reading Service, Transit Riders for Equal Access, People First, Independent Living skills classes, and the volunteer trainings. We utilize peer relationships and modeling in our Nursing Home Transition program and Peer training programs. We utilize volunteers to provide peer support to other consumers as an ongoing activity. Peer Relationships are firmly established through our classes as well as formal and informal gatherings. It is not unusual to see a group of peers gathered together in the activity room, conference room or our sitting areas discussing the day's events and challenges they face. Peer Role models are evident at all levels of disABILITY LINK through staff, board members, consumers and volunteers.

disABILITY LINK utilizes the knowledge of staff in order to reach out to specific targeted groups. Our staff has conducted workshops to other organizations on topics of interest related to best practices and has been seen as a leader. disABILITY LINK was instrumental in creating and coordinating the federally funded Georgia Peer Support Project. disABILITY LINK has provided peer support training to peer supporters. Supporting peer support has the double benefit of improving the skills and outlook of both the peer supporter and peer, good "bang for the buck." The 3-day, interactive and lively experience has helped to create excellent peer supporters and improved the quality of peer support in the disability community and has highlighted disABILITY LINK as a Center for Independent Living with excellence in peer support. disABILITY LINK continues to receive interest from CILs and other organizations around the state and country to provide the three day GA-PSP training. Most disABILITY LINK staff are certified through The Georgia Peer Support Project training and we continue to support many consumers and volunteers, etc., to experience the GA-PSP training.

Board membership of the CIL is comprised of more than 51% people with disabilities. Board members clearly recognize and discuss that they serve as role models and that the process of conducting board meetings is a function of the peer relationships and community involvement. Several of our board members were once consumers who had gone through programs such as the job classes and are now gainfully employed. They use their

experience as a peer supporter to many other consumers. In addition, our staff are excellent peer role models utilizing their stories and experiences to assist others. The youth independent living specialist provided peer support to youth while attending national conferences.

Several of our staff members participated in telling their story of working with a disability at different venues along with several consumers. RESPECT Institute (RI) has been facilitated and hosted by disABILITY LINK for several years - its a 3 1/2 day experience of peer led skills training and coaching to transform personal stories of disability into educational and meaningful presentations - participants report increased confidence and control while learning the skills to deliver stories to various audiences. disABILITY LINK and RI has increased the opportunities for graduates, and other interested parties, to meet monthly and peer support one another with the presentations, personal goals, etc. -leadership has emerged from each of the 3 graduating classes and are working together to support all graduates, and potential graduates, with a full range of peer relationships. Numerous previous members from the employment class have returned to the LEAPS meetings to encourage the current members and to demonstrate that success of the program. Several of the previous members have actually presented a topic which they wanted to share with the group.

The LGBTQ + disABILITY group was initiated and met monthly. This new intersectional group is meant to build a more inclusive environment for these two communities that strive for the same things: advocacy for human rights, but not special rights; valuing the inherent worth of each individual, all of whom deserve dignity and respect; promotion of inclusion and recognition of the talents and abilities of all individuals; and supporting for self-determination and choice. The meeting locations varied from in the office or in the community. But the main goal was to provide a safe space for the consumers who identified with both communities, seeking empowerment and future support. Per request by a consumer, who was struggling through their daily living activities (e.g. self-care, mobility, college life, and maintaining personal/social status) with a new and life-changing

diagnosis, a panel of peers was coordinated. The panelists were people who live by the independent living philosophy, and have positive insight to what life is like after such diagnosis. This opens doors for future resources beyond the scheduled event.

A new group focused on individuals of color with disabilities and police brutality was initiated and began meeting on a monthly basis to develop ideas, goals and a plan to address issues that individuals of color with disabilities face.

4.4 Increased Independence and Community Integration * - Required field

Increased Independence and Community Integration

Significant Life Area	Goals Set	Goals Achieved	Pro
Self-Advocacy/Self-Empowerment*	69	23	4
Communication*	77	27	4
Mobility/Transportation*	113	22	8
Community-Based Living*	123	64	5
Educational*	44	13	3
Vocational*	132	71	5
Self-care*	53	35	3

Significant Life Area	Goals Set	Goals Achieved	In Progr
Information Access/Technology*	22	4	16
Personal Resource Management*	19	14	5
Relocation from a Nursing Home or Institution to Community-Based LivingCommunity/Social Participation*	21	12	8
Community/Social Participation*	49	28	20
Other*	11	5	5

4.5 Improved Access To Transportation, Health Care Services, and Assistive Technology

* - Required field

In column one, indicate the number of consumers who required access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting year. Of the consumers listed in column one, indicate in column two, the number of consumers who, as a result of the provision of IL services (including the four core services), achieved access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting year. In column three, list the number of consumers whose access to

transportation, health care services or assistive technology is still in progress at the end of the reporting year.

Improved Access To Transportation, Health Care Services, and Assistive Technology

Areas	# of Consumers Requiring Access	# of Consumers Achieving Access	# of Consumers Whose Access in Progress
Transportation*	83	32	51
Health Care Services*	206	201	5
Assistive Technology*	46	20	26

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Note: For most IL services, a consumer's access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology is documented through his or her CSR. In some instances, consumers may achieve an outcome solely through information and referral (I&R) services. To document these instances as successful outcomes, providers are not required to create CSRs for these consumers but must be able to report that follow-up contacts with these consumers showed access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology.

4.6 Self-Help and Self-Advocacy * - Required field

Briefly describe how the CIL has promoted self-help and self-advocacy among individuals with significant disabilities during the reporting year. *

The Independent Living philosophy is the main focus of all staff, volunteers and consumer relationships. All consumers are encouraged to fully participate in the development of their IL plan. Our staff and our programs offer the tools necessary so consumers can help themselves. The IL skills training component of the core services includes how to express what you want and/or need to maintain and/or increase independence, and the necessary steps to accomplish the goal. IL specialists work one on one, as well in group settings, with consumers in areas of employment, budgeting, health and wellness, enrolling in benefit programs, advocating for their right to equal access in the community. disABILITY LINK distributes voter registration applications. IL specialists offer voting options and offers registration as a key component in having each voice heard. In the lead up to the Presidential Elections, disABILITY LINK hosted educational events and discussions around the issues impacting the disability community, staff and volunteers encouraged full participation in the electoral process. Independent Living Specialists educate consumers on ADA guidelines and fair housing and encourage the consumers to educate themselves to advocate effectively. disABILITY has conducted a variety of activities that encourage consumers to become directly involved in their own self-help and advocacy. Choices and resources are the tools of self-reliance and each person is encouraged to use those tools to solve their daily

and lifelong issues. disABILITY LINK was active in a variety of advocacy issues during the reporting year. This serves a dual purpose, participation in necessary advocacy, and the opportunity to invite consumers to learn about the issues, see the big picture, get involved and practice self- help and self- advocacy. During the reporting year, disABILITY LINK initiated, developed and supported a variety of advocacy and disability rights activities to promote "an equal playing field" for people with disabilities - issues included Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) advocacy at the state and federal levels; Home Buying (and other housing issues) seminars; Basic Parliamentary Procedure classes; hosted RESPECT Institute trainings and ongoing support (regarding the development of personal experiences of disability into effective educational and advocacy presentations); hosts an ongoing peer support group for survivors of domestic violence; participated in a statewide "Take Your Legislator to Work Day (hosting the elected representatives of staff, interns, volunteers and board members); participated in nationwide events concerning the portrayal of the lead character in the movie "Me Before You," educating the public and press about living with a disability and equal access to suicide prevention services; ADA training to consumers and provider organizations and other entities; supporting other grassroots peer led organizations (BIPVA, People First, etc); facilitated individual and group meetings with decision makers (policy and legislative staff and representatives, etc.); outreach to promote IL to a huge variety of individuals, service providers, private and public entities; participation in the annual Atlanta Martin Luther King, Jr. Day parade, developing a Georgia

Get Out The Disability Vote (GGOTDV) campaign; and as well as many other events. The office space at disABILITY LINK is full of positive self-help and self-advocacy messages. For example, posters, pictures, photos, etc., of accomplished people with disabilities, messages of power, hope and support. During the reporting year different activities and meetings were held that encourage the consumers to become directly involved in their own self-help and advocacy. A few of these activities include: Nothing About Us Without Us (NAUWU) which is a monthly interactive opportunity to learn, and share, about topics of interest, conversations so far have included the disability community regarding: included transportation, housing, veterans issues, services animals, AT, communicating with elected representatives and human rights. Each session is facilitated by consumers or guest speakers (often new to making presentations), with support from staff, and a "take action" segment encourages participants to make a commitment to and be empowered by the topic, (for example, to learn more, to advocate - specifically or generally, to support others to get involved, etc., as appropriate). NAUWU is attracting old friends and new visitors to disABILITY LINK and is a popular addition to the monthly calendar of events. •disABILITY LINK participated in the Home Usability Study. This research project is a collaboration between the University of Montana and the University of Kansas. Home Usability is about ensuring that people with disabilities are living in homes that meet their needs and desires the research project provides funds to help improve minor barriers, the grant has successfully concluded with the researchers very complimentary about

the participation of disABILITY LINK staff and consumers. Other events include: Circle of Support meetings – disABILITY LINK supports individual “Circles of Support” as a “tool” for self-advocacy and self-determination, supporting people to develop dreams and reach goals - when appropriate, disABILITY LINK has provided meeting space, circle facilitation, technical assistance, etc., for the meetings themselves, and for individuals and their supporters to plan their circle meetings, etc, ; Concerned Transit Riders for Equal Access (CTREA) – is an independent transportation advocacy group supporting self and systems advocacy, and embodies the notions of self-help and self-advocacy, the “tagline” of the group is, “Inform, Educate and Advocate for Efficient, Effective and Accessible transit.” The group is run by people with disabilities who use public transit – the group works to hold service providers accountable, for example, by increasing membership of members with advocacy skills and interests to the advisory committee of the major transit provider in Metro Atlanta and working on projects that promote collaboration between riders and operators. disABILITY LINK and CTREA co-hosted a community events focused on MARTA and the changes to ensure individuals with disabilities have a “Seat at the table” during the reporting year. Empowering Our Youth (EOY) – disABILITY LINK recognizes the need to promote self-help and self-advocacy at an early age through the development of Empowering Our Youth (for youth and young adults ages 14 to 29) where the participants are the leaders and decision makers, supported by the Youth Advocacy Coordinator. As youth several webinars and group meetings including

“Disability Day” and “Pride Day” involved youth. The youth independent living specialist has presented on various occasions to a diverse audience of young adults with disabilities about self- help and self-advocacy. Particularly transition related events.

4.7 Additional Information Concerning Individual Services or Achievements * - Required field

Please provide any additional description or explanation concerning individual services or achievements, including outstanding success stories and/or major obstacles encountered.

*

1. Information & Referral: Over the last year, we partnered with several organizations and developed memorandum of understandings including the local ADA Center, Metro Fair Housing and MENA. We continue to work with GACHI- GA Council for the Hearing Impaired. disABILITY LINK’s staff continue to be Certified Application Counselors under an agreement with Medicare & Medicaid Services to assist individuals in applying for health care coverage. disABILITY LINK also was an access point organization for Georgia’s Aging and DisabilityResource Connection for aging and disability services through the Balancing Incentive Program. We received calls and provided information and referral to the consumers calling in. receiving IL services.

2. Communication: We continue to develop and sponsor our chapter of Toastmasters, an organization that supports public speaking and leadership,. Chapter members have taken on

leadership roles. The members are rightly pleased with the achievements of the chapter; outcomes include; IL outreach, inclusion of a wide variety of consumers, and members of the disability community, and personal skill development.

3. Peer Support: disABILITY LINK provides peer support in a variety of venues. disABILITY LINK hosted trainings using the Georgia Peer Support Project curriculum for individuals from disABILITY LINK service area and around the state.

The training includes opportunities to share personal experiences of living with a disability, and opportunities to practice peer support skills with one another. The training strengthens the Independent Living (IL) community, and we all benefit from increased, (1) community development, (2) passion for IL, (3) peer support skills, and (4) self-determination.

4. disABILITY LINK began a peer support group for LGBTQIA + disability. Before attending this group he was not aware of the different supports that were available for him to continue his education.

Through the information and referral process he was provided with various resources such as Tools for Life to assist him with accessible equipment that he needs while continuing his education. He was also provided with a listing of various schools where he might enroll. He was provided peer support to complete applications and was able to successfully enroll in the school. He then faced another barrier because he did not have transportation in order to go to school. Through peer support and information referral to apply for a program at a low cost and was accepted to the program. He reports that without the initial class he would not have known where supports. He is enrolled in school, has accessible transportation and is pursuing his life goals.

5. Advocacy: We host "Nothing About Us Without Us" each month which is interactive, peer led, IL based opportunity to learn to be more active in a variety of topics impacting the disability community - topics included voting,

transportation, housing, veterans issues, AT, advocating for and with the ADA, civil rights law, and communicating with elected representatives - the content has included guest speakers, discussion panels, PowerPoint presentations, videos, discussions, and a combination of these tools. Attendees participate enthusiastically and report an increase in empowerment and community involvement.

6. Assistive Technology: We have a display of different assistive technology and partner with other organizations in order to keep it current. In addition we have a borrowing bookcase which includes audible books, large print books and other materials where individuals borrow and donate items on a rotating basis. An example of a success story includes: A consumer has had a hard year getting new equipment to help her get out of the house and into the community. The IL specialist worked with her in order to locate resources and purchase items needed. She has been able to get a new hooyer lift and wheelchair. She was experiencing issues with her aids getting her in and out of the bed but with the IL skills training and peer support she was able to hire and fire her own aids and train each to meet her needs. After all those issues were worked through her final need was being able to go to church. All the items together has given her a new leash on life as she says. She can get out of bed, was able to learn how to control her own needs and now she leads the choir at her church.

7. Employment, Vocational, counseling services and Independent Living Skills Training: disABILITY LINK provides employment classes as well as working with GA Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Through the program consumers have been able to find meaningful positions. We also expose consumers to job fairs and

networking opportunities. In addition, we are an employment network organization that assists consumers with the ticket to work program. Effective communication is a primary focus in disABILITY LINK's job readiness program, (LEAPS). Consumers who are interested are encouraged to teach one of the LEAPS classes and do presentations and outreach with staff from disABILITY LINK. Several consumers who has gone through the LEAPS program actively teach and assist different aspects of the classes.

8. Transportation and Housing: disABILITY LINK continues to be very active with transportation and housing issues. disABILITY LINK participates in identifying housing issues and working with entities such as Housing Authorities, apartment complexes and local landlords and legal services when needed - disABILITY LINK hosted a number of classes and events regarding housing issues, including home ownership, Section 8, tools to support housing searches, and a Lunch and Learn to support the efforts of SOPOS (Shut Out, Priced Out and Segregated). disABILITY LINK also works with the Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) in providing guidance and suggestions to the MARTA management. disABILITY LINK participates as an entity to assist in certifying individuals for MARTA Mobility (paratransit). A major problem in this area is lack of options for transportation. We held a grant that provided different options but it was redistributed to focus more on the senior population.

9. Recreational Services: disABILITY LINK has a Health and Wellness Gym with different activities to increase the participation in the community including healthy eating, Wii activities, bocce ball and many others.

10. Nursing Home Diversion: disABILITY LINK is a provider for the Independent Care Waiver Program which assists individuals in remaining in the community of their choice. Through the services provided we was able to support an individual who had become homeless after losing her job and being in & out of the hospital. Independent Living Training Specialist assisted consumer with applying for and gaining acceptance into an affordable housing program. According to consumer the process when smooth and she is a "happy camper."

10. Nursing Home Transition: Over the last year, disABILITY LINK supported consumers living in long term facilities to understand the transition process as well as the independent living process. Some of the individuals transitioned into their own homes or apartments, some have shared housing or roommates. A success story includes a consumer who had gotten shot and had his leg was in a nursing home for three months because he was unable to find an accessible place to live as well as an affordable home to live in. The nursing home was going to discharge him without anywhere to go. Working with his Independent Living Specialist he was able to look at his income, apply for benefits and obtain resources. The consumer with the help of the Independent Living Specialist located a home that was both affordable and accessible. Through disABILITY LINK he was able to pay his deposit plus his first month's rent. He continues to work on other goals, but is happy just to live back at home where he feels free to make his own choices.

Section 5. Provision of Services

**5.1 Compliance Indicator 2: Provision of Services
on a Cross-Disability Basis** * - Required field

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has ensured that IL services are provided to eligible individuals with a diversity of significant disabilities and individuals who are members of populations that are unserved or underserved, without restrictions based on the particular type or types of significant disability and in a manner that is neither targeted nor limited to a particular type of significant disability. *

Our staff and Board members represent a variety of disabilities (Multiple Sclerosis, deafness, visual impairments, mental illness, rheumatoid arthritis and well as many others). disABILITY LINK promotes outreach and collaboration at every opportunity. Examples include; ADA training to people and organizations that reflect the entire disability community; recording IL updates (and PSAs) for broadcast via Georgia Radio Reading Service (GaRRS) on IL, transportation, youth, AT and voting issues; regular collaboration with other peer led organizations (GMHCN, People First, NFB, etc.); regular collaboration with non-peer led organizations (GCDD, CLD, IHDD, ARC, Parent-to-Parent, providers, Shepherd Center, etc.); promotion and support of local, statewide and national concerns (education, employment, health, housing and transportation, plus attitudes, are cross-disability and cross-geographical issues); circulation of media and social media opportunities to promote full inclusion in community life; etc. disABILITY LINK's publications and programs stress the fact that we

serve all disabilities. disABILITY LINK provides IL services continuously on a cross disability basis.

Services are provided to all consumers who are determined eligible according to the Title VII of the Rehab Act, and then specific eligibility criteria defined by the funding source. Education and training is provided on a continual basis to staff on equal access, diversity and cultural issues. During the reporting year, disABILITY LINK has continued plans, and initiated further plans, to ensure services are provided across disability labels and to a variety of people with disabilities, outreach efforts include: In an effort to reach the unserved and underserved areas, services expanded to reach out to the Blind and deaf population, transitional youth and transitional Veterans. disABILITY LINK worked with a new variety of organizations with activities to ensure we engaged others and reached out to a diversity of individuals. These organizations and activities included engaging several local pet stores and animal hospitals to provide service animal awareness with our doggie day activity, engaged the community as disABILITY LINK with different events sponsored at different locations, hosted a workshops to provide information about workforce development and Independent Living Skills to different service organizations. disABILITY LINK continues to provide mentorship for the Brain Injury Peer Visitor Association; the disABILITY LINK brochure is included in the hundreds of packets of information shared with newly diagnosed people with brain injuries in 25 hospitals around Metro Atlanta. disABILITY LINK also participates in the training of the peer visitors. In order to reach a wider geographical area, the staff contacted community organizations such as libraries,

Chambers of Commerce, doctors and other healthcare offices, schools and colleges, veterans organizations, organizations serving people with mental health disabilities, organizations serving people who are blind and visually disabled, organizations serving people who are deaf or hearing disabled, organizations serving people with brain injuries, transportation organizations, nursing facilities (all of them in the service area) and residences for seniors, organizations serving veterans, etc. - by phone, email, mail and in person (participating in resource fairs, etc.) - throughout the 12 county service area to inform people with, and without, disabilities about disABILITY LINK and Independent Living . Independent Living Classes were held on a very wide variety of topics which attracted participants who were not previously consumers. disABILITY LINK continues to have a positive relationship with other organizations run by and for people with disabilities, including – The National Federation of the Blind (Georgia and Atlanta), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the National Council for the Blind (Georgia and Atlanta), the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network (and the Peer Support, Respite and Wellness Center), People First (National, Georgia and Atlanta), ADAPT (National, Georgia and Atlanta), and Concerned Transit Riders for Equal Access (CTREA).

Staff and consumers participated in presentations, panels and booths at Resource/Transition Fairs which provided opportunities to present IL philosophy and services; disABILITY LINK published a quarterly newsletter that included information about events and activities, and messages of self-help, self-advocacy and self-determination. disABILITY

LINK participated in radio media in the following ways: Radio (1) - monthly GaRRS/Two Minute Advocacy Sessions about independent living, transportation – reaches 20,000+ people statewide; Radio (2) disABILITY LINK increased the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, blogs, etc.) providing additional opportunities for dialogue and connections with people who might not typically seek support from a Center for Independent Living, and providing ease of communication for those who prefer to communicate electronically. The CIL administers the Voucher Travel Assistance Program (VTAP). The grant ended within the last reporting period, outreach efforts continue in the all counties served, in particular to the most rural counties with very limited or no transportation options. Youth Program – Empowering Our Youth (EOY) is the youth and young adults program for youth and young adults with disabilities (ages 14 to 29). This program was developed to reach out to underserved transitional youth. We are in the beginning stages of initiating a Veteran's transition program. Disability link also hosted an LGBTQIA + disability group for those that identify with both communities.

5.2 Alternative Formats

* - Required field

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has ensured the availability in alternative formats of all of its written policies and materials and IL services, as appropriate.

All program materials are made available to all consumers upon request in alternative format including tapes, Braille, large print, CCTV, Sorenson Video Relay. Our business cards include braille printing and all videos we produce feature text captioning. We make our weekly Georgia Radio Reading Service announcements available in text format. In addition, we attempt to keep a regular supply of alternative format materials for other community resources available for our consumers. disABILITY LINK uses Verdana 14 print font for printed material as a standard practice. Newsletters and program events are made available in text format through email. We offer an information board that utilizes large print for board minutes, latest events and other special announcements. In addition, this board has an iPod that individuals can listen to that reads what is presented on this board.

5.3 Equal Access

* - Required field

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has ensured equal access of individuals with significant disabilities, including communication and physical access, to the center's services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities, whether publicly or privately funded. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access is provided to any individual with a significant disability regardless of the individual's type of significant disability. *

All of disability LINK's office, programs and activities continue to be barrier free and all materials are distributed in alternative format upon request. We offer an information board that utilizes large print for board minutes, latest events and other special announcements. In addition, this board has an iPod that individuals can listen to that reads what is presented on this board. disABILITY LINK provided interpreter services on a regular basis to assist in job classes, peer groups and provision of core services. Our office currently use Access Video Interpreting app as an ideal communication services alternative. With webcam technology, it connects a Deaf or hard of hearing consumer with a hearing person by including a qualified Access interpreter from another location who provides interpretation through a computer screen. We currently have a video phone and access to video interpreting services for our deaf consumers which allow us to provide employment services to the deaf community. We can accommodate individuals through scheduling an appointment or walking into our office. 14 point Verdana font is utilized as a standard for print materials. Lighting levels, noise levels, wheelchair access as well as AT supports were provided as requested for different venues. Our office is a scent free environment. A common request is lighting levels for different sensory requests. We have been able to successfully accommodate this through removal of light bulbs in different areas while allowing ample lighting for others. In addition, for most of the year we had one staff member who was able to utilize sign language for communication on an as needed basis as well as Spanish and Mandarin speaking staff for language barriers with those specific needs. We provided tactile signing with their

hands for individuals who identified as Deaf-Blind. We provide basic sign language skills class on a monthly basis. We have sign language communication cards available. disABILITY LINK also provides services by visiting homes, in the community and other methods of communication such as but not limited to Skype for video conferencing when unable to physically be present at the center. Inside our office we have door handles that are designed for accessibility. Our doorbell flashes to alert for those who are deaf. Outside our entry to our office, we have a voice door greeting that is activated by motion, allowing those who are blind or low vision ease in identifying where our access entry door is located. In addition we utilize different social media venues including facebook, twitter, Newsline, etc to provide more tools for accessibility and resources.

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has advocated for and conducted activities that promote the equal access to all services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities in society, whether public or private, and regardless of funding source, for individuals with significant disabilities. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access provided to individuals without disabilities is provided in the center's service area to individuals with significant disabilities. *

disABILITY LINK advocates and conducts activities for equal access at every possible opportunity. We collaborate with partners and challenge others on equal access. We have

participated in conferences, trainings, events and education that include promoting equal access for individuals with disabilities. disABILITY LINK collaborated individually with organizations such as Metro Fair Housing, State Independent Living Council and Montana Rural Institute to find housing needs, discrimination and promote advocacy on fair housing issues. Staff and consumers participated in different events targeted towards finding gaps and needs. disABILITY LINK initiated, developed and supported a variety of advocacy and disability rights activities to promote "an equal playing field" for people with disabilities. Issues included a number of events, as well as continuing issues of access. Examples include; Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) advocacy at the state and federal levels; Home Buying (and other housing issues) seminars; ADA training to consumers and provider organizations and entities; supporting other grassroots peer led organizations (BIPVA, People First, etc); facilitated individual and group meetings with decision makers (policy and legislative staff and representatives, etc.); outreach to promote IL to a huge variety of individuals, service providers, private and public entities; the lead organization to promote participation in the annual Atlanta Martin Luther King, Jr. Day parade ("Disability Rights are Civil Rights") developing a Georgia Get Out The Disability Vote (GGOTDV) campaign; participated the Georgia Disability History Alliance (GDHA) planning and activities; hosting regular NAUWU education and involvement training opportunities; disABILITY LINK works toward increasing choices and options for transportation. We administered the Voucher Travel Assistance Program (VTAP), through a grant from The Atlanta Regional

Authority (ARC), which provides financial assistance for transportation options for people with disabilities. and although it was not continued we participate in the meetings in order to remain visible for the disability community. During the year our CIL advocated with other organizations regarding increasing the number and availability of accessible taxis in Atlanta. disABILITY LINK hosted a presentation by Uber and continues to advocate for accessible rideshare services. We worked with and was able to negotiate lower costs with different providers. Staff participated in Human Services Transportation Committee to increase access to transportation for people with disabilities, particularly in the suburban and more “rural” areas of Atlanta (and other issues of community accessibility).

Staff provided Travel Training services for people with disabilities. disABILITY LINK also identified and assisted in resolving issues while working with consumers to be their own advocate. One of the most common access concerns is with regard to public transportation – more specifically the paratransit service. Multiple consumers have had issues and sought support from the independent living specialist to get equal access that they are supposed to be receiving. The CIL provided support of Concerned Transit Riders for Equal Access (CTREA) to increase grassroots participation in transportation advocacy efforts. Staff and consumers are consultants with the Veteran’s Administration’s (VA) One-Click Program for route planning and increased options, and successfully advocated with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to expand the program to all people with disabilities, not just veterans. disABILITY LINK continues to

We held job training classes that focus on asking for reasonable accommodations and we work with employers through several of our programs to educate on providing those accommodations.

5.4 Consumer Information

* - Required field

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has ensured that consumers have the opportunity to develop and achieve their goals (either with or without an ILP) and that the consumer has the opportunity to express satisfaction with the center and such consumer satisfaction results are evaluated by the center. *

Consumer Service Record (CSR) is required to be completed for all consumers who require services, excluding those requesting only I&R. All consumers are encouraged to participate in the development of their goals and the ILP. ILPs are consumer driven. Consumers are notified of their right to develop or waive an ILP. They are also notified of their right to a hearing and/or contact the Client Assistance Program (CAP) should they believe that their rights or services have been denied unfairly. A consumer outcome and satisfaction survey is conducted by volunteers with a random sampling of consumers (approximately 10%) at the beginning, middle and end of the fiscal year. Surveys are also provided at the closure of each case. disABILITY LINK continued the use of social networks and encouraged participation of discussion through online message boards. There is a comment box

in the office to allow consumers to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with our services. They are checked regularly. In addition, we have a contact us on our webpage that allows for people to utilize for comments. The results are reviewed by management. One example of a consumer of satisfaction results included a consumer who had difficulty in obtaining Social Security benefits and not knowing his benefits in relation to work, reported that he was able to gain the support and information and because of the support and services he received at disABILITY he now has the life he wanted including a good job, good home and a fiance. He reports that the services were "valuable in getting my life in order".

5.5 Consumer Service Record Requirements

* - Required field

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL ensured that each consumer's CSR contains all of the required information *

disABILITY LINK utilizes a digital data management program for maintaining and ensuring CSRs are accurate and contain the required information. Supervisors/Program Managers and staff regularly confirm that this is being done by performing CSR reviews. There are staff trainings throughout the year to reinforce and modify policies and procedures. New staff are provided initial staff trainings during orientation. Additionally, staff participates in our digital data management program webinars in order to ensure accuracy of reporting. Ongoing

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent
Other	Community Education	43
Assistive Technology	Community Education	217
Other	Outreach Efforts	10
Other	Public Education	100
Other	Outreach Efforts	171

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent
Transportation	Community/Systems Advocac	89
Other	Community Education and P	96
Heathcare	Community/Systems Advocac	46
Other	Collaboration/Networking	160
Housing	Collaboration/Networking	235

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent
Healthcare	Public Education	394
Housing	Community/Systems Advocac	1700
Other	Community/Systems Advocac	80
Assistive Technology	Technical Assistance	136
Other	Technical Assistance	256

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent
Transportation	Collaboration/Networking	119

5.7 Description of Community Activities

* - Required field

For the community activities mentioned above, provide additional details such as the role of the CIL staff board members and/or consumers, names of any partner organizations and further descriptions of the specific activities, services and benefits. *

disABILITY LINK coordinated with many different organizations. Activities include participating in a resource fairs, health and wellness fairs, conferences, educational groups, National and local organizations, meeting with representatives of local, regional and state government and distributing pertinent information to consumers. disABILITY LINK worked with The Georgia Statewide Independent Living Council, The Georgia Advocacy Office and Atlanta Legal Aid, NCIL and APRIL on issues such as the Olmstead Decision Compliance and the Department of Justice settlement with the state of Georgia, Community Choice Options, transportation options and fair housing issues. disABILITY LINK focused a great deal of time on Empowering Our Youth by working with local schools, parents,

transition fairs and creating outreach avenues. disABILITY LINK continued to work on emergency preparedness and DeKalb Emergency Preparedness Festival was a success. Staff and consumers had the opportunity to see interactive emergency vehicle displays, receive disaster and emergency preparedness info, and learn about fire safety & crime prevention and how to prepare for pet and large animal crisis care.

Consumers, staff and volunteers provided education to the disability community and the general public. We continued with our newsletter and Dates to Remember (monthly reminder of activities). disABILITY LINK conducted a voter registration and education campaign to promote voter registration and educating about getting out to vote. disABILITY LINK was instrumental in creating and coordinating the federally funded Georgia Peer Support Project in the prior year and utilized what tools were developed to continue to hold peer support training groups. disABILITY LINK contracts with the local Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to provide essential peer support to the consumers transitioning from nursing facilities through Money Follows the Person. disABILITY LINK continues to advocate on transportation and housing issues. disABILITY LINK continued to work with employers such as the Center for Disease Control, Walmart, Kroger's, USDA, and many others in an effort to put people with disabilities to work in appropriate and gainful employment.

We collaborate with groups and provide resources for organizations such as Concerned Transit Riders for Equal Access, Decatur

Housing Authority, Georgia Legal Aid, National Federation of the Blind of GA, Metro Fair Housing and Disability Law and Policy Network. Staff, board members and volunteers collaborated and networked with many different entities including, but not limited to: Abilities, Inc., Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC), AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps/Georgia PAS Corps, AT&T, Atlanta Housing Authority (ALA), Atlanta Legal Aid Society (ALAS), Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), Atlanta Urban League, Atlanta, Georgia and National ADAPT, Brain Injury Peer Visitors Association (BIPVA), Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Center for Financial Freedom and Innovations (CFII), Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD), at Georgia State University (GSU), Center for the Visually Impaired (CVI); City of Decatur, Concerned Transit Riders for Equal Access (CTREA), Concrete Change, Decatur Business Association, Decatur Housing Authority, DeKalb Chamber of Commerce; DeKalb Rape Crisis Center, Disability Law & Policy Network (DLPN), Disability Resource Group (DRG), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Georgia ADA Coordinator, Georgia Advocacy Office (GAO), Georgia Council for the Blind, Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD), Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR), Georgia Department of Labor (DOL), Georgia Department of Rehabilitation Services, Georgia Library for Accessible Services (GLASS), Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network, Georgia Micro Board Association, Georgia Radio Reading Service

(GaRRS), Georgia Transplant Foundation, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (VR), Institute on Human Development & Disability (IHDD), at The University of Georgia (UGA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Latin American Association (Asociacion Latinoamericana), Manpower, Metro Fair Housing, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), Metropolitan Employment Network of Atlanta (MENA), National Association of Blind Veterans, National Federation of the Blind (NFB) – of Georgia, Cobb County, Decatur and Metro Atlanta, O'Hern House (Project Interconnections), Pedestrians Educating Drivers (PEDS), Peer Support, Respite and Wellness Centers, People First of Atlanta, People First of Georgia, Public Sector Alliance, ReBoot Project (of Tools for Life), Rockdale County Recreation Department, Shepherd Center, Siemens, Social Security Administration, St Jude's Recovery Center, The Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH), The Georgia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), Tools for Life, United Way of Greater Atlanta, Unlock the Waiting Lists! Campaign, US Department of Transportation, US Department of Labor, US Department of Veterans Affairs, VISTA, 101 Mobility, Affordable Medical Resources, AMS Vans, Atlanta School for the Deaf, Crossroads Atlanta, Cumberland Academy, Blaze Sports, Decatur City Government, Cobb County Council, GACHI- GA Council for the Hearing Impaired, GA Association of the Deaf (GAD), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), AARP, National Assoc. of the Deaf (NAD), GDBA-Ga Deaf Blind Association, and Destiny's Child Home Care. For many of these organizations, staff, board members and consumers: • Serve on specific committees that deal with disability and

independent living issues •Provide training, consultation or other service •Serve on Advisory Councils and Committees •Are active members • Are leaders, officers and board members, etc.

Section 6. Annual Program and Financial Objectives * - Required field

6.1 Work Plan for the Reporting Year * - Required field

6.1.1 Achievements

Discuss the work plan's proposed goals and objectives and the progress made in achieving them during the reporting year. *

Goal 1: To operate a center for independent living that conducts all activities within independent living philosophy. Objective: To provide Independent Living Services in 12 Counties of Cherokee, Cobb, Douglas, Coweta, Fulton, DeKalb, Gwinnett, Fayette, Clayton, Rockdale, Newton and Henry. Action Steps: 1. Provide individuals with IL skills training on a variety of topics of interest. 2. Conduct advocacy and educational activities no less than quarterly to address transportation and housing issues.

Result: Held monthly meetings for NAWU (Nothing about Us without Us) -12 classes - a 2 hour, interactive, peer led, IL based opportunity to learn and ideas be more active in a variety of topics impacting the disability community - topics included voting, transportation, housing, veterans issues, services animals, AT, communicating

with elected representatives, PowerPoint presentations, videos, discussions, and a combination of these tools - attendees participate enthusiastically and report an increase in empowerment and community involvement

A Seat at the Table - Board of Directors Training: a four hour training for consumers who were interested in becoming board members for non-profit organizations, was held quarterly during the fiscal year with over 30 consumers attending and 10 other organizations participating. **Dates to Remember:** Our monthly "Dates to Remember" newsletter containing information about events held by disABILITY LINK and other consumer-led organizations was distributed by mail and electronically to over 1,500 people monthly;

Assistive Technology Training - consumers received one-on-one training to use their assistive devices and other assistive technology to maximize their independence as well as hosting Tech Tuesdays on a monthly basis with a total of over 110 consumers combined in attendance on topics such as powerpoint, Microsoft Word, Facebook, Mobile apps, etc.;

History Classes - As part of the Get out and Vote Project we hosted events focused on voting, voting accessibility and learning who your legislature is. **Volunteer Orientation** – Held monthly volunteer orientation classes in order to have consumers become involved in their community and become peer supporters. We trained over 30 new volunteers over the course of the fiscal year. **Employment** – The LEAPS class continues to be well attended and broad consumer interest has led to a waiting list for future participants. Topics include items such as resume writing, job hunting, social media, how to be an employee, and work place accommodations; **Employer Education**

Workshops – Educated employers on hiring people with disabilities and providing appropriate supports in the workplace; Toastmasters- disABILITY LINK is an independent chapter of the organization that provides staff and consumers with the opportunity to hone their professional presentation skills. This group is held monthly with between 8 and 20 participants each event. Staff and consumers participated in many meetings, hearings and trainings relevant to the issues and advocacy of accessible transportation. The CIL provided support of Concerned Transit Riders for Equal Access (CTREA) to increase grass roots participation in transportation advocacy efforts by hosting meetings. Worked with local transportation groups and organizations such as MARTA and ARC. disABILITY LINK collaborated with Metro Fair Housing to promote fair housing practices for people with disabilities. Housing workshops were held on different events including home buyers, accessibility, visibility and other events. The attendance for each event was between 15 and 30 consumers.

Goal 2: Expand program for youth transitional services. Objectives: Support youth in transitioning into adulthood. Action Steps: 1. Develop and expand the youth program that promotes lifelong learning experiences. 2. Provide activities for youth which promote peer relationships and a sense of community on a quarterly basis. 3. Provide outreach activities to local school districts and colleges with two new partnerships.

Result:

Youth programs were developed and coordinated a few programs based off of consumer direction – WATCH ME!, an LGBTQ + disABILITY group, and a brief peer support panel for the consumers who have questions about life after being diagnosed with a severe disability.

WATCH ME! – An acronym for, "When Advocacy and Teamwork Combine, Help Means Empowerment!" was developed which is a monthly, three-day opportunity to gain knowledge of disability history, to develop/maintain independent living skills, and to support and empower peers. Consumers attended the disability history workshops in the office, and took the independent living skills trainings and peer support into the community.

The LGBTQ + disABILITY group met monthly. This new intersectional group is meant to build a more inclusive environment for these two communities that strive for the same things: advocacy for human rights, but not special rights; valuing the inherent worth of each individual, all of whom deserve dignity and respect; promotion of inclusion and recognition of the talents and abilities of all individuals; and supporting for self-determination and choice. The meeting locations varied from in the office or in the community. But the main goal was to provide a safe space for the consumers who identified with both communities, seeking empowerment and future support. Per request by a consumer, who was struggling through their daily living activities (e.g. self-care, mobility, college life, and maintaining personal/social status) with a new and life-changing diagnosis, a panel of peers was coordinated. The panelists were people who live by the independent living philosophy, and have positive insight to what life is like after such diagnosis. This opens doors for future resources beyond the scheduled event.

Empowering Our Youth (EOY) – disABILITY LINK recognizes the need to promote self-help and self-advocacy at an early age through the development of Empowering Our Youth (for

youth and young adults ages 14 to 29) where the participants are the leaders and decision makers, supported by the Youth Advocacy Coordinator. As youth several webinars and group meetings including "Disability Day" and "Pride Day" involved youth.

Group activities were held over the course of the year focused on peer support, identifying job skills, employment opportunities, applying to college and becoming involved in the community. Two youth were able to participate in the National Council for Independent Living and Associated Program of Rural Independent Living with community financial supports and peer support provided by the youth specialist. The youth traveled with the youth specialist for peer support and mentoring. Both voiced the experience was truly a learning one that made them feel more independent in their own lives and have become more involved in the disability organizations.

In addition to group programs, activities involving consumers seeking one-on-one mobility training and one-on-one money management training were conducted. This involves education on the MARTA fixed routes in the community – understanding the safety and operations of the buses and trains. The money management trainings were different from traditional educational settings, as they entailed community participation. The youth independent living specialist has gone minor grocery shopping, out to lunch, or leisure shopping with consumers. As preparedness for this activity, independent living specialist in the consumer had an appointment to draft a budget – or at least discuss the importance of budgeting.

Outside of direct services with consumers, the youth independent living specialist remained a part of multiple youth transition committees, presented at trainings and transition summits, and provided input from the independent living point of view. The Youth Specialist traveled abroad to assist in developing IL skills as part of the NCIL collaboration.

Goal 3: Transition 9 individuals from long term care to the community of their choice. Objectives: Support individuals in transitioning from long term care to independent living. Action Steps: 1. Provide activities that promote developing skills to transition into the community of choice. 2. Provide activities which promote peer relationships and a sense of community on a quarterly basis. 3. Provide outreach activities to local nursing homes and assisted living communities.

Result: We transitioned over 12 individuals from nursing homes back into the community of their choice while diverting over 54 consumers from long term living situations. Quarterly events were hosted for individuals who left long term care to independent living to exchange experiences and provide peer support. We utilize peer relationships and modeling in our Nursing Home Transition program and Peer training programs. We utilize volunteers to provide peer support to other consumers as an ongoing activity. Peer Relationships are firmly established through our classes as well as formal and informal gatherings. It is not unusual to see a group of peers gathered together in the activity room, conference room or our sitting areas discussing the day's events and challenges they face. Peer Role models are evident at all levels of disABILITY LINK through staff, board members, consumers and volunteers. Outreach

activities were help during the year at nursing facilities and assisted living communities. We applied for and received a grant that focused on getting individuals out of the nursing home and into the community of their choice.

Goal 4: People with disabilities are leaders in all of disABILITY LINK's activities, and in the community at large. Objectives: Staff and Board of Directors are role models and peers to our community members. Action Steps: 1. Staff and Board members will receive a full orientation and continued training that includes topics related to the independent living philosophy. 2. Staff and Board members will attend trainings that will increase their knowledge of services. 3. Staff will provide training to peers on specific IL skills. 4. Provide Board training to the community to recruit new board members as well as educate on serving on boards within their communities.

Result: All new staff received training upon hire. Ongoing staff trainings were held with the data management system on a weekly basis with attendance by staff specifically needing those trainings. Staff meetings were held focused on serving consumers. Different staff attended conferences related to their positions in regard to the five core services, financial management, program development, best practices, resource management, grant writing, and specific areas needed. All board members received training on how to be a board member and received a board manual with by laws, financial reports, introduction to being a board member and duties. All board members received financial training. In addition all staff and board received availability to trainings through the ILRU rapid courses. All staff completed ADA basic trainings. All staff and board received training specific to the IL philosophy and history. New board members

received a new board orientation. In addition, our website now has a section for board members only that allow for all materials to be accessible for each member. Over the course of the year we hosted a board training class "Get a Seat at The Table" which is an introduction on becoming a board member. This training provided an opportunity to reach out to consumers who were interested in serving on our board and other boards in order to learning what it means to be a board member. We also developed a new board training called "Beyond the Board Election Training" in order to provide ongoing training for those who are new or want to learn more about being an effective board member.

Goal 4: Wellness, particularly focusing on related secondary conditions of disabilities, will become an integral part of all activities of the organization. Objectives: Individuals will have opportunities to explore the full spectrum of wellness through different venues. Action Steps: 1. Provide an ongoing wellness program with monthly activities. 2. Advocate for expanding the Medicaid Buy-In for workers with disabilities. 3. disABILITY LINK will assist in educating and applying for services with the Affordable Health Care Act. 4. We develop a curriculum that reaches out to the underserved and more rural areas through technology by participating in a development group focused on living well with a disability.

Result: disABILITY LINK continues to host a health and wellness program. We received a grant and participate in developing the curriculum for Living Well in the Community. We continue with our wellness program focuses on overall wellness to staff, consumers and board. The program consists of different activities to increase the participation in the community including healthy eating, Wii activities, bocce ball and many

others. We have a small gym that allows one on one trainings to occur. The IL specialist is preparing for an exam to become a certified personal trainer. We continue to look at ways to enhance our gym.

Goal 5: Assist people with disabilities to have accessible transportation while living in the community of their choice through advocacy and education. Objectives: Individuals with disabilities will have increased and accessible access to transportation that is accessible. Action Steps: 1. Continue to research existing (specifically accessible) transportation options, both public and private, in the CIL service area. 2. Explore new opportunities for funding in areas of travel and mobility training. 3. Provide MARTA Mobility application assistance, including eligibility. 5. Continue to participate in the Voucher Transportation Assistance Program as grant allows to provide additional opportunities and choices to CIL consumers. 6. Advocate for improvements in availability and access to transportation by participating in transportation discussions and forums. 7. Provide trainings on advocating for consumers on a monthly basis. Result: disABILITY LINK also participates in working with the Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) in providing guidance and suggestions to the different managers. disABILITY LINK participates as an entity to assist in certifying individuals for MARTA mobility. The process for this has recently changed, but in some circumstances we still are able to certify individuals. disABILITY LINK also received a grant to provide transportation voucher assistance so that individuals with disabilities can participate in all activities of living including but not limited to shopping, spiritual activities and visiting others in the community. The grant ended during the year as the focus shifted to older adults. During the year our CIL advocated with other

organizations regarding increasing the number and availability of accessible taxis in Atlanta. We worked with and was able to negotiate lower costs with different providers. Staff participated in Human Services Transportation Committee to increase access to transportation for people with disabilities, particularly in the suburban and more "rural" areas of Atlanta (and other issues of community accessibility. Staff provided Travel Training services for people with disabilities. disABILITY LINK also identified and assisted in resolving issues while working with consumers to be their own advocate. One of the most common access concerns is with regard to public transportation – more specifically the paratransit service. Multiple consumers have had issues and sought support from the independent living specialist to get equal access that they are supposed to be receiving. The CIL provided support of Concerned Transit Riders for Equal Access (CTREA) to increase grass roots participation in transportation advocacy efforts. disABILITY LINK and CTREA co-hosted a community events focused on MARTA and the changes to ensure individuals with disabilities have a "Seat at the table" during the reporting year. Staff and consumers are consultants with the Veteran's Administration's (VA) One-Click Program for route planning and increased options. We participate in the ARC Transportation planning committee in an effort to include people with disabilities on a cross disability basis.

6.1.2 Challenges

Describe any substantial challenges or problems encountered by the CIL, and the resolutions/attempted resolutions. *

Challenges continue to be in the fact that we are limited to what we can do because of funding restrictions. In order to provide programs that reach all types of individuals and have staff to provide the services wages are lower than what is normally paid for staff with the same qualifications. Our staff is dedicated. We utilize volunteers to fill gaps as well as partnering with organizations and internships that are unpaid. Limited funding restricts our center to be able to do the outreach we need to reach individuals that are underserved. This fiscal year our grant focused on transportation ended which led to even more challenges as we had to end parts of our program and the staff involved. Finding funding or increasing funding is a high priority and challenge for us. A major challenge for us is to support financially the staff to do the programs. New service requirements were added without funding and with some reduction in funding. Discrimination, lack of self-determination and limited choices continue to be experienced by people with disabilities in our service areas. Major concerns include employment, living in the community of choices, services available in order to live independently as well as topics already listed. Challenges continue to be faced upon transportation and the involvement of people with disabilities being decision makers on issues involving them when it comes to local transportation providers. disABILITY LINK and consumers continue to advocate to be part of the voice. Housing continues to be a high challenge in all of our service areas due to older buildings and lack of accessible housing. disABILITY LINK continues to look for resources available, provide the four core services, develop coalitions and support people with disabilities to live full and meaningful lives in the communities of their

choice. One area that continues to be a challenge is being able to serve cross disabilities and all ages. Many funding sources are focused on the aging population in areas of transportation and on the younger age groups on transportation.

6.1.3 Comparison with Prior Reporting Year

As appropriate, compare the CIL's activities in the reporting year with its activities in prior years, e.g., recent trends. *

disABILITY LINK during this year lost the transportation voucher program and the staff involved in administering that program. The program also provided the opportunities to focus on transportation issues and advocacy on that subject. A decrease in funding from the Part C money has also impacted our services.

disABILITY LINK has been able to hire and focus on individual programs for the underserved population including working with the youth by developing the "Empowering Our Youth", WATCH ME!, an LGBTQ + disABILITY group, and a brief peer support panel for the consumers who have questions about life after being diagnosed with a severe disability. We have implemented new programs that built upon the board training and further assisted in training. This has been beneficial in locating consumers who are interested in serving on our board. We have found that our Peer support training, Board training classes and Nothing About us Without Us classes has been successful in recruiting board members and volunteers. In addition, the training has been most successful in connecting individuals to a group of support to share experiences in living independently. Our Volunteer program has expanded and led to individuals becoming more involved in the different areas.

6.2 Work Plan for the Year Following the Reporting Year * - Required field

6.2.1 Annual Work Plan

List the CIL's annual work plan goals, objectives and action steps planned for the year following the reporting year. *

Goal 1: To operate a center for independent living that conducts all activities within independent living philosophy. Objective: To provide Independent Living Services in 12 Counties of Cherokee, Cobb, Douglas, Coweta, Fulton, DeKalb, Gwinnett, Fayette, Clayton, Rockdale, Newton and Henry with outreach to underserved areas. Action Steps: 1. Provide individuals with IL skills training on a variety of topics of interest. 2. Conduct advocacy and educational activities no less than quarterly to address transportation and housing issues. 3. Conduct webinars and increase availability of services through other avenues such as Skype and other software applications that provide opportunities of conversation and meeting abilities.

Goal 2: Expand program for youth transitional services. Objectives: Support youth in transitioning into adulthood. Action Steps: 1. Develop and expand the youth program that promotes lifelong learning experiences including career exploratory options.. 2. Provide activities for youth which promote peer relationships and a sense of community on a quarterly basis. 3. Provide outreach activities to local school

districts and colleges with two new partnerships.

Goal 3: Transition 10 individuals from long term care to the community of their choice. Objectives: Support individuals in transitioning from long term care to independent living. Action Steps: 1. Provide activities that promote developing skills to transition into the community of choice. 2. Provide activities which promote peer relationships and a sense of community on a quarterly basis. 3. Provide outreach activities to local nursing homes and assisted living communities. 4. Participate in community meetings focused on community living and sustainability of transition programs.

Goal 4: Wellness, particularly focusing on related secondary conditions of disabilities, will become an integral part of all activities of the organization. Objectives: Individuals will have opportunities to explore the full spectrum of wellness through different venues. Action Steps: 1. Provide an ongoing wellness program with monthly activities. 2. Advocate for expanding the Medicaid Buy-In for workers with disabilities. 3. disABILITY LINK will assist in educating and applying for services with the Affordable Healthcare Act. 4. Participate in development program to build curriculum focused on reaching underserved areas.

Goal 5: Assist people with disabilities to have accessible transportation while living in the community of their choice through advocacy and education. Objectives: Individuals with disabilities will have increased and accessible access to transportation that is accessible. Action Steps: 1. Continue to research existing (specifically accessible) transportation options, both public

and private, in the CIL service area. 2. Explore new opportunities for funding in areas of travel and mobility training. 3. Provide MARTA Mobility application assistance, including eligibility. 4. Advocate for improvements in availability and access to transportation by participating in transportation discussions and forums. 5. Provide trainings on advocating for consumers on a monthly basis.

Goal 5: Assist people with disabilities to have accessible housing while living in the community of their choice through advocacy and education. Objectives: Individuals with disabilities will have increased and accessible access to transportation that is accessible. Action Steps: 1. Continue to research existing (specifically accessible) housing options, both public and private, in the CIL service area. 2. Advocate for improvements in availability and access to housing by participating in housing discussions and forums. 3. Provide trainings on advocating for consumers on a monthly basis.

6.2.2 SPIL Consistency

Explain how these work plan goals, objectives and action steps are consistent with the approved SPIL. *

The work and plans of disABILITY LINK are consistent with the Statewide Plan for Independent Living. One example is disABILITY LINK provides services (including advocacy) in accordance with, "(1.1 Goals and Mission). The mission of Georgia's Independent Living (IL) Program is to promote a philosophy of independent living that includes consumer control, peer

support, self help, self determination, equal access, individual and systemic advocacy, services that maximize leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of people with significant disabilities, and promote the integration and full inclusion of people with significant disabilities into the mainstream of American society". disABILITY LINK remains in frequent contact with The Georgia Statewide Living Council – activities include, attending quarterly meetings, serving on committees, collaborating in advocacy activities, sharing information and making referrals as necessary. Shared goals are reflected in our work plan including transportation, housing and transitional services.

Section 7. Other Accomplishments, Activities and Challenges * - Required field

Describe any additional significant accomplishments, activities and/or challenges not included elsewhere in the report, e.g. brief summaries of innovative practices, improved service delivery to consumers, etc. *

One major highlight was we increased our visibility with our webpage that is more accessible and easier to navigate. We continue to focus on how to develop partnerships and increase sustainable donors as an avenue of fundraising. We have collaborated with different organizations to host events and have reached out to more than 300 different organizations. This year we held 3rd annual event which drew in over 200 participants from the community, consumers and businesses. We also focused on

doing outreach efforts. Methods include traditional medium, such as; quarterly newsletters, monthly "Dates to Remember," fliers for events hosted and supported by disABILITY LINK, presentations to a variety of audiences, meetings with people and organizations that can help us reach people with disabilities (especially underserved populations), booths at resource and transition fairs, distribution of brochures to (literally) hundreds of organizations that serve the general public, as well as people with disabilities, and using every opportunity to share the philosophy and services of a Center for Independent Living such as disABILITY LINK. disABILITY LINK has developed a social media presence including an updated web page (that integrates social media), Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, You Tube, blogs (such as ILiveWithADisability.com and Live Free Project). In the previous fiscal year we saw some great growth and engagement with our online consumers.

This year we were highly involved with "Get out the Vote" and voting polls accessibility. We continue to host a chapter of Toastmasters here, which has been mentioned above. We also worked with the GA SILC on funding, housing and transportation issues. We also continued to work with Emergency weather conditions and getting the word out in regards to closures and weather advisories while providing education on safety and preparations. We passed along information about emergency shelters, interpreters, food resources and volunteer attendants. We coordinated with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency on the hurricane, Get Ready Gwinnett and Dekalb Emergency Management Agency to disseminate

this information via social media. We had a huge success with several retweets and post shares to reach the most people. This action not only helped empower the people we reached, but potentially saved lives. disABILITY LINK records "Two Minute Advocacy Sessions" with the Georgia Radio reading Service (GaRRS). One session per month is on IL issues and one per month is on transportation issues and one session on assistive technology. GaRRS has a listening population of around 20,000 people with disabilities statewide. disABILITY LINK has a volunteer program that reaches out to consumers both past and present to assist in meaningful tasks and assignments. The youth director is participating in a youth program that we anticipate to bring forth more involvement with the youth. We developed a facebook page focused on LGBTQIAP+ disability. We utilize our webpage and a job board at the offices to post the positions. Volunteer hours include board members, consumers and the community reach well over 6000 hours. Reaching out to the smaller communities due to the travel distances has been challenging. We utilize different methods including video conferencing and telephone conferencing to meet some needs. This upcoming year we look to develop more areas. We utilize our televisions, computers and other means for communication. Staff is continuing to learn our digital management system and capturing all the information that is needed. We have many programs that individuals with disabilities attend. We track how many people attend our different sessions. We served over 4100 individuals with disabilities through peer support groups, advocacy groups, Nothing about us without us, tech talks, topics of interest, emergency prep, voting education. We

continue to work on ensuring that we capture all services provided to consumers with additional training to staff. We continue to develop programs utilizing the comments, panel groups and suggestions from the consumers.

Section 8. Training and Technical Assistance

8.1 Training and Technical Assistance Needs

* - Required field

Training And Technical Assistance Needs

Advocacy/Leadership Development

General Overview

Community/Grassroots Organiz

Individual Empowerment

Systems Advocacy

Legislative Process

Applicable Laws

Training And Technical Assistance Needs

**General overview and promulga
of various disability laws**

Americans with Disabilities Act

Air-Carrier's Access Act

Fair Housing Act

**Individuals with Disabilities
Education Improvement Act**

**Medicaid/Medicare/PAS/waivers
term care**

**Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as
amended**

Social Security Act

Workforce Investment Act of 19

**Ticket to Work and Work Incent
Improvement Act of 1999**

**Government Performance Resu
Act of 1993**

Training And Technical Assistance Needs

Assistive Technologies

General Overview

Data Collecting and Reporting

General Overview

704 Reports

Performance Measures contained
in 704 Report

Dual Reporting Requirements

Case Service Record Document

Disability Awareness and Information

Specific Issues

Evaluation

General Overview

Training And Technical Assistance Needs

CIL Standards and Indicators

Community Needs Assessment

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

Focus Groups

Outcome Measures

Financial: Grant Management

General Overview

Federal Regulations

Budgeting

Fund Accounting

Financial: Resource Development

General Overview

Diversification of Funding Base

Training And Technical Assistance Needs

Fee-for-Service Approaches

For Profit Subsidiaries

**Fund-Raising Events of Statewide
Campaigns**

Grant Writing

Independent Living Philosophy

General Overview

Innovative Programs

Best Practices

Specific Examples

Management Information Systems

Computer Skills

Software

Networking Strategies

Training And Technical Assistance Needs

Public Meetings

**Role and Responsibilities of
Executive Board**

**Role and Responsibilities of Gen
Members**

**Collaborations with In-State
Stakeholders**

CIL Board of Directors

General Overview

Roles and Responsibilities

Policy Development

Recruiting/Increasing Involvement

Volunteer Programs

General Overview

Optional Areas and/or Comments (write-in)

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Provide additional information, comments, explanations or suggestions not included elsewhere in the report *

Increasing revenue is a major challenge for disABILITY LINK. The loss of the transportation grant has impacted staffing, programming and the consumer. Reduction in Part C monies while increasing core services continue to be an impact on staff. With the loss of different funding it is essential that revenues are located. Major efforts have been and continue to be explored.

In addition, this year one of our grants that provided funding assistance in long term transitional services ends. Centers for Independent Living have not received an increase but are expected to keep up with the cost of living and wages to employ individuals who are capable of providing services. Several staff members continue to serve on boards. The youth director is a co-chair for the youth steering committee on APRIL, NCIL youth member, Georgia's core transition team member of the Children's freedom initiative. The Executive Director is an elected board member on the Associated Program of Rural Independent Living (APRIL) as well as on subcommittees for NCIL. She is also an active member of the Statewide Independent Living Council of GA and was appointed to serve on the Board. Board members serve on multiple disability related organizations including the National Federation of the Blind, Developmental Disability Council of GA as well as many others. Staff are members of different boards in the community including boards focused on transportation, health care

issues, accessible housing and other issues related to the disability community. disABILITY LINK continues to share the independent living philosophy and services through our service area as well as being peer mentors to other Centers for Independent Living statewide and nationwide. Our work is guided by the vision of people being fully included in our communities.

Section 9. Signatures

NAME OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR* Kim Gibson



I certify that the information provided in this report is true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.



As the Executive Director, I certify that the Board has reviewed and given approval for submission of this report.



