



disABILITY
LINK
the center for rights & resources

THE ABILITY LINK

Quarterly Newsletter
Fall 2017 Edition

Edited and Designed by William
Daniels, Social Media Apprentice

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and Resource
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Living Specialist and
Housing Advocate
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Gibson(CEO)

disABILITY LINK is an organization led by and for people with disabilities and promotes choice and full participation in community life.

Advocating for human rights, not special rights.

SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

www.facebook.com/disABILITYLINK

www.twitter.com/disABILITYLINK

www.instagram.com/disabilitylink

WHATS NEW?

Learn about the programs we have at disABILITY LINK and what new and exciting things are going on within those programs.

Description of picture below: Marchers at the MLK march in the background with a sign showing “We lift each other up” with staff Members Margo Waters, her granddaughter and James Turner holding up “Disability Rights are Civil Rights” banner.



Travis Evans

Health, Wellness, and Resource Specialist



Picture of Travis Evans

Our Health and Wellness program encompasses different strategies to live healthy in the community. This program is not a cookie cutter program. We realize that people are different and have different goals. The program looks at all aspects of a person's life including spiritual, healthy eating, support systems, exercise, mental health and other areas. We focus on people's abilities and not the disability to meet their own goals. Our gym has several items in it in order to begin exercise programs. Currently the Health and Wellness program has an elliptical, exercise bike, stretch bands, hand bike and a Wii with different exercise programs to utilize. We encourage people to come and use the equipment. Set up your appointment to get started with Travis Evans by contacting him at tevens@disabilitylink.org or 404-687-8890 ext. 115.



Sonny Carver

Assistive Technology Specialist Deaf and Blind Independent Living Specialist Intern



Picture of Sonny Carver

The Deaf and Blind Outreach seeks to collaborate with organizations to support individuals who are deaf and blind to empower them to live independent lives and to support them in their pursuit of the life they want to live.

The assistive technology program at disABILITY LINK is designed to support individuals with devices that aid in their independence, enhance the quality of life, and assist them in their life including employment pursuits. There are many tools available.

One of many examples of different devices include the Amazon Echo. This is a voice command device that will perform many functions, such as providing traffic updates, recipes, playing games, and answering general knowledge questions. The device also plays music from various sources. If you are interested in learning more about this and other topics related to Assistive Technology, join us on the second Tuesday of each month for Tech Talk Tuesday or contact Sonny Carver at SCarver@disabilitylink.org or by phone at 404-687-8890 Ext. 113. We look forward to supporting you in your journey toward independence.



Picture of Margo Waters

Margo Waters

Lead Independent Living Specialist and Housing Advocate

As the Lead Independent Living Specialist and Housing Advocate, I am responsible for working with people of all ages and types of disabilities in setting and maintaining goals to promote independence.

In 2017, IL (Independent Living) Skills and Housing Advocacy will continue promoting Independent Living Skills and Housing Advocacy which has empowered others to become more involved.

The IL (Independent Living) Skills and Housing Advocacy class/training is working in coalition with other organizations and individuals to address the lack of Affordable, Accessible and Integrated Housing and arranging trainings that promotes Independent Living (IL) and Home-Based Community Services (HBCS).

Independent Living Skills and Housing Advocacy class/training are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Stay tuned and look for the announcements and postings in the monthly issues of Dates to Remember, daily Face Book and Twitter postings. Feel free to join the coalition and help address the issue of the lack of Affordable, Accessible and Integrated Housing.

You can also suggest topics and or concerns that you have. If you would like to RSVP to attend a class/training or want more information contact Margo Waters at mwaters@disabilitylink.org or call me at 404-687-8890 Ext 110

James Turner

Volunteer and Administrative Specialist



Picture of James Turner

We are excited for this New Year and the opportunities for individuals to be involved in our Volunteer Program. Volunteering here at disABILITY LINK you can expect appreciation, opportunities to increase knowledge and experience, and peer support from others.

disABILITY LINK's Volunteer Program includes orientation training, placement in your choice of hands on activities, leadership opportunities, building friendships, choice of volunteer placement and a great sense of belonging.

For more information or to become a volunteer contact James Turner at jturner@disabilitylink.org or 404-687-8890 Ext 119

Orientation is held every 3rd Thursday of the month from 10 am-12 noon
RSVP for your spot.



Linda Pogue

Disability Rights and Program Director

Expanding Independent Living

Picture of Linda Pogue

The term Independent Living is used to cover a wide range of ways to live, often centering on places to live for seniors and people with disabilities – the independent living I want to talk about is not residential, it is not about where to live, it is how we live.

The Independent Living Movement grew from other civil and human rights movements – Ed Roberts, a student with significant disabilities at The University of California at Berkeley in the 60s, is considered the Father of the Independent Living Movement – in turn, he credits his Mother with helping him to see himself not as someone who was helpless and at the mercy of other people, but someone who could be proud of himself and determine his own life – his efforts to help organize his fellow students with disabilities with issues such as housing, personal care, wheelchair repairs and similar grew into efforts to help organize non-student community members with disabilities who were experiencing the same barriers in life – the outcome of all this was the first Center for Independent Living – in the decades since, there are now more than 500 Centers for Independent Living all over the US – Centers for Independent Living (or CILs) are characterized by being non-residential, community based, grassroots, not-for-profit, cross-disability, organizations run by and for people with disabilities – the foundation of these services is the peer-to-peer relationship, where people with disabilities act as mentors for other people with disabilities, showing by example how to help each other live more independently. For more information contact Linda Pogue at GreenPogue@disABILITYLINK.org or 404-687-8890 Ext 114

Message from the New Board Chair

It is an honor and privileged to have been nominated and selected as the new disABILITY Link Board Chair. I have served on the Board since 2013 and have been very active in the Georgia Disability Community. I am a parent of a 38 year old son that has Friedreich's Ataxia, a progressive degenerative neuromuscular disease, and who uses a wheelchair. I understand and live with the issues that both individuals with disabilities as well as their parents must deal with. Independent Living is the most important concept for all families dealing with disabilities. I look forward to continuing the success and growth of disABILITY LINK.

I have served for 6 years on the State Independent Living Council and am one of the Local Ataxia Support Group Leaders as well as an office on the National Ataxia Foundation located in Minneapolis. My son Jon, is a Medicaid Independent Care Recipient as lives at home with us. I also serve as a member of the Department of Community Health ICWP Advisory Committee and was a legislative assistant to the Director of Policy at the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities. During this period, I was a lobbyist at the Capitol and lead the Unlock the Waiting List Campaign.

I look forward to this exciting opportunity to work with Kim Gibson, Executive Director as well continue to expand the programs and services for individuals with disabilities within the Atlanta Metro are and surrounding communities.

Thanks,

Dave Zilles



Picture of Newly elected officers and Board Members of disABILITY LINK

Description of picture board members in front of the office.
 Front Row: Bill Nabors, Vice Chair, Vernitia Shannon
 Second Row: Bridgette Suttle, Rosemary Graham, Secretary, Katherine (Kate) Seelman, Dave Zilles, Chairman
 Third Row (Back): Kim Gibson, Executive Director holding Charlie, Robbie Huff. Missing: Tracey Stokes Board Member



Picture of Kim Gibson

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

The New Year came in with a roar. The weather, political issues and new legislation focused around people with disabilities all have been on the front line.

Emergencies and disasters can hit quickly and without a warning. It forces individuals to quickly react. It is important for each of us to be prepared for these emergencies by having a plan. Throughout the year we host different events on emergency preparedness. While I invite you to participate in these events, I also encourage you to research and become involved. In Georgia the website with the different information can be found at the following address: <https://ada.georgia.gov/emergency-preparedness>.

The last newsletter I talked about voting. The Presidential election for the next four years has come and gone. Many people ask, now what? At disABILITY LINK, we encourage you to become involved in your own community and therefore I would like to provide you with a few suggestions on how to remain active politically in your community.

1. Start with your own paperwork

Make sure that you are registered, know where your polling place is, who your Senators, Mayors, City Councilmen, Representatives, and other local appointed officials are. The easiest way to do that is go to your county board of elections website to find details.

2. Get involved in the process

Observe what is going on locally and nationally. Research to make sure that you are reading facts and not opinions or even just plain old propaganda. If you are able to then go, attend meetings that are held by your local legislatures, community organizations and other venues to continue to be informed.

3. Look at the local

Make sure you show up for local issues when it comes to voting.

Remember it is often easier to ask questions locally and find someone willing to address your issues that higher up in the political food chain. Make sure that you listen to what is going on, take time to read and research different initiatives. Remember not to take someone's word but actually read and research and form your own opinion.

4. Consider becoming a leader

Think of running for even a small, local position. To become part of the system you don't necessarily need to hold an office, but becoming part of different work groups, becoming active in advocacy with different organizations and help identify and set policy.

5. Provide others with a chance to get involved

Encourage friends and others around you to get involved, vote and talk about issues. Let others express and value each other's opinions. Remember that you may not always agree.

6. Start now

Although the Presidential Election is over there is still other elections coming up, new policies being presented, and advocacy that may need to be done. Don't wait for the next presidential election to become involved.

As we continue to move forward in the New Year, I want to invite you to the many events here at disABILITY LINK. We have many events focused on promoting choice and full participation in community life. This year our Annual Fundraising event will be held with the theme being "**Connecting the Past and Present to Ensure our Future**". You can contact any of our staff for more information for sponsorships or ticket purchases.

Thank you all for being part of the disability community and the support you provide.

Sincerely,

Kim Gibson

Please review the following list of dates for office hours, annual events, and holidays when the office will be closed:

Normal Business Hours

Mon. – Thurs. 9 AM-4:30 PM

Join Us for Our Annual Events!

April 29 Annual Fundraising Event

Holidays & Closed

February 20Presidents Day

April 14 Good Friday

May 29Memorial Day

July 4Independence Day

September 4Labor Day

November 11 Veterans Day

November 23-24 Thanksgiving Day

December 20 – January 2 Holiday Break

SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT

“Connecting the Past and Present to Ensure our Future”

APRIL 29TH, 2017

CONTACT ANY OF OUR STAFF FOR MORE INFORMATION

Wish List:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
IPad Mini	1
IPad	2
Kitchen table	1, approx. 4'x6'
Fold-n-go Workstations	4
Universal TV Remote	1
Stackable exercise mats	5

Youth Support for conferences — please contact Staff for information!

Contact Us:



We can help you in applying for or renewing your food stamp benefits!



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404-687-8890 Voice

404-381-8112 Video

404-687-8298 Fax