



disABILITY
LINK
the center for rights & resources

The
ABILITY LINK
Quarterly Newsletter

2016 | Fall | Election Edition

What's Inside...

Edited & Designed by: Sukie Glick,
Youth & Social Media Specialist

disABILITY LINK is an organization led

by and for people with disabilities and promotes choice and full participation in community life. In addition to a recap of this last quarter, you will also read contributions by guest writers from our community, instead of the usual format of only staff submissions. Being an election year and after having read our director's encouraging words, this quarterly issue of our newsletter will be focused **how to**

Table of Contents:

Our Director's Note	Pg. 2 & 3
Last Quarter Review (ICYMI)	4
Your LINK to Voting	5
#BlackLivesMatter	6
Hop on [a] Board! (An Interview)	7
My NCIL Experience (By a Youth)	8 & 9
Disability Rights	10
Getting Involved	11
Invites/Holidays/Closed Dates & Wishlist	12
Contact Us and Become A Member	13
Voting Checklist	14

become a voter, what you might want to look out for when educating yourself before "dropping in" your ballot, and who to contact for local and national support.

Speaking of support, disABILITY LINK thanks you so much for yours! Thank you for reading our material and participating in our events and activities. If you would like to be a community guest writer of this

newsletter, please contact Sukie Glick, at SGlick@disabilitylink.org. We hope you enjoy this quarter's **Election Edition of The ABILITY LINK!**

Message from our Executive Director

Dear Friends:

As part of our mission disABILITY LINK focuses on equal rights, equal access, peer support and options for people with disabilities to live independently in the community of their own choice.

Last newsletter I talked about voting and although my words are repeated from the last time, I feel it is an important enough issue that I say exactly the same thing, so please forgive me if you feel like you are reading the last newsletter.

These are times of great debates about the political arena, economic concerns and basic civil rights both here in Georgia and throughout the nation.

In 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. organized a massive march on

Washington and delivered his famous "I

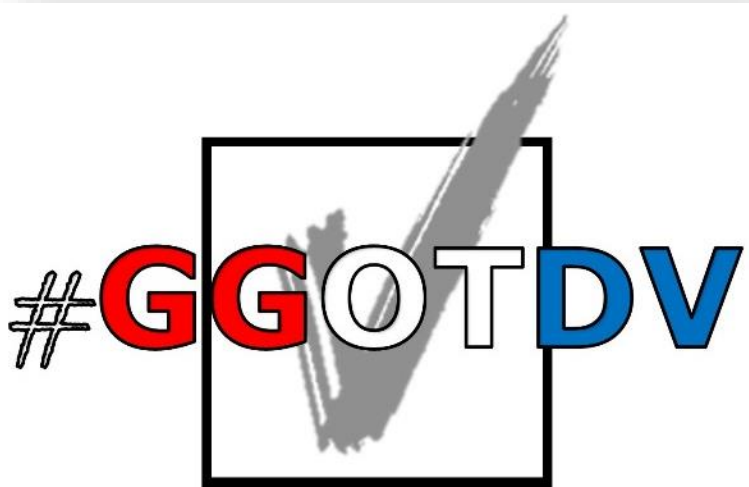
have a Dream" speech. This, along with other voter drives in the south, provided a pathway to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Now some 50 plus years later, we still fight for equal access to voting polls and receiving accommodations in order to vote. People with disabilities need to continue to use their voice to ensure that the steps to removing barriers to vote are being taken.

Day of voting is not the only factor involved in voting. It is so important that people with disabilities have a voice in the election process. It means being educated on the different candidates and electing the individual that best represents you. It is not about the party, but who has your best interest, their



platform and their record of voting. I recently was asked who I was going to vote for and why? I was quizzed as to the candidate's platform for people with disabilities. I was quickly able to answer all that, although I did not share with that individual who I was voting for in the primaries, I was able to discuss the platforms with them.

Often we get so caught up in who is running for President, especially right now when the media is hyping up the race, that we forget that locally there are candidates running for office and attention needs to be placed so we are taking care of our interests at home too.



Above: a black box with a gray checkmark. In front in large red white and blue font reads, "#GGOTDV"

I want to challenge each of you to start using your voice and take a vested interest in your lives by getting out and voting. disABILITY LINK hosts different events focused on getting out and voting as well as learning how to advocate for yourself.

I invite each of you to participate in the events but beyond that I challenge each of you to learn more about your local candidates and national candidates and let your voice be heard by taking it from your living room to the voting ballot after all VOTING IS POWER!

Sincerely,

Kim Gibson

In Case You Missed It!

Written by: Kim Gibson, Executive Director

Photos by: Brittany Daniels, Social Media Apprentice



Our 1st **Wine tasting event "Sip in September"** was held at AMS Vans. Noble Winery hosted the wine event with different Georgia Wines. It was great to learn while tasting the different selections. It was a great night with lots of catching up of new and old friends, fun and competition.

A special thanks goes out to all of our sponsors including community sponsors: AMS Vans (Silver Sustaining Sponsor) who provided the space and transportation for the event, Noble Wines, Zilles Group, Schwartz & Rollins Law Firm, Bill Nabors Law Firm as well as others who personally or professionally donated. If you donated and your name was missed on the list, thank you so much. For those who attended, thank you for coming. For those who missed the event, we hope to see you at our next fundraiser in October.



NOTEABLE MENTIONS

- The 2016 Greater Gwinnet Senior Hero Award from Peregrine's Landing
- Exceptional Community Partner Award from Metro Fair Housing in April
- Named in Controlyourbuilding.com blog "21 ACCESSIBILITY EXPERTS WHOSE INSIGHTS ARE INVALUABLE TO FACILITIES MANAGERS".

Your Local LINK to Voting

Written by: Ron Harris, Voting Rights Specialist

Over the past several months disABILITY LINK has been involved in many voting related issues such as

- What is the **Electoral College and how does it work?**
- Where can People with Disabilities **find information on Disability Rights?**
- What to do **if I cannot vote** due to an issue on voting day?

disABILITY LINK has worked with the DeKalb Office of Voter Registration. They brought an accessible voting machine to our office and demonstrated how visually impaired and hearing impaired could access the ballot and make choices for candidates and issues.

disABILITY LINK participated in the RevUp the Vote Georgia sendoff event at the Shephard Spinal Center. This march happened September 21st through the 29th. The march began in Baltimore, Maryland and ended in Washington D.C. The march was composed of People with Disabilities in order to bring awareness to our community on the importance of full participation in the voting process. Make sure to watch the national news channels for updates.

Also, in the works is the drive to **bring screen readable ballots to Georgia.** Several groups such as NCIL and Office of The Secretary of State are working to

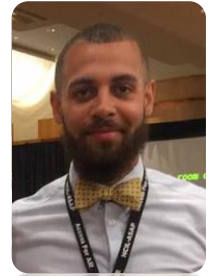


**SEE BACK FOR
VOTING DAY
CHECKLIST**

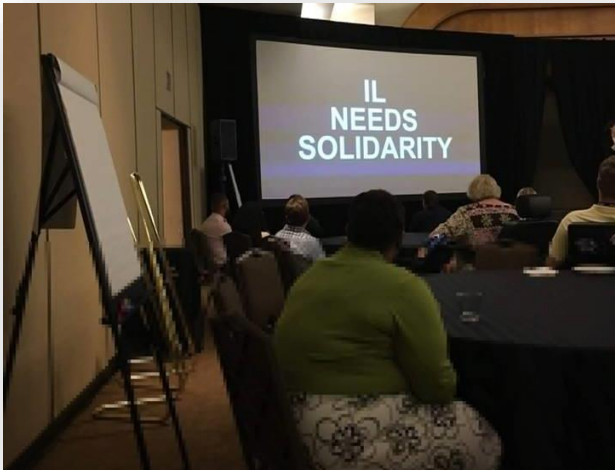
We would be happy to provide you support in making an effective request for action. For more information and voting support, contact Ron Harris, at disABILITY LINK: RHarris@disabilitylink.org or 404-687-8890 ext. 108.

All #BlackLivesMatter, Including the Disabled Ones

Guest Written by: Dustin Gibson, NCIL Diversity Caucus Chair



“Disability rights are civil rights” is a phrase that is often chanted, but is rarely practiced. Racism and ableism are prevalent in every institution that comprises the social systems in which we live. They cannot be separate from one another. They are in fact, co-dependent. Often referred to as the “largest minority group” in the world, people with disabilities are about 19% of the United States population. It is important to center the idea that people with disabilities live within other socially constructed groups that are not separate from that of the disability community. Specifically, the experience of African descendants in America and disability are homologous.



The policies that have disproportionately impacted African descendants in America have had similar effects for people with disabilities. Examining this through an intersectional lens, helps us to acknowledge the systems of oppression that have simultaneously targeted a specific set of people. Policies such as The Ugly Law, The Fugitive Slave Act and The 1994 Crime Bill have created a prison demographic that is overwhelming represented by Black Deaf and Disabled

people. Historically, law enforcement agencies have been created and tasked with the duties of enforcing laws that are inherently ableist and racist. This has manifested itself in harassment, imprisonment and murder. At least 60-80% of police killings are Deaf and Disabled people.

Affirmations for the value of Black Disabled life is still a necessity today. The resistance by those of a protected class over the exhibition of telling the truth in public is the very reason we must continue to strive for love in those settings, which Cornel West describes as justice. Arguments over semantics, methods and calls for peace will not matter until justice is no longer absent and Black lives matter, including the Disabled ones... to everyone.

Hop on [a] Board!

Interviewed by: Suki Glick, Youth & Social Media Specialist

The disABILITY LINK Board of Directors is made of an incredibly diverse group of community leaders, in addition to the federal mandate of being **at least 51% people with disabilities**. I had the opportunity to ask one of the members, Paul McLennan, a few questions before his time with us comes to an end.

How did you hear about the board?

I heard about the board through working around transportation issues with Ken Mitchell. I am retired from MARTA and as a member of the Transit Union was very interested in building a bridge between the workers at MARTA Mobility and the disability community.

How long did you serve on the board?

It will be 6 years at the end of this year.

What are a few tips you would share with someone who is interested in being active on a board?

Be open to learning about the history of the disability rights movement, if you don't know about it already. Learn about disABILITY LINK and what it does. Get to know the awesome staff that work there. Get active in an issue that affects the community. Look for ways to build coalitions with other people who may be affected by the same issue.



Board meetings are normally **held the third Wednesday of each quarter from 12:00 – 2:00 PM**. Meetings are open to the public; staff, consumers, interested parties are invited to attend. **The next meeting is Tuesday, October 18th.**

My Experience at the National Council for Independent Living (NCIL) Conference

Guest Written by: Katrina Parsons, Youth and Job Coach



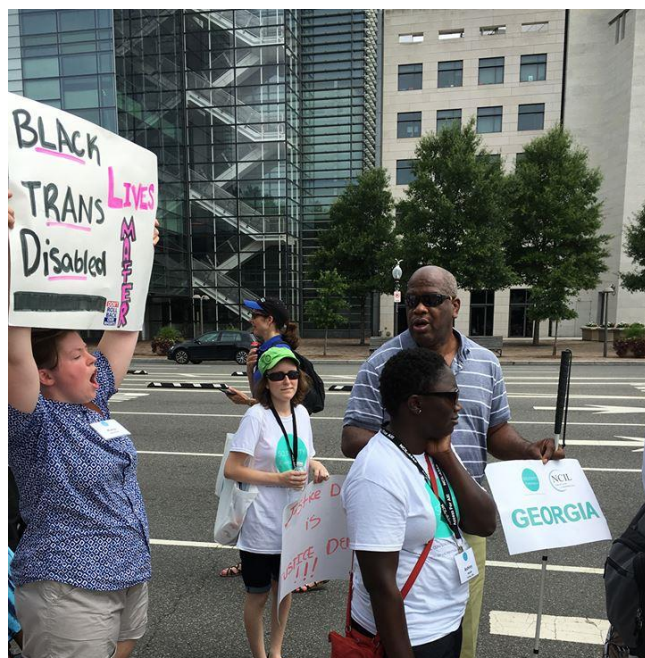
This past July, I traveled to the National Council for Independent Living (NCIL) conference in Washington D. C. with six other disABILITY LINK staff members. I was incredibly fortunate to receive funding from NCIL's Youth Caucus and the Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia (SILC) to be able to attend the conference. It lasted four days and was filled with workshops, mixers, and visits with representatives and senators on Capitol Hill. Attendees seemed very enthusiastic and brought a lot of energy to the events especially to the March to the Hill. I have been to a couple of academic conferences before, and I did not feel as much energy at those conferences as I did at this one. I enjoyed networking with others involved in the Independent Living field, learning more about topics I have not thought a lot about before such as the further injustices (as severe as police brutality) that people with disabilities that also identify with another minority group face, and youth being able to gain employment while keeping Social Security benefits. I did a segment, along with my colleagues Katie Johnson and Sukie Glick, about our experiences at this conference for the Georgia Radio Reading Service.

We had contacted Georgia Congressional Representatives, about a month before we left, to see if we could schedule an appointment to meet with them when we were visiting the Hill. Not a lot of them were going to be available, since that time of year was recess time for them, but we went ahead and gave their office in DC a packet of information about our organization. A couple of weeks ago, I received an e-mail from Susannah Johnston, one of the assistants of Representative Barry Loudermilk, who is the representative for the district that I live in. I had called her to tell her about



disABILITY LINK as well as the purpose of our visit in DC. The goals of our visit were to ask for more funding for Centers for Independent Living and support for any legislation concerning certain aspects in the lives of people with disabilities such as housing, transportation, and employment. She seemed eager to take these requests into consideration. I also mentioned to her the push for deinstitutionalization. She told me that her mom lived in a nursing home for a while and moved into her own place about a year ago. Her mom was a lot happier living in the community. We also discussed how frequently she comes down to Georgia and her work with Representative Loudermilk on Homeland Security and agriculture. She makes it to Georgia about twice a year. She said that if we would like to talk to her about anything else concerning the rights of people with disabilities, we should feel free to e-mail her.

The Conference, learning how to talk to legislatures, learning how to advocate and the whole experience was a wonderful experience and I thank everyone who helped me participate.



Legislation Affecting OUR Community:



The Disability Integration Act, S. 2427

Civil rights legislation, introduced by Senator Schumer to address the fundamental issue that people who need Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) are forced into institutions and losing their basic civil rights. The legislation (S.2427) builds on the 25 years of work that ADAPT has done to end the institutional bias and provide seniors and people with disabilities home and community-based services (HCBS) as an alternative to institutionalization. It is the next step in our national advocacy after securing the Community First Choice (CFC) option.

Contact for Support

Want to know about other disability related legislative items on the table? Feel free to contact one of our Disability Rights Specialists:

Ken Mitchell – kmitchell@disabilitylink.org

Linda Pogue – greenpogue@disabilitylink.org

SAY NO TO HR 3765



HR 3765

Requires a person with a disability to give a business owner who has barriers to access a written notice, and 60 days to even acknowledge that there is a problem—and then another 120 days to begin to fix it.

No other civil rights group is forced to wait 180 days to enforce their civil rights!

**I have a
disability
and I
vote**

Some options to consider for getting involved:

- **Volunteering**

Contact James Turner, Volunteer Specialist at

JTurner@disABILITYLINK.org,
404-687-8890 x119

- **Registering to vote**

Contact Ron Harris, Disability Rights Project Specialist, 404-687-8890 x108

- **Georgia Get Out the Disability Vote campaign**

Contact Ron Harris at
RHarris@disABILITYLINK.org

- **Marching to demonstrate the power and pride of the disability community**

– contact Linda Pogue at
GreenPogue@disABILITYLINK.org
404-697-8890 x114.

- **Teaching your skills and sharing your experience with someone else – peer support**

training is available at disABILITY LINK, for more information contact Linda Pogue

GreenPogue@disABILITYLINK.org
404-697-8890 x114

- **Running for elected office**

– don't wait for others to make things happen, you are the expert in your life, you know the solutions – share your leadership, experience and knowledge with the disability community and the greater community

- **Sharing your voice**, expressing your ideas, concerns and issues – write an article for your community newspaper or on-line newsletter, write to a newspaper editor, contact a radio or TV station – help the community be informed

- **Making an official complaint** – when experiencing discrimination, don't just complain, make an official complaint, and hold service providers accountable – be part of the solution

- **Joining a committee** working on an accessibility issue important to you – work with peer led organizations such as disABILITY LINK, ADAPT, People First, BIPVA, ALDA, CTREA, etc., to join your peers in “leveling the playing field”



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!

October 14 Doggie Day (See Back)

December 9 Consumer Appreciation Party

Holidays & Closed

November 11 Veterans Day

November 24 Thanksgiving Day

November 25 Family Day

December 21 – January 2 New Year’s Break

We will re-open on January 3rd at our regular business hours.

Wish List

ITEM QUANTITY

Floor stripper/buffer Office space

iPad Mini 1

iPad 2

Kitchen table 1, approx. 4’x6’

Fold-n-go Workstations 4

Universal TV Remote 1

Youth Support for conferences — Please contact Sukie for information!

Contact Us:



disABILITY
LINK
the center for rights & resources



1901 Montreal Rd. Suite 102
Tucker, GA 30084
Reach out to see how we can support you with
applying for or renewing
404-687-8890 – voice
404-381-8112 – video
404-687-8298 – fax
your food stamp benefits!
give us a call to find out
how we can help!

www.disabilitylink.org | www.twitter.com/disabilitylink |
www.Facebook.com/disabilitylink

Become a National Member:



<http://www.ncil.org/ncil-membership/>

<http://www.april-rural.org/index.php/join-us>



Voting in Your State

To register to vote, either fill out and send in a Voter Registration Application or sign up when you renew your driver's license. After you register, the Secretary of State will send your precinct card to your county who will then send it to you. Although, it is important to note that you don't need to bring your precinct card to vote. Its purpose is to let you know where you need to go in order to vote.

What You Should Know:

- See http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/elections/2016_election_dates for a list of upcoming election dates.
- Log in to [My Voter Page](#) to find your polling location and see a sample ballot for the upcoming election.
- On Election Day, polling stations open at 7 a.m. and close at 7 p.m. If you can't vote during those times, you can either vote early or send in an absentee ballot.
- When you arrive at your polling station, you'll need to **bring a valid photo ID** such as a driver's license, passport or voter identification card.
- The polls offer audio ballots for voters who are blind or have low vision and booths for voters in wheelchairs. If you need help with your ballot, you can ask a family member or friend to come with you to the polls and fill the ballot in with your choices.

