**disABILITY LINK – Legislative and Public Policy Quarterly Report – January to March 2015**

Major Theme for 2015 – ADA 25/Disability Rights *are* Civil Rights!

1. **Recent Activities:**
* Nothing About us Without Us – disABILITY LINK’s Discussion and Information Sessions (open to all) – First Thursday of each month from 10am to 12 noon:

January 8 – Disability Rights are Civil Rights

February 5 – Getting “Prepared” for Disability Day at the Capitol

March 5 – Disability Day at the Capitol – a field trip

April 2 – Direct Action Advocacy

May 7 – ADA 25

June 4 – Peer Led Organizations

* Martin Luther King Day Parade/January 16 – the largest contingent of disability community participation (over 100 people) in the history of the MLK Day Parade in Atlanta – “Disability Rights *are* Civil Rights!”
* Mental Health Day at the Capitol/January 20 – with a message of “Recovery Makes Economic Sense”
* Legislative Advocacy Days – Jan 21 – (Waivers) - Jan 29 (ICWP: Raise the Rate) - Feb 4 (Kids Need Real Homes) – Feb 11 (Employment) – Feb 19 (Youth) – provided participation and support
* Our History: Looking Back and Moving Forward/Third Monday of each month/Feb to Nov – themes from the history of the disability community
* Vigil for People with Disabilities killed by family or care providers – February 27, hosted event and posted video on issue (as part of a network of Centers for Independent Living, Autism Self Advocacy Network, Not Dead Yet chapters and others, raising awareness of the issue)
* ADA Training to City of Atlanta’s Parks and Recreation Department – on January 27, provided disability, independent living and ADA training to Commissioner and 12 Department Directors
* ADA 25: Disability Pride Parade – monthly collaboration in planning for major parade on Saturday, June 13 at National Center for Civil and Human Rights in downtown Atlanta – 500 participants expected
* Disability Day at the Capitol – March 5, consumers and staff endured the appalling weather, joined people from all over the state to ensure Georgia Legislators know that “Disability Rights *are* Civil Rights!”
* Accessible Transportation – collaborated with Concerned Transit Riders for Equal Access (CTREA) to hold public meetings on March 17 and 26 to continue to advocate for accessible paratransit services – also legislative transportation advocacy
1. **Other Efforts and Activities:**
* ADA 25 Pledge – [www.ADAanniversary.org](http://www.ADAanniversary.org) – encouraging participation/pledging
* Statewide Youth Transition and Post-Secondary Education Planning
* Independent Care Waiver Program (ICWP) – Policy Focus Groups for consumers and providers
* Olmstead Decision Anniversary Event/June 22 at the Capitol
* disABILITY LINK’s ADA 25 Open House/July 10
* Medicaid Bias, Fair Labor Standards Act and the Community integration Act (CIA) - advocacy to support community, not institutional, services and supports
* Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) – continued efforts for ratification
* Promote Independent Living (IL), community inclusion, self-advocacy, self-determination, barrier removal in every conversation, meeting, discussion and presentation, etc.

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